

edition

st. charles

art

(C)      4/28

Few if any ~~ixx~~ persons living today will recall the days when the St. Charles ~~haxx~~ <sup>building</sup> at the corner of Main (then called Mill) and Court streets was the center of many public gatherings. It seemed an ill-fated structure and collapsed, in part, in July, 1861, and suffered damage again a few months later after repairs had been started. It had been built in 1860.

The old hotel stood at the corner where the Security First National bank is now situated and, according to an article in the Visalia Weekly Delta, "was quite an ornament to the town and cost some \$12,000 or \$13,000."

The following, taken from the Visalia Weekly Delta of July 25, 1861, tells of the crash of the structure:

"On Saturday last, about 25 minutes to 11 o'clock a.m., the St. Charles building, situated on the corner of Court and Mill streets fell with a tremendous crash. The building was two stories high, with fire proof walls, the lower story of which is used for a billiard and bar-room, and the second story was appropriated for music, dancing and other assemblages. The whole was quite an ornament to the town and cost some \$12,000 or \$13,000.

"The second story of the building, with the exception of the front wall, was entirely demolished. It appears that from some cause the roof of the building was imperfectly put together and for some time previous had been known by the proprietors to be sagging in the middle and of consequence spreading out at the sides, and the whole resting upon the walls, without plates.

more



ad one St. Charles

"Thus settling and spreading, the walls finally yielded as above and the inevitable crash ensued. It was a very fortunate circumstance that the falling of the building--in as much as it ~~was~~ must sooner or later go down--that it took place when but very few persons were about it. Had it happened during a public gathering or even late in the evening of the same day, it would ~~have~~ most assuredly have been attended with loss of life.

"As it was, on gentleman, Mr. John Gill who was standing at the time in company with Dr. Lyons of Woodville, in one of the front ~~rooms~~ doors of the building, in attempting to make an escape, was caught and buried beneath the falling brick and very severely, but it is hoped not mortally, injured. He now lies under a doctor's care but is said to be getting along very well.

"Dr. Lyon is somewhat hurt but not seriously so. The south wall fell into the residence of E.P. Hart, literally demolishing a portion of the house, taking the roof, ~~timers~~ timbers, etc., clean beneath the weight of the falling brick. Mrs. Hart who was sitting near a front window of the house, barely escaped with her life. Mr. Henry Harding, who was behind the counter at the time of the catastrophe, very narrowly escaped serious injury from the west end of the building in his escape from the crumbling ruins.

"We learn that Messrs ~~the~~ Cohn Brothers, proprietors of the St. Charles, intend to reconstruct the building as soon as necessary materials can be procured. Mr. J. Gosland of Stockton was on the builder. The building has been finished and occupied about 12 months."

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ad two St. Charles

Apparently the "necessary materials" were obtained and reconstruction was started but the building again suffered "injury" according to the following article which appeared in the Visalia Weekly Delta of November 21, 1861:

"The late heavy rains that injured the building in this place known as the St. Charles, as the roof was not finished. This seems to be an unfortunate building, though a well-built one.

"It was much injured some months ago, the whole upper part tumbling down, because ~~of~~<sup>the</sup> roof was on improperly and now, because it is not on, it is damaged again."

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(e) 4/58

treatment of indians (another story to come)

White men of Tulare county in the 1860's too the law into their own hands, as they did at that period in other parts of the nation in dealing with the red man.

The whites could see but little good even in the best of Indians and infractions of the law were followed by speedy punishment and, no doubt in many cases, by the punishment of many innocent persons. The old saying that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian" was not new at the time nor was it a mere saying--it was practical "law enforcement" of the time.

~~That might have been condoned~~ Acts which might have been condoned if committed by a white man were followed by dire punishment for an Indian.

Following is a letter from Cover District, Kern River, dated April 19, 1863, and ~~was published~~ published by the Delta of April 23, 1863:

"Since the severe punishment inflicted on the Indians at Owens Lake, a considerable number, discouraged by the unfavorable aspect the war was assuming, passed over to this section and quartered themselves upon a rancheria of peaceful Indians at this place. They had done nothing to merit censure during their stay, and manifesting their previous guilty conduct only by an extraordinary desire for privacy, keeping themselves in out-of-the-way places during the day, and availing themselves of the hospitality of the rancheria during the night.

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ad one treatment of indians

"This morning at a very early hour, the place was surrounded by Captain McLaughlin's company and the resident chiefs, Jose Chico and Don Urbane (against whose fair name the breath of foul mouthed slander has never dared to whisper a word), were brought forth and compelled to indicate every strange Indian; and all who had been known by them to have participated in the war, or in stealing cattle, numbering between 30 and 40, were shot.

"This act, the harshness of which at first appeared astounding, is generally approved by friends of the Union, who are gradually waking up to the necessity of energy in war, whether it be against the secesh or Indians; while those clamoring disapproval are, as usual, those who do all they can to embarrass the government to those fostering protection they owe so much. It is though, though clear evidence of the face has not transpired, that the outbreak at Owens river may have been brought about by the same influences which operated to produce the terrible massacres in other sections, making it necessary to send troops from Visalia and Los Angeles to these areas, thereby affording the guerilla bands a clear field for stealing, and the performance of any other of those nefarious acts which are deemed essential to advance the interests of the Southern Confederacy."

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Another correspondent, after describing how the Indians were surrounded by the soldiers, wrote:

"The captain ordered Jose Chico to select all of the Indians for whose good behavior he could vouch and let them stand aside, which was done. He then requested one of the oldest citizens, (Mr. Harmon), to select all he personally knew to be peaceable citizens of Kern river.

m ore



ad two treatment of indians

"The captain then ordered all children and females out of the ranks and the remaining bucks, 32 in number, were marched out of sight of the rancheria and told to skeedaddle for life, but for some cause unknown to me, a row commenced and the result was that 31 of their number were ~~killed~~ killed on the spot and the 32nd mortally wounded.

"The majority of the Indians killed were a part of those who had been engaged in stealing stock from this vicinity since the outbreak on the Owens river; the balance were Kern River Indians who were in the habit of disappearing whenever the Owens River Indians broke out, and were unable on their return to give any satisfactory account of themselves."

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From the Visalia Weekly Delta, March 2, 1862.

"HONEST INDIAN:--A native Visalian, known here as "Indian Sam," appropriated two bed quilts on <sup>Wednesday</sup> ~~Tuesday~~ last--the property of Dr. Russell. He was arrested and taken before Justice Beckham and sentenced to receive 20 lashes which were well laid on the following morning. Sam, like a predecessor of white blood, whom we noticed last week, took advantage of his reputation for honesty. He had heretofore been considered "one of our nice Indians."

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(2) (4/58)

The first building in which prisoners were detained in Tulare county apparently was in the court house, contract for which was let August 10, 1857, to W.G. Russell, for \$1000. The floor of this structure was of brick in which were placed rings, to which were attached chains and the prisoners secured thereto.

The second county jail was situated on the first or ground floor of the court house and had six cells. The contract for this work was let May 4, 1858, to Redd-Palmer and Company, contract price being \$9500 but after a committee of citizens overpowered the sheriff and took James G. McCrory from this jail and hanged him from the bridge over Mill Creek on the evening of December 24, 1872, at the corner of Center and North Court streets, a separate or third building was constructed by contract awarded Miller and Fox, May 7, 1873, for \$4860 and was situated just north of the then court house on the present court house block.

The fourth jail was situated in the court house, which was constructed by Stephens and ~~Walter~~ Childers, under a contract dated June 3, 1876, the contract price <sup>for the court house</sup> being \$59,700. The jail was situated on the first, or ground floor, of this building, as in the previous court house.

On October 14, 1889, a jail building was constructed under a contract awarded M.J. Byrnes for \$27,000 and was situated on the present county jail site, the building facing west.

On January 5, 1917, a contract was awarded Trehitt and Shields for construction of the present jail building for the sum of \$34,900.



edition

expositor

4/24

Visalia was  
~~Visalia~~ of the Civil War period ~~was~~ tolerant of  
those who sympathized with the Confederate movement--to an extent.  
However, attacks upon President Lincoln and his integrity we re  
not countenanced as the editors of the Equal Rights Expositor"  
discovered after a few brief months of existence.

The beginning and end of the Equal Rights Expositor  
are best outlined in clippings from the Visalia Delta, the  
history of the newspaper being given in the terse language and newspaper/  
Delta style  
of the ~~days~~ of the 1860's.

From the Visalia Delta of September 3, 1862:

"Messrs Hall and Garrison have commenced the publication of a  
weekly paper called the Equal Rights Expositor, with the material  
formerly used in printing the Tulare Post--which latter institution  
has "pegged out." Politically, the new paper declares that "the  
South stands justified in the sight of God and the world," which is  
sufficiently explicit on that point. The editors promise to  
devote their principle attention to the advancement of the county,  
in which field of labor, we extend them a cordial welcome.

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From the Visalia Delta of March 12, 1863:

"On Thursday evening last, about 9 o'clock, the town was  
aroused by the sounding of crashing and smashing, which was soon  
ascertained to proceed from the building occupied by the print-  
ing office of the Equal Rights Expositor. A crowd at once  
rushed toward the spot, but they did not get far, for on each  
street and alley intersecting the block were found sentinels with  
cocked pistols, who informed them that "no citizens are allowed



ad one expositor

"In less than half an hour, the establishment was a perfect wreck, the type being thrown into the street and the stands, cases and press smashed to pieces. Their work done, the rioters departed whence they came. On entering Mr. Garrison, the junior partner was found (by the rioters) at rowk and a guard was placed over him, the the assurance that no harm was intended him.

"The immediate cause of the outbreak is said to have been the publication of an article on the "California Cossacks," .....but the starting of it is attributable to the..... publication of such compliments as the following:

"We wish the people to look this matter boldly in the face, so that they may know when they give their support to the president, they give a vital stab to the government of their fathers.!"

"We have said Abraham Lincoln has perjured himself, and we have proven it. We now tell those who support this detestable war, to the extent of their support, the participate with Lincoln in the crime of perjury.!"

"Much has been written and said about the spirit of Americans, but that portion of them who sustain the administration are base cowards; they have the hearts only of does and rabbits--not of men. They are an encumbrance and disgrace to any free country, and are constitutionally fitted only for serfs to some despot. They would cringe and lick the rod as often as it smote them!!"

"Let our states rights friends look around them, and note the passive slaves of the president, who prate about rebels and traitors, while they hug their chains with the servility of a kicked and cuffed hound!!"

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ad two expositor

"These insults had been keenly felt and the result is the destruction of the office. The talk on the street is that the Tuolumne Rangers (Co. E. 2nd Cavalry) took the lead in the matter.

~~He~~

3 m.

"'Tis but justice to say, ~~that~~ in regard to the late disturbances in this town, that the feeling against the Expositor did not extend to Mr. Garrison, the junior editor. Although a firm, consistent and positive defender of the rights of secession, it seems to be understood that he was not the author of the low, gross abuse of the government and citizens which has disfigured its columns."

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A subsequent letter in the Delta, signed "soldier" ~~xxx~~ denied indignantly that the military had had anything whatever to do with the destruction of the Expositor office.



edition

city jail

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4/24

Visalia was having its "jail trouble" ~~early~~ in the early days as she is today and then, as now, the need was pointed out by the Visalia newspaper with the result that, finally ~~in~~ on February 8, 1873, ~~the ground~~ ground was broken for the structure shown in the adjoining photo.

Up to the time of the construction of the jail, it was the custom to tie intoxicated persons to trees until they were deemed sufficiently punished and sober enough to be released.

The story is best told in articles from early newspapers and orders of the Tulare county board of Supervisors:

From the Tulare Times, October 19, 1872:

"Visalia must have a calaboose. The county jail is denied to the marshal to confine persons convicted of or charged with misdemeanors, and he can do nothing with them unless he chains them to trees, exposed to sun and cold."

Order of the Tulare county board of supervisors, November 16, 1872

"Ordered that the trustees of the town of Visalia be, and they are hereby granted permission to erect a suitable town prison on the north side of ~~the~~ Court House Square."

From the Tulare Times, December 21, 1872:

"In accordance with our suggestions, the board of trustees have decided to build a town prison. The building will be 14 by 24 feet in size, and 14 feet high, of timber five inches thick, set end on end, and competent architects have agreed to construct the building for \$1100 in town scrip. This is a much needed improvement."

m ore



ad one city jail

From the Tulare Times, February 8, 1873:

"CALABOOSE:--Ground has been broken for the new town calaboose, to be built on Court House Square, north of the court house."

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The old "calaboose" is still in use--it was discovered by A.W. Frost, who took the photograph, on the Hyde Ranch Dairy where it now is utilized as a storage place for grain instead of human derelicts.

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(c) 4/24  
Frost

County Court House Buildings

by A.W. Frost

The Tulare county court house at one time was a building rented at a rate of \$75 a year, it would appear from old ~~court house~~ records.

The first court house of Tulare county was designated by the act of the legislature of April 20, 1852, which provided as follows:

"The seat of justice shall be at the log cabin on the South side of Kaweah creek, near the bridge built by Dr. Thomas Payne and shall be called Woodsville."

This bridge was on or near the location of the present bridge over Kaweah river, near the old Goad place, seven or eight miles east of Visalia. This served as a court house until after the general election held September 7, 1853, when the county seat was changed to Visalia.

The second court house was a building retnd from A. King of Visalia and was situated on the northwest corner of Bridge and Oak streets, at the rate of \$75 a year. This lot was sold by the county of Tulare to Thomas Baker, March 7, 1854, and in December of that year, the board of supervisors ordered that "the court house be ~~renewed~~ hired for one year from March 11, 1855, at \$75 per anum from C<sup>v</sup>lonet Baker, to be paid in town script, provided that the court house be repaired before January 1, 1855, A.D., by making a fire place, shutters, etc."

more



ad one Frost

The third court house appears to have been rented from Russell and Poindexter, according to the following order of the board of supervisors on February 3, 1857:

"Ordered that \$60 be paid Russell and Poindexter for the rent of their house from November 1, 1856, to February 3, 1857,.....and it is further agreed that the county have the use of said house for the space of three months for the sum of \$132."

The records show that the only property owned by Russell and Poindexter at that time was Lot 6, Block 28, which is the second lot east of Court street on the north side of Main street.

The fourth court house was the first court house built by the county, the contract for which was let August 10, 1857, to W.G. Russell for \$1000 and was situated on the present court house site. The building was 20 feet by 36 feet, with 12 feet off for offices, the remainder being for court room, which would make the the court room 20 by 24 feet. The floor of this building was of brick in which were placed rings, in which rings chained were attached to which prisoners were chained. This, therefore, was the jail as well as the court room.

This building being only a temporary affair, another building was constructed in 1858 for court house and jail.

The fifth court house was contracted for with Redd, Palmer and Company on the site of the present court house, On may 4, 1858. The contract price appears to have been \$95 00 but the upper story was not finished and part of the first story also was unfinished. The building was 40 by 60 feet and, as above stated, of two stories, and was constructed of hard burned brick.



ad two frost

In the first story also was the jail. This building was completed and accepted February 8, 1859. At various times thereafter, the interior of the court house was finished. This building served as the county jail until the taking out of the jail of some citizens of James G. McCrory and the hanging of him from the bridge over Mill creek at the corner of Center and North streets on Christmas eve, 1872, and the board of supervisors, on May 7, 1873, awarded a contract to Miller and Fox for a jail building on the court house grounds, just north of the court house, for \$4680.

The sixth court house was built under contract of June 3, 1876, with A.L. Stephens and Arnold Childers; the contractors, the contract price being \$59,700, and the building was completed June 9, 1877.

On August 8, 1907, contract was awarded W.D. Trehitt for the north and south wings of ~~the existing~~ this building, which is the present court house, for \$40,000, the north wings being of fire-proof construction. These wings were completed May 23, 1908.

The contract for the new annex on the west side of the old court house was let to Frank J. Reilly of San Francisco on July 12, 1934, for \$125,721, and was completed about July 1, 1935.

end frost