

One of the bright chapters in the history of Sequoia National Park is found in the work of the National Geographic Society in eliminating private lands in the Giant Forest and other sections of the Park.

In 1916 Congress appropriated \$50,000 to purchase some of the more important of these lands. However, the price demanded was \$70,000. Nearly all hope of making the purchase ^{had been} ~~was~~ given up when the Governing body of the society donated ~~\$50~~ \$20,000 and the deal was completed.

Later the Society continued its efforts and in 1920 three members gave the organization \$21,330 with which to acquire tracts ~~which~~ ^{amounting} to 609 acres. In 1921 another holding containing ⁶⁴⁰ ~~460~~ acres was purchased for \$55,000 which included a ^{donation} ~~donation~~ of \$10,000 raised by a special tax levy by Tulare County California.

Stephen T. Mather, first Director of the National Park Service, was the most liberal of the ^{long list of} ~~benefactors~~ as his donations to ^{these} ~~this~~ and other purchase projects totalled more than \$60,000.

From the earliest days army men recommended that fish be planted in ^{Sequoia} the park waters. In 1894, through the Sportsmen's Club of Visalia and the California Fish and Game Commission, Capt James ~~Ridgely~~ Parker succeeded in obtaining 20,000 young fish which were planted in the Marble Fork and its tributaries.

These and succeeding plants must have been successful as the report of the Acting Superintendent ~~for~~ 1908 shows that a woman fishing in the park on August 20, 21 and 22nd caught 242 trout some of which were 14 inches long and none less than ten.

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Among the early attempts to improve the wildlife population in the Sequoia National Park were the introduction of elk in 1904 and 1905. A total of 142 wild turkeys were released in the park in 1910 and 1912. The last ~~of the elk~~ was reported in 1920. However, neither elk nor turkeys are found in the area today.

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In 1902, because of many complaints received ^{from} civilians that the soldiers were killing more deer than they were protecting, the Secretary of the Interior ordered the army detachment ^{in Sequoia Park} dis-armed while on ~~park~~ duty.

Capt. Frank C. Barten reported, " As soon as it was known that my soldiers would not carry their carbines, both Forest Rangers, who had always previously carried guns, voluntarily gave them up, which removed the last possible chance for anyone to charge ~~tha~~ the rules and regulations of the park were being violated by those on duty it."

Although grazing of sheep and cattle in Sequoia National Park has been eliminated for many years, the area now included was once practically denuded by hungry livestock according to the reports of U.S. Army Officers who patrolled the park during the summer month from 1890 to 1913.

Captain Dorst estimated that ~~5,000~~ 500,000 sheep were grazing in and around the great forests in 1892. The Captain reported, "The sheep have been crowded so closely that pleasure parties visiting the mountains have been put to great inconvenience because they could get no grass for their ~~pack~~ horses and pack animals."

Even after 8 years of effort on part of the soldiers, whose patrols covered 7,000 miles in one summer to drive out livestock, the army still reported 200,000 sheep on the reservation in 1898. A proposed trip of exploration into the headwaters of the Kern was abandoned because it was reported that grazing in the area was so intense that no forage was available for horses of the detachment.

Exasperation with the bear population in the Giant Forest was expressed by Major James B. Hughes in 1911.

In his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior he said, "The Bears at Camp Sierra during the past season proved to be a general nuisance. Campers lost quantities of provisions that were stolen and destroyed by them, and on several occasions during the night time campers and tourists were alarmed and much frightened by ~~them~~ the sudden and unwelcome visits of Mr. Bruin. So far as I know the bear is neither useful nor ornamental, and I recommend that he be exterminated."

Although the bears still roam over Sequoia National Park those who make nuisances of themselves are now trapped by the rangers and hauled far away from centers of population where they ^{are} liberated.

on duty in Sequoia Park
Capt. L.C. Andrews reported on cooperative efforts with the Visalia Board of Trade in 1901 which resulted in the construction of a trail to Kings Canyon.

Speaking of the trail to the General Sherman Tree he stated in his annual report on Sequoia National Park, "I soon found that one point of interest beyond the Giant Forest was the Kings ~~Canyon~~ River Canyon, and so made a proposition to the Visalia Board of Trade, to extend the trail on past the General Sherman Tree to the north ^{line} ~~boundary~~ of the park if they would continue it from there into the canyon. This was accepted and the trail just completed; so next season's tourists will find a well constructed trail direct to the canyon."

The first regular hotel in Sequoia National Park was erected in 1914 by Mr. Walter E. Kenney. He also operated a tent camp and accommodated 259 guests at his resorts during the season.

early canals

Difficult as it may seem to believe in these days when canals are used in Tulare county only for irrigation purposes there was a time when such canals were constructed solely for the purpose of freight-carrying ships, according to F.F. Latta, authority on Tulare county history.

The first great canal in the San Joaquin valley, the San Joaquin and Kings river canal, which leaves the San Joaquin river east of Mendota, first was proposed as a freight canal, Latta states. The freight idea was dropped when construction of the present east side Southern Pacific railroad was started in 1871.

"Today the idea of a freight canal is so strange that we can scarcely believe that such was ever seriously considered," says Latta in one of his Little Journeys Through the San Joaquin.

"The first canal was seriously proposed as early as 1853. The freight-carrying idea was first so strong that it wasn't even mentioned. The state act read 'An act to provide for the construction of a canal from the Tulare lake to the waters of the San Joaquin' and was passed by the California state legislature on May 12, 1853.

"Thus was the way opened for a Tulare lake canal. Little time was lost in forming the first company to build the canal. On June 23, 1853, the following men formed an association for the purpose of building the canal: Elcan Heydenfeldt, Solomon Heydenfeldt, Samuel Bell, P.T. Herbert, Elam Covington, J.C. Cohen, B. McAipih, Wm. Roach and J. Bolling. Each held an equal share in the association.

more

MORLEY M. MADDOX
Manager

Visalia Times-Delta and Morning Delta

CHARLES A. WHITMORE
Editor

Oldest Newspapers in the San Joaquin Valley. Times Established in 1865, Delta in 1899. Delta Re-established February 1, 1937

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WEST-HOLLIDAY-MOGENSEN

ad one early canals

edition

"On the same day as the first agreement was drawn, M.J. Holley, E.R. Carpenter, J.S. Graham and Thomas Payne were taken into the association. On July 5, 1853, P.T. Herbert was appointed attorney to act for the group.

"At Benicia, on July 16, 1853, it was agreed that the whole stock of the company should be 600 shares with a par value of \$1000 each, and David Calloway was added to the list of stockholders, making a total of 14.

"What finally became of the company we do not know.....Perhaps it was easier to form a paper association than it was to raise money for actual construction. Perhaps they sold out to others. At any rate, no ditch was dug and later they continued the effort to build a canal from Tulare lake to the San Joaquin river..

"The idea of a freight canal had so many possibilities that it was kept alive for almost 20 years. It is not surprising that such was the case. Every pound of supplies brought into the San Joaquin valley had to be freighted in over long difficult roads, either from Stockton or Los Angeles..~~It was not until 1853 that~~

"Every pound of produce from the San Joaquin valley had to be freighted out. The cheapest freight rates were prohibitive. It was commonly stated among pioneer valley settlers that it did not pay to produce anything except for home consumption that could not carry itself to market. This limited profitable produce to hogs, cattle and sheep. For many years, stock raising was the only profitable business.

"By 1860 it was learned that almost any soil crop could be raised in abundance on San Joaquin valley lands. But all surplus was practically valueless because of the heavy freight tolls. So the idea of a freight canal hung on.

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ad two early canals

"On April 11, 1857, a second act of the California state legislature was approved, authorizing W.C. Montgomery, Joseph Montgomery, A.J. Downer, F.W. Sampson and their associates to reclaim all swamp and overflowed lands between the Kings river and Kern lake. These men were also authorized to construct a freight and drainage canal connecting Tulare lake with the San Joaquin river.

"The grantees were to have the right to collect tolls for the navigation of the canal for a period of 20 years. A right of way 200 feet wide was granted, as well as every odd section of the land reclaimed. It was the grandest concession ever given by the state of California in the San Joaquin valley and had the works been constructed, would have reclaimed approximately 800 square miles of land, half of which would have gone to the canal association.

"Tulare county citizens bitterly opposed the canal concession and brought about the repeal of the act at the next legislative session. The supreme court held that the repealing act was unconstitutional. The association struggled along for a number of years, reclaimed a few sections of land and secured patents to them but the great canal was not built.

"About 1868, a group of valley men conceived the idea of impounding the water of future floods in the south end of the San Joaquin. It was proposed to build a great levee from the high land near where Fresno now is situated across to a point west of the present Tranquility.

"The San Joaquin river was to be diverted south to join Kings, Kaweah, Tule, White and Kern rivers and some 30 minor streams to create a great inland sea.

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more

ad three early canals

"As the first step in promoting such a gigantic plan, it was presented to Henry Miller.....Miller doomed the plan.

"Another important event in 1868 was the survey of the San Joaquin valley by an engineer in the employ of San Francisco and London capitalists....The report rendered was enthusiastic and convincing. It led to important steps toward development. One member of the London group filed on the waters of the San Joaquin river.....

"As the floods of the summer of 1868 hastened action toward grasping opportunity of water development, the dry summer of 1871 sped on the work of construction. Crops were a failure and river water was needed.

"Farmers from all parts of the valley flocked to the work of digging the 'big ditch', the magnitude of which was then unequalled in the west.

"Henry Miller was an ~~extremely~~ extremely interested and not inactive spectator to the construction of the west side canal.

Hundreds of his teams were hitched to the scoop scrapers and dozens of his men were employed in driving them. His firm purchased several thousand shares of stock in the company which was engineering the construction.

"By October of 1873, the newly formed company was in financial straits. During the few years immediately following, control gradually passed from the hands of the original holders to those of Henry Miller and his firm.

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ad four early canals

"Cost of the original canal and diversion dam at Mendota is said to have been more than \$1,250,000. The Miller interests are said to have paid for the vast system less than one-third of its cost. By 1875, the railroad was constructed into Bakersfield and later continued over Tehachapi Pass. Since shortly after the beginning of the construction of this road all idea of a freight canal from Tulare lake was forgotten and has never been seriously considered since."

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WEST-HOLLIDAY-MOGENSEN
CO. INC.

July 1859

V.W.D. July 9, 1859

YOUNG VISALIA: Few people beyond the borders of our country, and indeed some within its boundaries who have never visited our thriving young town can form any adequate idea of its resources, its rapid advancement in wealth and population and its prospects of future greatness. Its name is often mentioned abroad and the inquirer anxious for information eagerly asks, "Where is Visalia ? " The day, however, is not far distant when the whole world shall know where Visalia is and when its name shall be no more an enigma to the most unsophisticated. Indeed its importance as being the nucleus of one of the richest agricultural portions of the state is already beginning to attract attention to California and the influx of population this season has been enormous. Thought it is now but four years since the settlement of this place commenced it has been rapidly increasing in wealth and importance, not with the feverish excitement which characterized the growth of many of our western towns which spring up in a year or two and then remain stationary for double that length of time, but with a steady and continually increasing growth which augers a continuance of prosperity for its future growth, until it occupies no inferior place in the catalogue of country towns. Our population at present numbers probably one thousand souls and from its rapid increase for the few months past we may reasonably expect that the same will be doubled during the next year.

LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS: The improvements of all kinds speak highly for the enterprise of its citizens and show that while they possess a reasonable and laudable desire to advance their individual interests, no narrant or sordid motives exist to

prevent their devotion to public improvements. Indeed we may say without egotism that no town can be found in the state whose citizens manifest a more lively interest in public improvements and where enterprise appealing to their sympathy meet a more hearty response. Every street is supplied with good running water which is brought a distance of over one mile by Mr. Mathew's mill race. which besides supplying the town with water furnishes water sufficient to run a grist mill. As a specimen of public improvement we may mention the courthouse and jail, consisting of a brick edifice built in the Roman style of architecture, forty by sixty feet and two stories in height. One-half the basement is finished and contains six cells, with a wall between and around the whole. The cells are lined with boiler iron with doors of the same material. The front part is intended, when finished for the offices of the county clerk and sheriff. The upper story is the court room and is sufficiently capacious to contain one thousand persons and when finished will be one of the finest rooms of the kind in the state. Messers Palmer, Redd & Co. are the architects who built this admirable structure, and it is not too much to say that such a courthouse would be an ornament to any village in the state. We have also a respectable brick church, which when completed will be a comfortable place of worship. There is also a frame schoolhouse, which with some few needed improvements will become a comfortable place for the instruction of the young. It is believed, however, that we shall soon be able to build a larger and more commodious house for young America. The artesian well now being dug on the corner of Main and Court streets(should its enterprising inceptors succeed in getting

water, as there can be little doubt they will) will be an estimable blessing to our town by supplying its citizens with good, pure, and more than all, cold water, which is such a luxury in warm weather.

INDIAN LEGEND OF RAIN
SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

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In the long, long ago the San Joaquin Valley was a barren waste. The Indians gathered about their fireside and were talking about the valley. Amongst them were the old Rain Makers. They decided to make rain. They arose quietly and went out into the night, and when they were far from their brothers they took their Holy Stones from their pouches and held them high in the air, praying to their God for rain, taking handfuls of sand and throwing it into the air to the West.

The clouds gathered, the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed, and rain descended in torrents for days, nights, and weeks, until the entire valley was a great Sweet Water Lake. As time went on and the water began to recede, the lands appeared above the waters and then the grasses grew, the shrubbery and trees came and when these had grown the birds of the air, animals and mountains took up their homes within the valley, making the Happy Hunting Grounds for the Indians.

A few years ago a party of Indians were riding from Three Rivers to White River. They stopped for the night and built their camp fire, and again this old Legend was told. The younger Indians said, "No, no it cannot be". Among them was an old Rain Maker. He quietly arose and went out into the night and when he was far away he took his Holy Stone from his pouch and held it high in the air and prayed to his God for rain. He threw handfuls of sand into the air to the West. Immediately the clouds gathered, the thunder rolled,

and crashigg lightening illuminated the entire valley, and rain descended in torrents. The younger Indians became frightened and went out into the night. When they had found their brother they begged that he stop the terrible storm--he did.

This Legend has been told throughout the ages and is told at the present time around the fireside of the Indians.

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H. L. Morrison
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Porterville, California