

THE HISTORY OF CENTREVILLE
CHAPTER 02
1860 to 1869

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* **BIOS** *

Josiah (James) B. Tolin / Frank Rogers / Daniel A. Faulkner / Rev. James Pierpont / Dr. Lorenzo G. Yates / Rev. W.F.B. Lynch / Dr. Cyrus H. Allen / Henry C. Gregory

Josiah (James) B. Tolin:

James Tolin was farming in Centreville prior to 1860, but he came to prominence when he bought the Stacy Horner property (50 acres) on the SW corner of today's Fremont Boulevard and Thornton Avenue. How this came to pass is described by the ladies of the Country Club in their book *The History of Washington Township*:

"In 1852, or perhaps early in 1853, Capt. George Bond and Mr. Stacey Horner built homes in Centreville. The Horner house still stands where built (1904), on the corner at the intersection of the Newark and Oakland roads; when constructed this house was one of the finest in the country; on the death of the owner the property was sold to Mr. Tolin, and for years after his death his widow continued to occupy the place, and with her lived her sister, "Aunt Lo Smith," known far and wide as a capable nurse and a friend to those in need. All have now passed away and the place is owned by strangers."

Mr. Stacy Horner (father of John Horner) passed away on August 12, 1862. So it is about this time that James Tolin became a farmer on this 50 acre farm. James had come to Centreville prior to 1860 to farm. He was born in Waterloo Illinois in 1824. His wife Sarah was born in Pennsylvania in 1824. They had two sons Frank and John.

James Tolin died on December 1867 at the age of 43 years leaving his wife Sarah to care for the farm. Shortly after the death of Mr. Tolin Mrs. Tolin's sister, Lois A. Smith, known in Centreville as 'Aunt Lo,' came to live with her sister. Lois Smith passed away on November 26, 1891, followed by her sister, Mrs. Sarah Tolin on November 30, 1893.

Frank Rogers:

The ladies of the Country Club state that the first Portuguese family to settle in the Centreville neighborhood was that of Frank Rogers, whose son now owns the place bought by his father in 1866. I found several Frank Rogers in the Centreville area, but they were gone by the 1880's. I did, however, locate one Frank Rodgers who owned 70 acres across the road from the old Alviso Grammar School in 1878. His farm was adjacent to the farm of James Hawley in the Alviso District.

The Portuguese population from the Azores Islands were settling so rapidly in Alameda County at this time and paying such high prices for small parcels of land, that a humorous correspondent in the county paper, writing at Centreville, remarked that "a Portuguese advancing towards your premises for the purpose of negotiating a purchase, adds much greater enhancement to its value than the assurance of having a railroad pass through your verandah."

Daniel A. Faulkner:

Daniel A. Faulkner came to Centreville in the late 1860's and founded a blacksmith shop here. Daniel came from Nova Scotia where he was born circa 1836. His wife Maria was also born in Nova Scotia circa 1843. They had three children, two of which were born in Nova Scotia and one born in California. On June 27, 1871 Daniel Faulkner received the patent shown below. The advertisement is from the Paulsen Business Directory of 1872.



The last entry found for Daniel Faulkner was that he was farming in Sutter Township, Sacramento County in 1880.

Rev. James Pierpont:

The Reverence James Pierpont came to Centreville to preach at the Presbyterian Church in 1866, the only year he was at Centreville. Rev. Pierpont had come to California in 1852 from New York. He ministered to locations as varied as Placerville in 1853, to Oakland, Healdsburg, and Murphy's Bar. Reverend Pierpont died in April 1885 at the residence of his daughter in San Francisco.

Dr. Lorenzo G. Yates:

Dr. Lorenzo Yates was born in England in 1837 and came to the U.S. in 1853. His wife Eunice was born in New York circa 1837. Together they had six children, five sons and a daughter.

Dr. Yates came to Washington Township circa 1864 where he practiced dentistry, the profession of his choice. But his real love was the natural world and it was in Centreville that he gained world-wide prominence.

The ladies of the Country Club in their book *The History of Washington Township* wrote of Dr. Lorenzo Yates:

"Dr. Yates was (Centreville's) first dentist, but he is better known as a careful and scientific investigator. He gave much attention to the Indian antiquities of the township, and collected an extensive cabinet of Indian and other curiosities. Many of these are now in Golden Gate Park Museum of San Francisco. Most of the curios in the cabinet of Lincoln School District were donated by him. He also recorded a number of geological and barometrical facts of value. He has written several scientific books of note, and is a member of the very exclusive scientific Linnean Society of London, having received his appointment on the demise of Asa Grey, the noted botanist. There were but eight other members of this society in the United States at that time."

Born of a natural curiosity about his surroundings, it sent Dr. Yates on expeditions of digging, finding, cataloging and authoring. In June 1867 he discovered the tusk of an animal of the elephant species near Mission San Jose. It was found about twenty feet underground, where a channel had been cut by the previous winter's rains. The tusk was 24 inches long, and 23 in circumference.

In 1871 Dr. Yates was out prospecting for geological specimens in the hills in the southern part of the county where he unearthed a portion of the inferior maxillary of a mastodon. Its measure was: From front of jaw to the back of the last molar teeth, 24 inches; width of jaw at angles, 18 inches; width of jaw midway between front and rear, 15 inches; depth of jaw from crown of molar teeth, 9 inches; thickness of jaw, 9 inches. This specimen exhibited, in a marked degree, the peculiar process of the shedding and replacement of molar teeth. In the jaw, here mentioned, a part of one set of teeth had just been shed, another set were in place, and another set developed in the jaw, ready to replace the others when shed. The jaw was one of the finest ever discovered in California.

On January 28, 1871 *The Pacific Rural Press* of San Francisco printed this article on the accomplishments of Dr. Lorenzo G. Yates of Centreville Calif.:

"Few people in Alameda County know of the choice cabinet and collections of Dr. L. G. Yates. The doctor is an indefatigable worker and student in every branch of natural science. His collections of geological, mineral and archeological specimens, etc., are wonderfully complete and interesting. He has a complete set of specimens from all the different formations of the Silurian, Devonian and Carboniferous ages. His collection of reptiles, birds, insects, shells, etc., is most interesting. He aims especially to preserve specimens of all the animate and inanimate things of Alameda County, and is writing the natural history of the county. He is quite an expert taxidermist and preserver as well as collector of natural curiosities. He has collected many specimens of fossil animals; and also human remains and implements from the old Indian mounds in California, as also several strange samples from the "stone age." Several of these, obtained with difficulty and expense, he has sent to the Smithsonian Institute, with which he is in constant communication, reserving plaster casts of the same for his own cabinet. "No one collection that has been received by us has proved of more interest than yours," wrote the Secretary of the Institute, on the receipt of one collection out of many, sent to that National Museum by Dr. Yates. The doctor has many books of great value to him which he has received in return for his many favors to the Institute, but like most of those who devote their time to the advancement of science he receives very little assistance or encouragement from those who might and should second their efforts. Still, he has some friends, good and true, who appreciate his commendable labors, and give credit to whom credit is due. Should it be the good fortune of any of our readers to visit Centreville, they must not forget to call on the doctor, who is always pleased to show his curiosities and explain their meaning."

Dr. Yates sold his home in Centreville in April 1882 to Sigmund Salz and relocated to Santa Barbara and there on January 31, 1909 he passed away at age 72 from a stroke. Dr. Yates was a dentist by profession but he gained his world-wide as a specialist on ferns, general botany, paleontology, North American Indians, and conchology. He was a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London and of numerous others. He was the author of "California Digest Masonic Law," "The Channel Islands," "Aboriginal Weapons in California," and several others. He leaves a widow he married last fall.

Rev. W.F.B. Lynch:

The Rev. Lynch came to us from a farm near Gettysburg PA., where he was born in 1827. Rev. Lynch married Miss Rachel Jackson and would have four children from the union; two sons and two daughters. Two were born in Ohio and two were born Iowa. In coming west Rev. Lynch and family spent a few years in Carson City, Nevada before coming to Oakland in 1867. He then spent a short time in Alvarado before settling in Centreville where he took the pulpit in late 1867 and stayed two years.

Rev. Lynch was elected Superintendent of Public Schools in Alameda County in 1869, a position he held until 1877. In July, 1871 Albert Lyser and Rev. Lynch helped to secure the site for a school to be called the "Washington

College of Science and Industry." The intention of these two men was to found a school based on the main features of the Polytechnic Schools of Europe and some of the Eastern States. Rev. Lynch was voted a Trustee of the school.

After 1869 Rev. Lynch gravitated toward teaching, although he continued to perform many marriages. He held the office of President of the County Board of Education for twenty years until his retirement in 1895

On August 26, 1901 Rev. Lynch passed away at the home of his daughter, Mrs. H.F. Eber of San Leandro. Locally he left a son, H.W. Lynch who was principal of the Centreville Grammar School.

Dr. Cyrus H. Allen:

Dr. Allen was born in Vermont in September 1833. His wife Myra was born in Ohio in May 1844. They had one son Charles H. Allen who attended medical college.

Other than the above information everything else was given by the ladies of the Country Club in their book *The History of Washington Township*:

"Dr. Cyrus H. Allen, who served in the 8th Vermont Regiment as surgeon throughout the Civil War, came to California to recuperate his broken health and settled at once in Centreville, in 1867. He has lived here continuously ever since, engaged in the active practice of his profession; in the early days fording swollen streams on horseback, or in his high sulky, traveling all over the valley and into the high hills and mountains as far as Livermore and beyond; for it often happened that he was the only physician between San Jose and San Lorenzo. Known far and near he is considered as belonging to the township rather than any one locality. He has recently associated with him a younger man, Dr. C. A. Wills, whose home is also in the village. Other physicians who have been residents of the town are Drs. Robert Hall, Buteau, Hastings, Hall, Walliser, Cabral and Emerson; the latter two are now living here and in active practice."

For Mrs. Allen the ladies had this to say:

"The Country Club, under whose auspices this history is published, was the outcome of two political equality societies, one of Centreville and one of Niles. The first meeting of the Woman's Club of Washington Township, afterward re-named the Country Club, was held in December, 1897, at the home of Mrs. C. H. Allen, Centreville."

Henry C. Gregory:

Henry C. Gregory first came to prominence in Centreville in 1869 when he built the Gregory House hotel on the same spot that the Ogden Hotel had originally occupied when it burned down in 1866. A replacement hotel was built in its place and that one also burned down in 1869. Here Mr. Gregory would built his hotel that would be a landmark in Centreville.

Henry Gregory was born in New York State in October 1839. Henry had been well traveled before he settled in Centreville in the late 1860's. He had made and lost several fortunes in various parts of the U.S. Mr. Gregory came to

Centreville, and in 1869 purchased the store of C. J. Stevens, and conducted that business until 1878, during which time he accumulated a good deal of money.

He then sold out and bought the "Niehaus Ranch," and embarked in farming. He then sold the ranch keeping fifty acres for himself. While in business at Centreville Mr. Gregory held the office of Postmaster from 1869 to 1877. After the sale of the C.J. Stevens store in 1878 Mr. Gregory then went to San Jose where he operated the New York Exchange until 1881.

In 1881 H.C. Gregory returned to Centreville and built the Gregory House hotel, one of the best hotels in the county. Mr. Gregory was twice married, and had three children: May, Amy, and George.

Although Mr. Gregory owned the hotel he leased out operation of the hotel to a string of proprietors.



The Gregory House hotel in Centreville

One such proprietor was Colonel C.J. Pullen who had been the proprietor of the Rose Hotel in Pleasanton. He came to Centreville and assumed the management of the Gregory House in January 1889. But in April 1891 Mr. & Mrs. Gregory had to assume control of the Gregory House.

In 1898 the Gregory House was under the management of Alonzo Olney. In July of 1902 Mr. Olney purchased the Rose Hotel in Pleasanton from its former proprietor, D.F. Tillman. Mr. Olney was already well known for his management of the Congress Springs Hotel and later the Gregory House in Centreville. His management of these two hotels was such that he has now the name of being one of the best and most efficient hotel managers on the coast. Silas W. Olney was associated with his father in the management of the hotel.

Mrs. M.A. Graves was landlady of the Gregory House in December 1901 when the hotel was quarantined because of a suspected case of smallpox. The hotel

was quarantined for eight days. In January 1902 Mrs. Graves sued Dr. H.W. Emerson, Dr. G.E. Chalmers, health officers for the Centreville District, and Supervisor Charles F. Horner for \$5,400 in damages, allegedly due to the quarantine placed on the premises during December.

The complaint alleged that Dr. Emerson was called to treat one of the lodgers and circulated the report that his patient was suffering from smallpox; that thereafter Supervisor Horner had Health Officer Chalmers quarantine and fumigate the place. The quarantine remained in effect for eight days.

In regard to the fumigation: "Dr. Chalmers proceeded to fumigate the place in a most careless and negligent manner, throwing a disagreeable and injurious substance over the carpets, floor, furniture, and household goods in in said hotel, greatly damaging same and making it not only disagreeable to the plaintiff, her guests and family, but also dangerous to the health."

In 1904 the Gregory House came into the possession of Benjamin K. Badger. Shortly after signing the lease Mr. Badger brought a lawsuit against Henry C. Gregory to recover \$1,000 he paid down and \$2,000 in damages. He says Gregory represented to him that the hotel would bring in \$200 a month, a livery stable would bring in \$150 a month, and that the bar could be worked into a good trade.

Badger says that there is no income from the place and that he has been swindled. He took a lease of the place for five years at a rental of \$90 a month, paying \$1,000 down and a note for \$3,200 more.

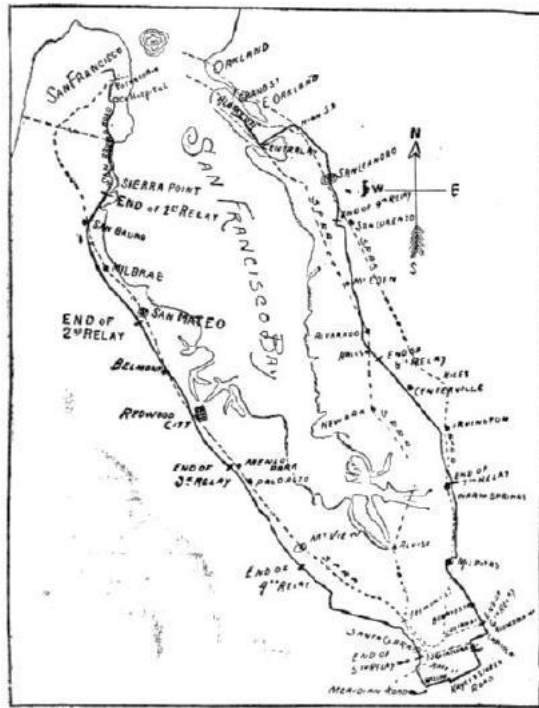
Henry Gregory then brought a foreclosure procedure against Mr. Badger to recover the \$3,000 owed to him. But before the foreclosure be brought to bear, Mr. Badger had the foreclosure estopped until the law suit Badger brought against Gregory was decided.

The annual meetings of the Washington Township "Pioneer Society" formed in 1876 were celebrated at the Gregory House. The hotel was used as polling place for many elections in Centreville.

The Gregory House was a favorite place for travelers to stop on the way from San Jose to Oakland or Oakland to San Jose. It was also a favorite place for "wheelmen" to stop and dine on their trips. "Wheelman" today are known as bicyclists.

The great 100 mile relay race of the California Associated Cycling Clubs would be run April 12, 1896. The race would be contested by ten teams of ten men each from San Francisco, San Jose, and Alameda County.

The teams would start from San Francisco and ride around the Bay via San Jose and would finish in Alameda. There would be 9 relay points located at: Near Sierra Point (San Bruno); San Mateo, north of Palo Alto, south of Mt. View, between Santa Clara & west San Jose, north of Alum Rock Road, north of Warm Springs, between Centreville and Alvarado, and San Lorenzo.



100-Mile Relay Course of the California Associated Cycling Clubs. The Heavy Black Lines Indicate Relay Route.

Bargains —IN— Bicycles.



and BICYCLE
SUPPLIES.

BUSINESS OF O. S. POTTER & CO.,

IN LIQUIDATION.

EXTENSIVE
STOCK
BEING SOLD
AT
CUT RATES.

48 FREMONT STREET,
CORNER OF MISSION.

At least one team publicly averred that they will stop at the Gregory House to enjoy one of those dinners which have made the Gregory House so popular with wheelmen.

Henry Gregory was active in social and civic activities in the town of Centreville. In September 1880 H.C. Gregory was a charter member of the Centreville Council, No. 34, Independent Order of Odd Fellows. On March 27, 1896, when the Centreville Athletic Club was incorporated, Henry was a charter member. Henry was also active as an official in local elections.

Henry's wife Mary also took an interest in civic affair and was very active in taking back the Centreville Town Hall from the private hands it had fallen into. The ladies of Centreville met at the Town Hall on June 15, 1891 pursuant to former notices and elected officers of an association to be called, "The Ladies' Town Hall Association." The following officers were elected: President, Mrs. Henry Gregory; Secretary, Mrs. R. Rockwell; Treasurer, Mrs. George Patterson. It was decided to form a committee to solicit subscriptions. Directors for the Ladies Town Hall Association of Centreville were chosen; they were: Mary Gregory, Dora Overacker, Louis Overacker, Susan S. Milton, Caroline P. Simpson, Laura Beck, Hester Trefry, and Mary Matheson.

On August 27, 1906 Henry C Gregory died at Centreville. His estate was valued at \$30,000, which was represented by lands, hotel, bar fixtures, notes & bonds, and cash in the bank.

His will left money to the children of his deceased daughter May, his daughter Amy and his widowed wife. To his son George he left \$100 with a stipulation that if he married Caroline Emmering of Johnstown PA that the latter would inherit a strip of land situated near his hotel in Centreville.

*** CENTREVILLE ROAD STRUCTURE ***

In reading Chapter 01 of this history (1850 – 1859) you will encounter a myriad of pioneers who came to Centreville, some only briefly, others to stay and build a place to live. In the beginning there was a single road *through* Centreville and it was conceded that it was pretty much improved by the Horner’s for bringing their produce from the ex-Mission lands to their landing at Union City.

Union City was pretty much the Ellis Island of Washington Township if not the entire East Bay soon after Statehood. Many of the pioneers of early Washington Township came to the area through Union City; some stayed for a short time while others immediately left Union City for the interior of Washington Township or the gold country.

As early as 1851 there were regularly scheduled daily trips (except Sunday’s) to and from San Francisco. This was by John Horner’s little steamboat which linked his farms in Washington Township to his commission house in San Francisco where he sold his produce. For this he needed a reliable road system, especially when he added his stage coach line from Union City to the Mission San Jose.

When Alameda County was created and the first Court of Sessions met at Alvarado on June 3, 1853 two important items on the agenda was the mapping of the townships and then the creation of road districts and the maintenance of these roads. Seven roads in the county were initially designated as county roads, each with a road overseer.

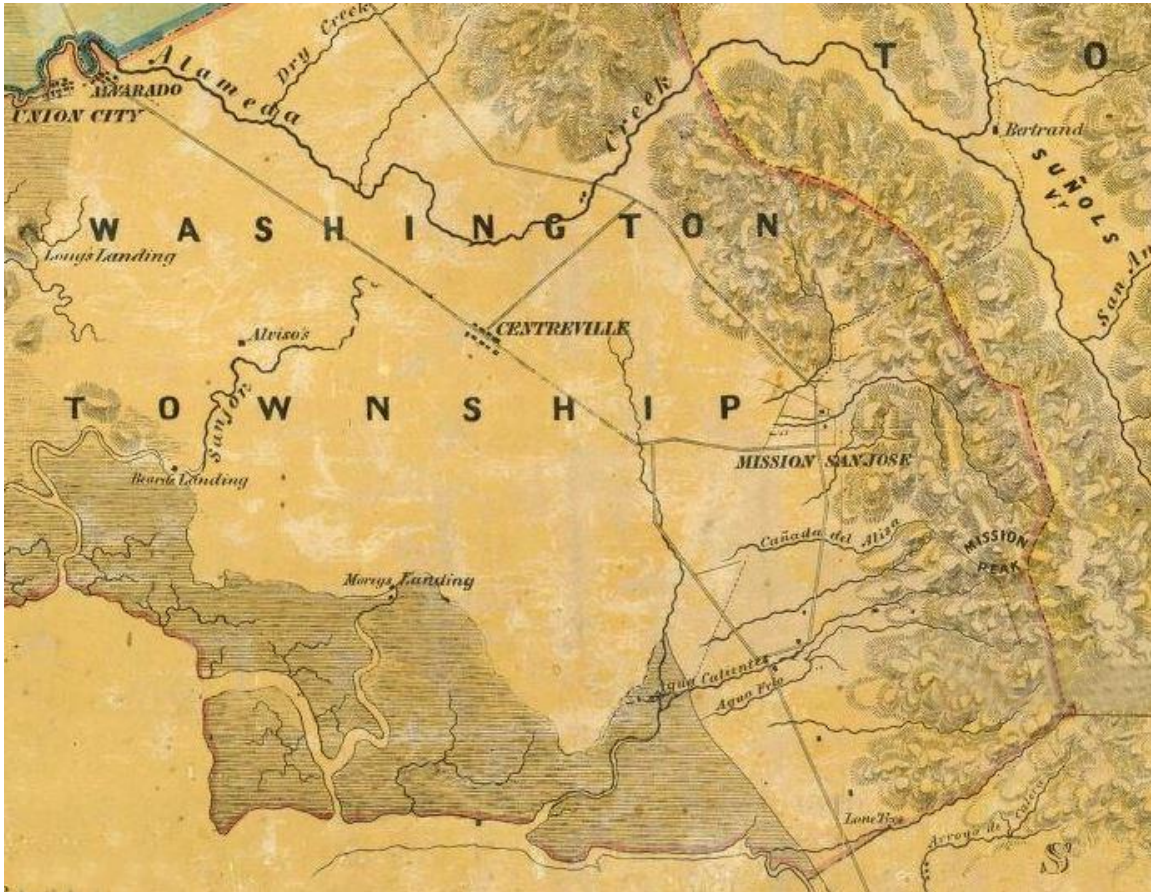
The main road in Washington Township was the one Horner used between Union City and the Mission San Jose. The road overseer for this road was Charles C. Breyfogle.

The 1857 township map shown on the following page shows the existence of this road, and it also showed that there was in existence a road east from Centreville connecting to a road that ran north from Mission San Jose to Oakland. This road would later be called the “Centreville-Niles Road,” but at the time the map of 1857 was drawn the town of Niles had not yet come into existence. This road connected Centreville with the upper road, today’s Mission Boulevard. In 1857 the Mission to Oakland Road was known as the upper road because it skirted the foothills. The Centreville Niles Road would later become known as Fremont Avenue, but this changed when the City of Fremont was incorporated and old Hiway 17 took the name Fremont Boulevard within the city of Fremont. Fremont Avenue was then rechristened Peralta Boulevard.

The road from Union City to Irvington was known as the lower road, because it skirted the lowlands near the marshes. The road that connected Centreville east to the Upper Road is today’s Peralta Boulevard. Later historians would refer to this road as the “Niles” Road, though Niles did not exist before 1870.

Another road in Centreville that gained prominence after the coming of the pioneers was called the “Newark” road by later historians and residents, although the town of Newark did not come into existence until the 1870’s. The first of homes about this

road were those by George Bond and Stacy Horner. But as the pioneers came the road would be pushed ever westward where the town of Newark would be eventually founded.



The 1857 map of Washington Township is shown above.

Robert Blacow spurred a movement to the southern part of Centreville with his 357 acre ranch, which straddled the Centreville to Irvington Road. The Blacow property included what would be today's Washington High School and gave Mr. Blacow a long stretch of frontage of what would be today's Mowry Ave. The stretch of this road west of the Centreville Irvington Highway was known as Mowry Road, but the stretch of the road east of the Centreville Irvington Highway was known as Santos Road. But that was changed to Mowry Avenue about the time Fremont incorporated. The eastern stretch of Mowry Avenue ends when it merges with Peralta heading towards Niles.

There were more interior roads within the town of Centreville that completed the early road system for the town. The road that stretched west from the Catholic Church was Central Avenue and the other that ran north to south between the "Newark Road" (today's Thornton Avenue) and ended approximately where Stevenson Blvd. would be today, was Blacow Road.

Other streets would be filled in as time went by, but these were the streets that led to the success of Centreville, and largely due to its rich soil built up over the centuries of floods that brought the top soil from the Alameda Creek Watershed rushing through the canyon onto the farmland of Washington Township.

*** THE GREAT FLOOD OF 1862 ***

In 1861, farmers and ranchers were praying for rain after two exceptionally dry decades. In December their prayers were answered with a vengeance, as a series of monstrous Pacific storms slammed—one after another—into the West coast of North America, from Mexico to Canada. The storms produced the most violent flooding residents had ever seen, before or since.

Sixty-six inches of rain fell in Los Angeles that year, more than four times the normal annual amount, causing rivers to surge over their banks, spreading muddy water for miles across the arid landscape. Large brown lakes formed on the normally dry plains between Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean, even covering vast areas of the Mojave Desert. In and around Anaheim, flooding of the Santa Ana River created an inland sea four feet deep stretching up to four miles from the river and lasting four weeks.

From the Columbia River north of Portland to southern California as far south as Mexico vast lakes appeared from inundation. It went as far inland as Nevada, Utah, Idaho, New Mexico and Arizona.



Sacramento, the State capitol was accessible by boats only.

Washington Township was not immune from the deluge from the sky. On January 16, 1862 a reporter from *The Daily Alta California* from San Francisco braved his way into Alameda County and set up his station to record the ongoing events at Vallejo Mills (Niles). His reports of what transpired:

“Nearly everyone in this county have sustained loss by the flood, some having their whole store of worldly goods swept away, and are, in fact, objects of charity themselves. The express messenger started off from Hayward’s on the morning of January 7th on horseback, intending to cross the creek at this spot

(Niles) the following day, if possible, but alas for human calculation, he found himself hemmed in by the flood, his resting place resolved into an island, and here he has remained, water bound since.

During the night and morning of the 9th and 10th, all our residents were in danger of being swept away, and, in fact, had the current swollen been a foot higher than it did, we would have all floated away. We have fortunately been spared that infliction, but a large amount of damage has been sustained. A house and machine shop within 200 yards of where I put up was carried off about 4 a.m. on the 10th. It was by David A. Phelps, an old man, his son and his son's wife, and a child 15 months old. They barely saved their lives, as we could give them no help for 13 hours. They saved themselves by keeping out of the current in eddies and little knolls. After suffering that long we managed by ropes, etc., to pass them victuals and dry clothing, but could do nothing more for them till 8 o'clock on Saturday morning, after being 28 hours in that condition. They lost everything.

Four men on horseback made an effort yesterday (15th) to get over. We went down opposite Centreville to effect a passage, but failed on account of the quicksand. Bamber's express arrived on the 13th with six day's paper, the messengers being on foot. At the mills (Vallejo's Mill) the water was eighteen inches higher than ever known. The walls were inundated and fell into the stream. The damage to the mill property was estimated from eight to ten thousand dollars."

And what of Alvarado were floods were common place? In a word, it was worse. The town of Alvarado was inundated. On January 13th it was reported there were few spots in town that were not covered with water to the depth of six feet. The residents took to firing minute guns (essentially guns fired every minute) there for relief. It is impossible to get to them from this way to render any assistance.

On January 14th Mr. Charles A. Crane informed *The Daily Alta California* that after the news reached San Francisco on Sunday night of the flood at Alvarado he endeavored to charter a steamer to go immediately to their relief, but failed. This morning he chartered the *Pride of the Bay*, which he dispatched to the relief of the town. Since her departure the schooner *Anna Whitton* arrived from Mr. Crane's (his brother's) warehouse at Alvarado and reports that the water had not risen high enough to enter the warehouse or dwelling, but the salt marsh had been flooded with from five to six feet of water.

The news of the flood was a long lived topic throughout the U.S. Here is an article from *The Defiance Democrat* of Defiance Ohio, dated March 29, 1862:

"Nothing like the recent flood in California has ever been witnessed on this continent, within the knowledge of its civilized inhabitants. The San Francisco Herald says it has inflicted a blow upon the state from which it will not recover for half a century.

Thousands of the citizens have been utterly bankrupted, and in round numbers may be as high as \$50,000,000. A great many deaths by drowning are reported, and probably many hundreds have met a watery grave. The town of Alvarado was six feet under water at one time, and the inhabitants fired minute guns to call attention to their distress, but it was impossible to offer them any assistance."

*** MASONIC LODGE ESTABLISHED ***

The Centreville Masonic Lodge (Alameda Lodge, No. 167, F. & A.M.) was organized on September 9, 1863 with its charter being granted to the following members on October 13, 1864:

James Beazell Perry Morrison Samuel I. Marston T. Scott
H. G. Ellsworth G. M. Kutz A. J. McDavid.

The following were the first officers:

James Beazell, W. M. Perry Morrison, S. W. S. I. Marston, J. W.
Thomas Scott, Treas. H. G. Ellsworth, Sec. G. M. Kutz, S. D.
A. J. McDavid, J. D.

The lodge's building, which is two stories high occupies a space of sixty by forty feet, being divided into an entertainment hall on the ground floor, and a fine lodge-room upstairs. They met on the first Saturday on or before full moon, of each month.

*** CIVIL WAR ***

Although the feeling in Washington Township was strong for the Union during the Civil War, there were those whose sympathies were with the south. In Centreville this lead to interesting confrontations at times.

The ladies of the Country Club cite an instance of North-South confrontation in the paragraph below:

“The Fourth of July 1864 an amusing incident took place in Centreville, although attended by a good deal of excitement; James Lewis, of the United States Hotel, who was a rebel sympathizer, hoisted on his flag-pole a Confederate flag; he was waited upon by a committee of Union men and given the alternative of hauling down the flag or having the pole cut. The flag came down.”

And the ladies cite another example with this paragraph:

“A convention of unionists was held at Sacramento June 13th, 1863 where Howard Overacker represented Washington Township. In 1863 the feeling for the Union in the in Washington Township was strong. This caused an amusing incident in Centreville, although attended by a good deal of excitement. At one time someone raised the flag on the pole with the stars down. The story runs that "Old Man Harlan" saw it as he came in town and the insult fired his blood; he went into the store nearby, took an ax, came out and ordered the offenders to "right that flag in five minutes time." The order was speedily obeyed.”

*** VIGILANCE COMMITTEE ***

There had always been desperadoes, firebugs, and thieves in Washington Township since almost the time of its inception. But it continued unabated, and in the early 1860's citizens were losing patience with the slow pace of justice. As far back as 1855 people in Alvarado had taken justice into their own hands. In November 1855 two luckless individuals were dragged from the hotel room that had been their jail cell, then bound and placed in a buckboard, and taken to a tree on the Augustine Alviso Ranch and there they were hung. They were then cut down and buried where they had been hung.

In November 1863 another execution occurred near Alvarado. This time a band of Mexican desperadoes that roamed the hills, came into the town of Alvarado and were fired upon by members of the gang who immediately fled. The citizens gave pursuit, and captured one of them. He was taken to the Brooklyn House, and placed under guard. That night he was taken out by the vigilantes and hanged. An inquest was held upon his body by Justice Bond of Centreville. Justice Bond's graphic verdict was produced and the following being its text: "Found hung by the neck to the rail of Alvarado bridge, by person or persons unknown to this jury." It was claimed by old residents of Alvarado that this lynching was performed by residents of Alvarado, and not by the vigilantes.

The citizens of Murray and Washington Townships became tired of the bands of horse and cattle thieves, stock poisoners, and firebugs who were so incessant and daring that the citizens were determined to put a stop to their marauding's. To this end a meeting was held at Centreville on April 1, 1865, where they resolved to form themselves into a Vigilance Committee, Thomas Scott being chosen President, Dr. J. M. Selfridge, Secretary, and William Tyson, Treasurer, in addition to whom an executive committee of twelve members was appointed. The immediate effect of this move was to make the rogues be more on their cautious in their evil doing. A reward of five hundred dollars for the conviction of the person or persons who a short time previously poisoned a wheat-field belonging to Mr. Ellsworth, was at this time offered by the committee.

*** EPISCOPAL CHURCH ESTABLISHED ***

The Episcopal Church was erected in 1867, and consecrated September 28th of the same year by Bishop Kip, the Rev. D. J. Lee being the minister in charge. Soon after came the Rev. E. Warren, who boarded around among the faithful and was the first resident clergyman. The first baptism in the church was James Allen Marston, son of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Marston. A rectory was added to the church property in 1884.

* **1868 EATHQUAKE** *

On October 21, 1868 a great earthquake damaged the brick walls of the Centreville church so severely that it was closed for a year, with the congregation having to conduct services in the Centreville Methodist Church. C.J. Stevens, the merchant, narrowly escaped death in his general store when the second floor collapsed spilling twenty tons of grain onto the lower floor. The sacks of wheat came tumbling down into the merchandise of the store shelves on the first floor. Meanwhile the old adobe church at the Mission San Jose was knocked down and the store of Jacob Salz was badly shaken with some of his merchandise being badly damaged. Milton's hotel slid from its under-pinning's. All over the valley, chimneys fell or were twisted completely around. Those on Howard Overacker's house went through the roof. The back part of Dr. Selfridge's house, which was built of concrete, was thrown down. The earth continued to quake with more or less force for several days.

* **NOTEWORTHY EVENTS** *

1860:

Centreville Postmasters:

George W. Bond	Oct. 18, 1858 to Nov. 12, 1861
Calvin J. Stevens	Nov. 12, 1861 to 1869
Henry C. Gregory	1869 to Jan. 15, 1877

1860:

Centreville Presbyterian Church:

In 1860 the Centreville Presbyterian Church had fifty members. At this time the church at Alvarado was organized, chiefly from members of the Centreville church. The Centreville Presbyterian Church previously had been the overseer of the Pres. Church in Mt. Eden. The Pastor gradually transferred his labors from Eden to Alvarado. Mr. and Mrs. Cornell were efficient helpers. The Presbyterian Church in Alvarado was chiefly erected by their influence. The Eden church was scattered by the change of population, and the church building later became a school house, and finally sold without authority of the church. In the fall of 1860 Mr. Brier resigned his pastoral charge to enter upon the work of "church extension" on the Pacific Coast. At this time Rev. B. N. Seymour was invited to become the Pastor of the Centreville and Alvarado churches, the Alvarado church having always been united under the same minister. Mr. Seymour continued until the fall of 1865.

January 1861:

Telegraph:

In January 1861 the California State Telegraph Company purchased all of the lines in the State and then consolidated with the Overland Telegraph Company, connecting at Salt Lake City with the Western Union Company. The Operator at Centreville was Gabriel M. Kutz (Gabriel Kutz was the partner of Jacob Salz in Centreville).

Mrs. Mary C. Kelsey:

Mrs. Mary C. Kelsey passed away in Centreville on January 26, 1867. She was the wife of Charles Kelsey and was in her 64th year.

1868:

Centreville Town Hall:

In 1868 the citizens of Centreville erected a Town Hall funded by public subscription. However, after a period of time this public building passed into private hands, which took a concerted effort by the ladies of the town to buy back the hall.

October 13, 1868:

Moses - Reeder:

Fred Moses and Mollie E. Reeder were married in Centreville on October 13, 1868, by the Rev. W.F.B. Lynch. Mollie Reeder had previously been a school teacher in the Centreville area.