

Bailey Flat



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Madera County

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a story of
Bailey Flat School District.

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Respectfully dedicated to
all who so kindly and
patiently helped me
gather these facts.

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Chapter II.

Location.

Bailey Flat is a mountainous section of Madera County eighteen miles north of Raymond. It may be reached by a road winding along the wall of the canyon made by the North fork of the Chochilla River.



Chapter III.

Description

It is a picturesque place with tall pines and many oaks, with here and there a cedar. Cotton woods along the creeks keep the air white with cotton in the spring time, abundant and beautiful wild flowers decorate the hills in spring and early summer. Such shrubs as manzanita, red bud, lupine and wild lilac flaunt gay colors. Wild life abounds in the form of foxes, coons and coyotes. Many kinds of wild birds make the woods glad with song. But look out for poison ivy and rattlesnakes.

Chapter IV.
Occupations.



The principal occupation is cattle raising. The land mountainous and rocky, being more adapted to that than to other occupations. The average yield from this industry being about \$10,000 yearly.

There is some mining for gold along the creeks. In the long still summer days you can hear the put-putting of tiny gas engines pumping sand into sluice boxes. Neither is the gold pan neglected. The yield from this occupation would be hard to judge. The miners either tell you an impossible story or they refuse to tell at all. Either fearing competition or, the returns being so small, they don't wish to tell.

Map. 1

Chapter IV.
Bailey Flat School.



A Modern school building,
the pride of the community.



Bailey Flat School in 1936.

Chapter II.

Mail Service.

The mail comes to Bailey Flat three times a week in good weather. Each family has a box of indifferent description nailed to a tree or post. The postman leaves one mail sack in the box at each call and takes the out-going mail in another sack which the box-holder has previously placed in the box.

In wet weather the mail service is very uncertain. For many weeks during the rainy season the mail is brought on pack horses.



Chapter VII.

History - The Rodeo.

In the early days before it became customary for each cattle man to fence his pastures, the Flats were used as a gathering place for all cattle of the community. The last rodeo was held about twenty years ago. Rodeos were serious events in those days. Animals fought without being goaded into a frenzy, and men rode for a more serious purpose than to amuse a crowd. The men came with their pack horses prepared to make camp and stay until the work was finished.



A Serious Rodeo.



a Bull fight.

Chapter VIII.

How Bailey Flat got its name.



In 1855 the Flats were homesteaded by a man named Bailey. He made his living by dairying and sold his milk and cream to the miners at the Gambetta and Josephine mines, in the days when Grub Gulch was yielding a golden harvest. Rather a task that, since the way was two and one-half miles of unbroken trail up a steep hill. Donkeys like these carried the milk and cream on their backs.

Chapter IV.

Other Old Timers. "Apple Seed John."

This neighbor Lood also had its "Apple Seed John" but instead of apples he planted Walnuts. No one seems to remember who this community minded gentleman was, but certain it is that the walnuts are there along the creeks producing a generous crop each year for any or all who wish to gather them.



Mr. Larson's store, Post office, Saloon and dance-hall.

Another old timer worthy of note was Mr. Larson who homesteaded the land now known as the Eaton Ranch. He served his neighbors with a post office, store, saloon and dance-hall.

His enthusiasm is given the credit for getting the first roads built into the Flats.

Chapter X.

Hang Man's Tree.

An oak, still standing locally known as Hang Man's tree, a large "H" cut into the side of the tree is used as proof of the story. In very early days routes here. a Mexican soldier met his fate



Chapter XI.

Early mode of transportation.



Early Transportation

Chapter III.

Development.

The community has not developed as have other mountain communities of Madera County. Four or five months each year the rivers are unsafe to cross. Since there are no bridges the people are cut off from any market. This condition keeps out families who would settle in the community because of the fear of being cut off from a doctor in case of sickness or accident, and the extreme difficulty of keeping enough to eat for family and live stock. The three branches of the river meet in the middle of the flat. In winter there is much snow and abundant rainfall but the summers are dry and hot. The river then becomes a splendid friend, affording many lovely and cool places for swimming and picnicking.



