

Bethel





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Madera County Schools



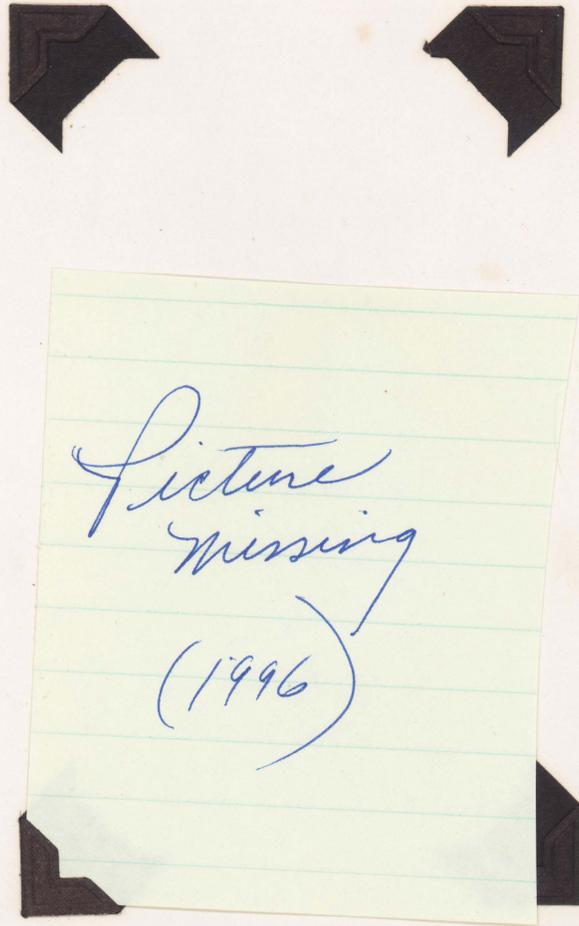
✓ Dec. 1

To Mrs. Marson

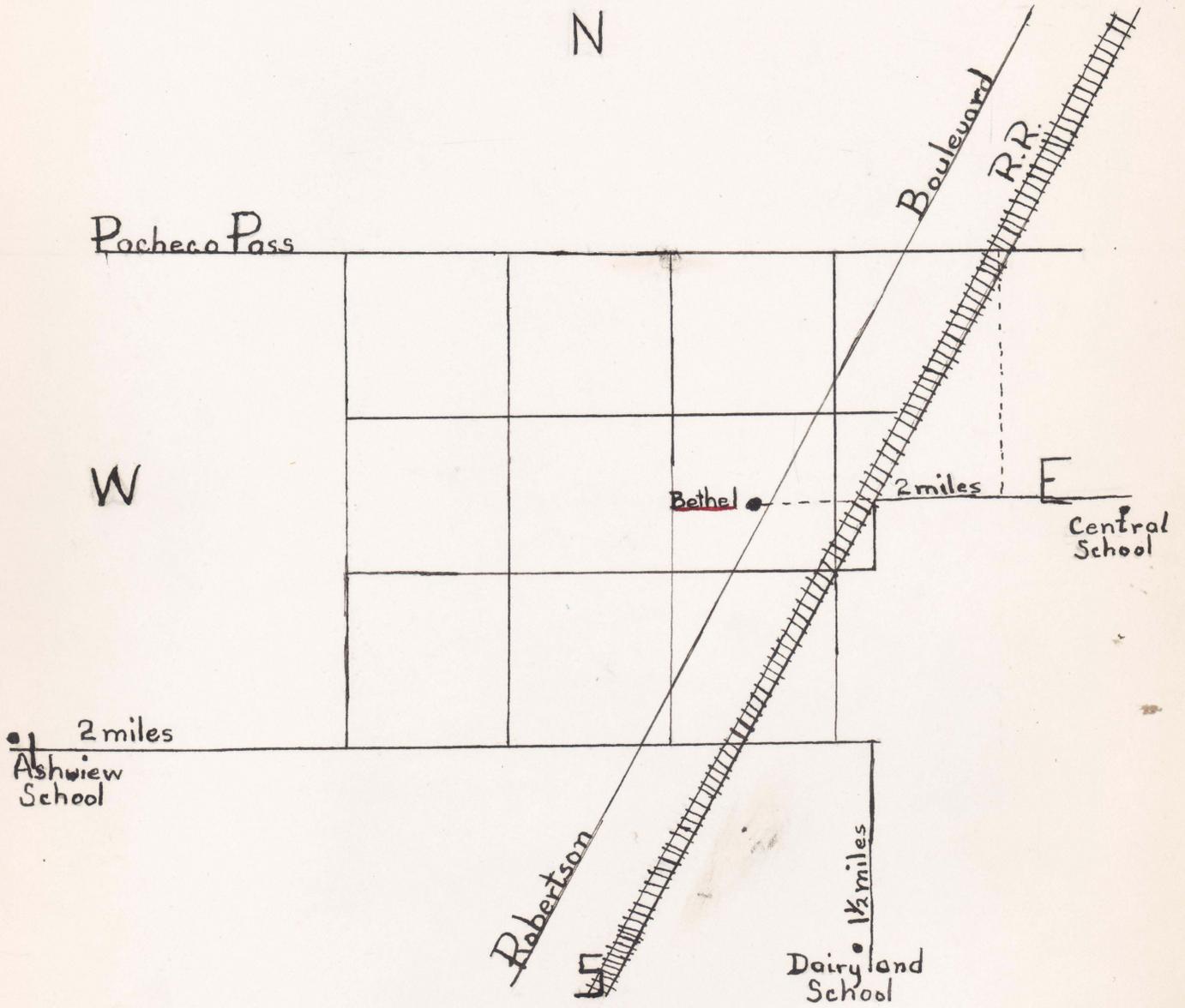


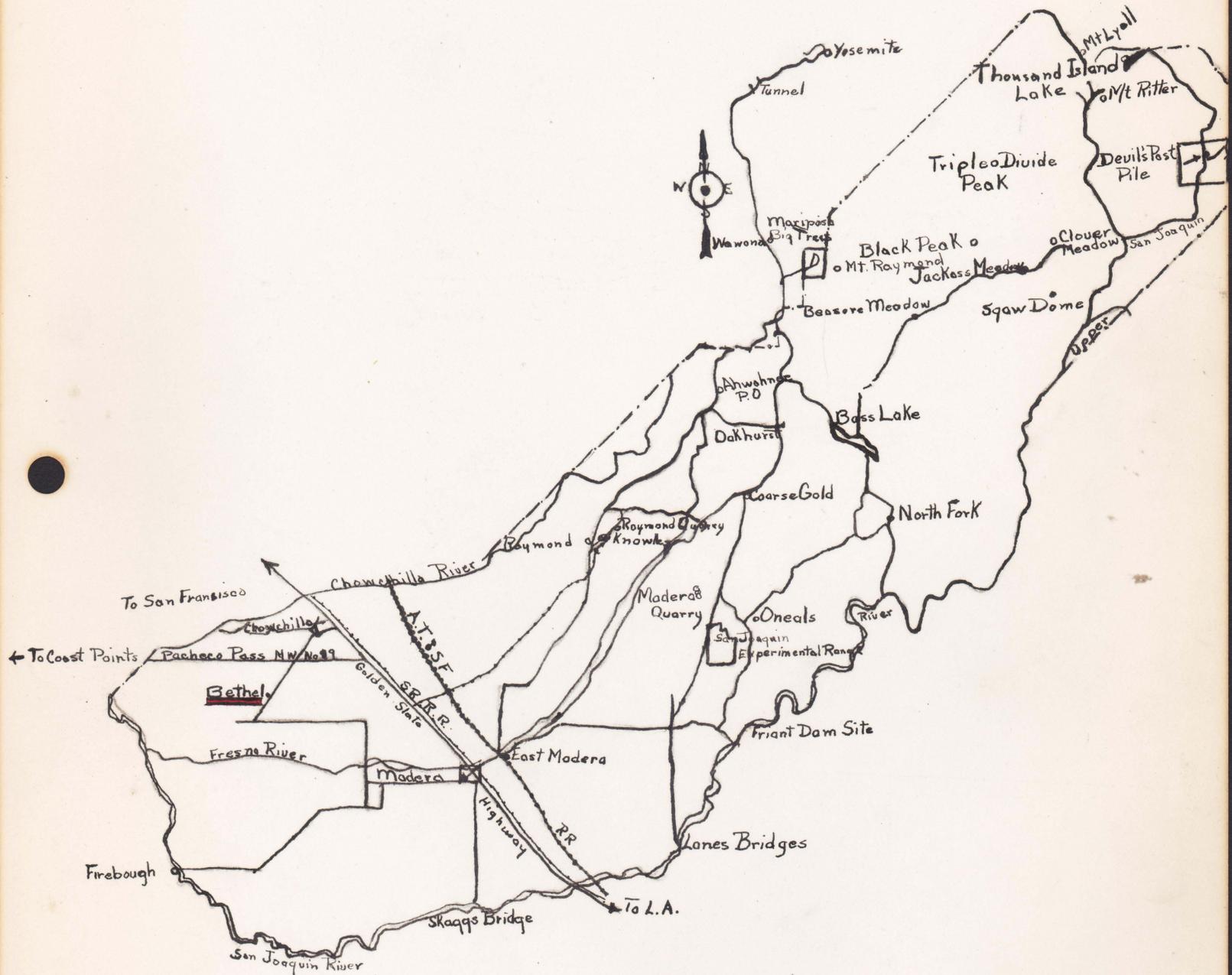
who, with her Family,
was the first to
settle in Bethel.

No Mrs. Marson



who, with her Family,
was the first to
settle in Bethel.





History

BETHEL DISTRICT

The district and our school were named for the Bethel Church which was established in the community in 1920. The history however dates farther back than this. The land was originally owned by Miller and Lux. Mr. Robertson bought the land and in turn sold it to various agencies. It is from these agencies the people bought their farms.

The first settlers were Mr. and Mrs. Larson who came to this district in 1914. Closely following came the Bancroft and Milleson families. Being the first in the district they obtained the best land with the least alkali. Mrs. Larson tells how in 1914 the agencies brought out prospective buyers to view their progress. These agencies offered people from the mid-west a free trip to Chowchilla. However, they had to put a \$100 deposit on some property. This land was guaranteed and if the buyer did not like his land they would change it or go back. This offer brought many people to the district and, from being practically worthless, the property doubled and redoubled in price. In other words, for a time there was quite a land boom.

Many Adventists from Escondeda moved in and in the same year, 1914, they started their own school. For a few months they carried on school in a home and old boxes, benches and anything handy were used as furniture. However, they soon had their school built. Some non-Adventists, also, sent their children to this school, others sent their children to Chowchilla. For awhile a train was used to transport the children.

This railroad was built out to a large ranch in Dairyland and was used to ship cattle. Later a truck and private cars were used.

The next most important date in Bethel history, the first being 1914, is 1920. Three things mark this year as outstanding-- the Bethel Church and the school were built, and thirdly the district was formed.

First, the Bethel Church was built. At first the church was a community church and any sect was permitted to hold their services there; but it was finally taken over by the Methodists permanently until last year, 1937 when the Methodists built a new Bethel Church in Chowchilla and the building was taken over by our school and is now divided into an auditorium and primary room.

Second, our school was built in this year. In June, 1920 Muriel B. Needham conducted a 20 day summer school to determine the enrollment. The school was built by Alen Rector and Wm. Trine. The first elected trustee was Mr. Lopar. The other two trustees appointed by the County Superintendent were Mr. R. Woodward and Mr. O. Milleson. Mr. Milleson remained a trustee until 1937---seventeen years.

Bethel for the first year was a one teacher school. The one and first teacher was Blanche E. Moore. Eight graduates composed the first graduating class. The exercises were held with the Chowchilla Grammar School at the High School. The second year there were two teachers Mr. F. Silsbee and Mrs. Grace Rector. In 1937 with the increase in cotton planting

Map. 1

making a greater demand for labor, a third teacher was hired for 1937-38 and Bethel is now a three teacher school. It has also expanded in size having taken over the Bethel Church for its primary room and auditorium by the following resolution:

Resolution and Order of Board of Trustees of Bethel
Elementary School District, Madera Co., State of
California. Dated-April 12-1937

The following resolution was passed at the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Bethel School District.

Resolved, that it is, in the judgment of this Board advisable that an election be called for May 11, 1937, for the purpose of submitting to the electors of Bethel Elementary School District the question whether bonds of said district shall be raised and sold for the purpose of buying the grounds and the Methodist Church building for school purposes and for remodeling and the equipment necessary for School purposes.

Said bonds shall be for the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2000.00) in denominations of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) bearing interest at the rate of four percent per annum, payable semi-annually. Said bonds shall run for a period not to exceed four years. Said election shall be held at the Bethel School house, the polls to be opened between the hours of 1 P. M. and 6 P. M. with Mrs. Emma Feichtmeir-Inspector, and Mrs. Ida Akens and Mrs. Minnie Kemper as Judges of the election.

The above resolution was adopted by a unanimous vote of the three trustees. The board ordered the election notices to be posted-1 Snyder's Store. 2-Bethel School house. 3-Corner Robertson Bldg. and Tyler road. and that publication of such notice of election shall be made in the Chowchilla News for once a week for three successive weeks beginning April 22, 1937.

(Signed) O. R. Milleson
Clerk of Bethel School Dist.

April 22-29-May 6.

Third, in 1914 Bethel was formed into a district and the name suggested by Mrs. Lopar was chosen-named for the church Bethel--a Hebrew word meaning the House of God.

Industry

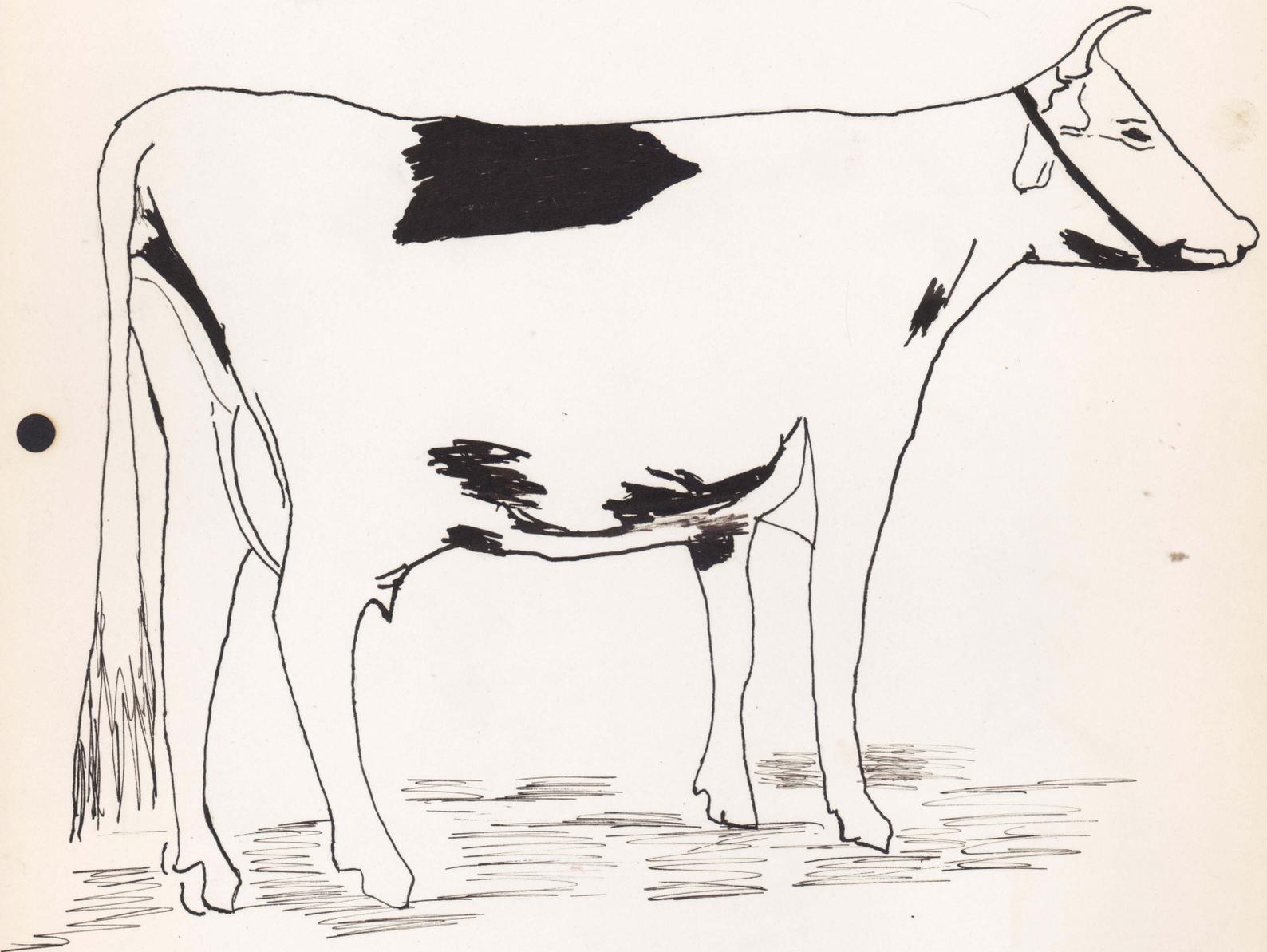


Cotton



G r a i n

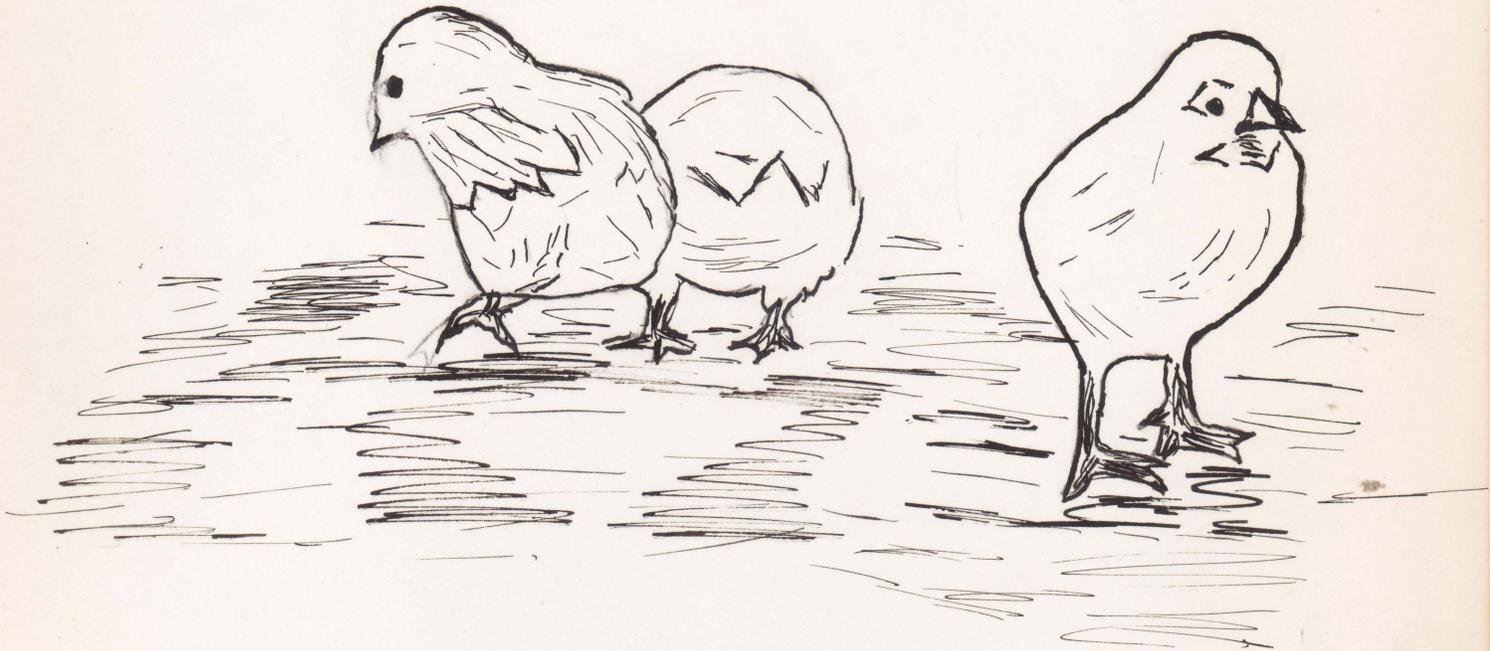
Dairy Cattle



Grapes



Poultry





Fruit

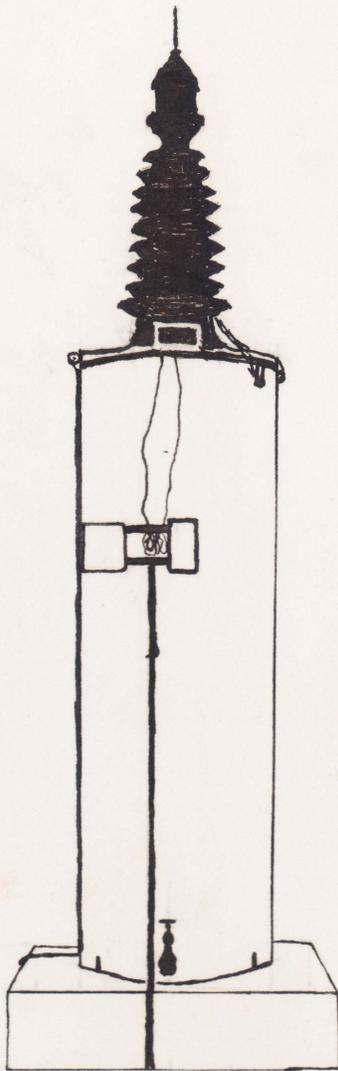
THE DAIRYLAND SUBSTATION

The Dairyland substation was built in 1918 and has been increased in capacity several times until at present it is being increased to 15,000 K. V. A. with the latest type of equipment such as nitrogen gas filled transformers, Solinoid and motor operated switches, Voltage regulating transformer, Synchronizing potential transformer and Deion fuses. It is remote control and has Elco Counter reclosing relays.

It can receive power at 110,000 volts from either Le Grand or Mendota substations which are junction stations and receive power from several different sources.

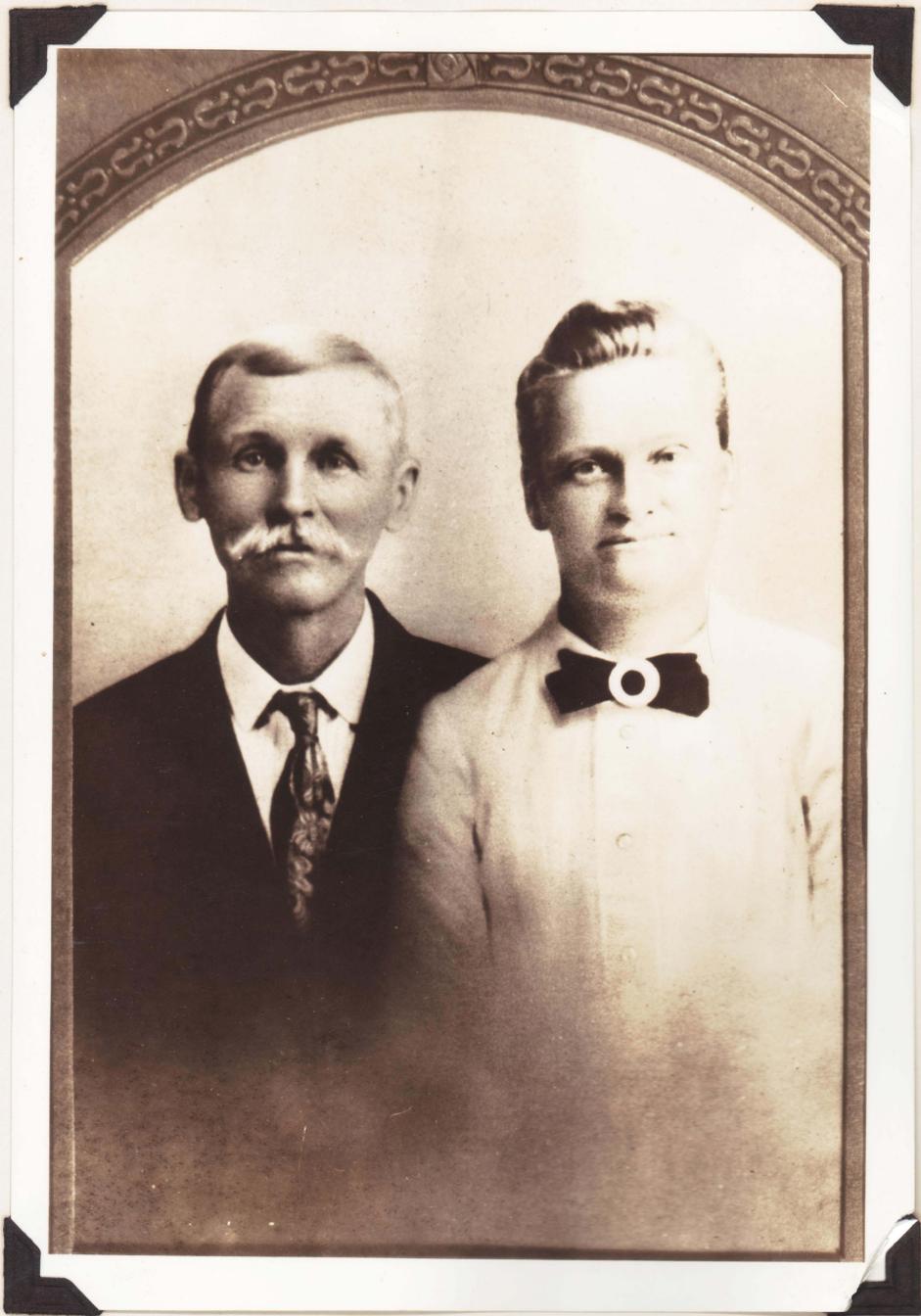
The voltage is stepped down at Dairyland Substation from 110,000 volts to 11,000 volts to supply power for the Chowchilla, Ashview, Alamo, Bethel, Central Colony, Fairmead, Dairyland, Berenda and Dixieland districts.

Substation



Synchronizing Tower

The First School Adventist



Mr. and Mrs. Larson



A truck that took
Bethel children to
Chowchilla before our
school was built.

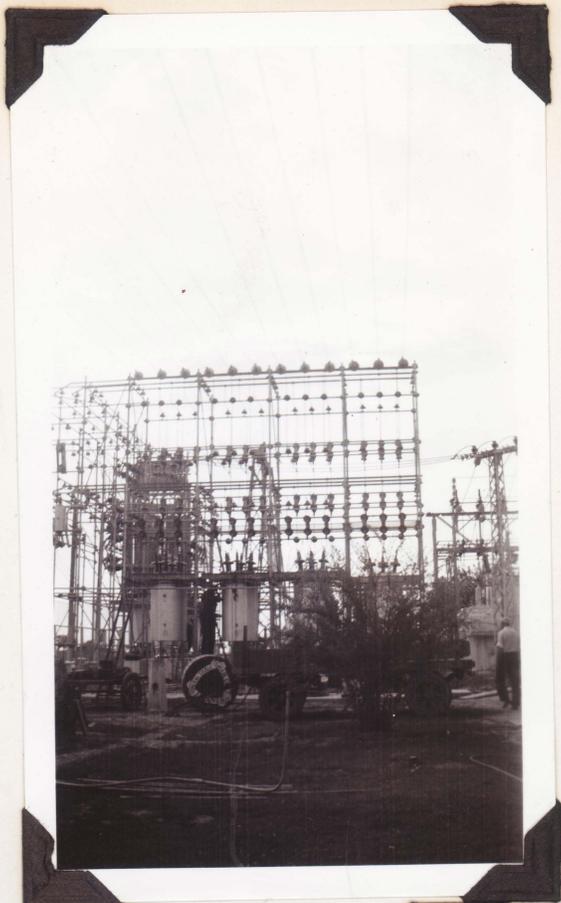


The First class



Substation







One of the first houses



Clubhouse

