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NEW HOPE: A MORMON COLONY IN
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

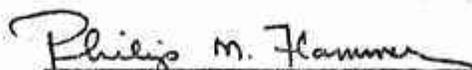
A Thesis
Presented to the
Department of History
Brigham Young University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

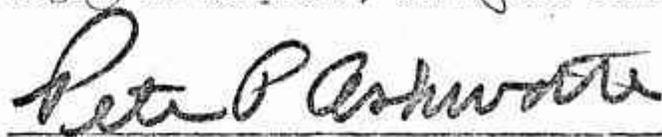
by
Clint McCready
April 1976

This thesis, by Clint McCready is accepted
in its present form by the Department of History of
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requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

Few people are aware of the fact that in 1846 the Mormons had a small agricultural colony in central California. Even fewer individuals realize that this small agricultural settlement known as New Hope, The Mormon Ranch, or Stanislaus City could very possibly have become the center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The intention of this paper thus becomes an attempt to place New Hope in its proper niche in Mormon and California history.

Heretofore it has been difficult to find out about New Hope because the accounts are mostly fragmentary and often contradictory. This means that the interested person would have to find several different books and then read their various short accounts, concerning New Hope, to get a somewhat clear picture of what it was. In-as-much as no previous work focuses solely on New Hope it has also become the purpose of this paper to bring together all of these accounts into one volume. Along with this compilation of material

it was necessary to weed out several inaccuracies and then add enlightening facts from new sources.

New Hope, in and of itself, was probably not much different than numerous other small agricultural settlements of its time. It is true that it was religiously oriented; group prayers were held in the morning and evening and leaders were appointed instead of elected, but then many other colonies had also been established upon religious principles. What makes this Mormon Colony unique was that it was founded on the expectation that thousands of people would soon join them and that it would become the center of the Mormon Church.

As already indicated, little attention in the past has been given to this small settlement. New Hope has probably been ignored for a multitude of reasons: it was abandoned after just one year, it made no great contribution to California, its demise had no lasting effects, and it was overshadowed by the exciting events of the Mexican War, the establishing of a state government, and the gold rush of 1849.

Literature

In reviewing the literature about New Hope one finds that there are two good, yet incomplete, works on the subject. These works are "A history of the Mormon Settlement of Central California 1846-1857" by

Kenneth Baldrige and "A History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in California 1846-1946" by Eugene Campbell. The focus of each of these books is on a larger area than just New Hope and therefore they treat New Hope as a secondary or lesser topic. They both offer an excellent synopsis of the small colony even though they do not emphasize its dormant potentials.

The next best works to consult for information about New Hope are found in several different books. Leo Muir, in 1952, wrote an excellent two volume work entitled A Century of Mormon Activities in California. Yet by writing about a whole century of Mormon activities he only wrote a little more than two paragraphs about New Hope. California Mormons by Sail and Trail, by Annaleone Patton, deals with the early Mormon migrations to California and contains more information about New Hope than does Muir's book; nevertheless, it is a very condensed history of the little colony and she only dedicates about five pages to it. Paul Bailey's, Sam Brannan and the California Mormons gives a well documented resume of New Hope and contains very few errors. Of course the main thrust of the book is about Sam Brannan and his numerous activities, his being the father of New Hope was only of minor importance to Bailey.

Four other writings contain brief summaries about New Hope. George Tinkham and Colonel F. T.

Gilbert each wrote separate, but comparable volumes entitled History of San Joaquin County. Each volume was meticulously researched, but only contains a compact, one page, history of New Hope. Hubert Bancroft in his History of California gives a very condensed summary of Stanislaus City from the California viewpoint, while B. H. Roberts in his History of the Church gives a brief account with a Mormon slant.

Some good interpretive information has been supplied in four historical fiction books. Paul Bailey's The Gay Saint, Reva Scott's Samuel Brannan and The Golden Fleece, Louis Stellman's Sam Brannan, Builder of San Francisco, and Bob Young's Empire Builder, Sam Brannan all were based on fact and provided some speculative enlightenment. Yet like many other works, on the subject of New Hope, they are sporadic and at best fragmentary.

Of course, the greatest amount of information about New Hope can be found in the primary sources. The best account of what went on at the Mormon Ranch is found in a newspaper account written for the San Jose Pioneer in 1877. Judge R. F. Peckham, who was at New Hope for months, wrote four long articles about his adventures there. This account was written thirty years after his stay there, but it appears to be accurate and agrees with other contemporary records. Addison Pratt,

who spent about six weeks at New Hope, kept a diary which gives a good account of the land and what he did there. Jane Tompkins, a young girl at New Hope, also recorded her recollections of what went on at the settlement. She recorded her story years after the event, which is now found in "Manuscript History of The California Mission". Her account is quite inaccurate, but supplies some very important information. Another contemporary observer, who probably only visited New Hope, was William Glover. Years later he wrote a paper about the history of his life and the Mormons in Central California. As many of the other accounts, it is composed of recollections.

Naturally, the best primary sources concerning the politics of settling New Hope were the letters of Sam Brannan and Brigham Young. These letters were written during the birth and death of the little colony, and not only contain information about the physical growth of New Hope but they also express the feelings of these two leaders. Contemporary newspaper articles about the settlement give another added insight into the working of the colony.

The secondary sources mentioned before are lacking in completeness because while they will use one or more of the available primary sources, they fail to use all of them. Thus, a unique contribution of this paper

is that it uses all of the available sources, including some new ones, and focuses solely on New Hope.

Contributions

Some new insights and interpretations have also been added to the old ones. Other authors have written that New Hope was founded in expectation of Brigham Young and his followers, and to ease some of the criticism Brannan was receiving at the time. Yet, what many authors fail to point out is that New Hope would provide jobs, alleviate the food shortage in San Francisco, and could become economically profitable. Another important fact which has been ignored is that after Brigham Young told Sam Brannan that he was going to the Great Basin and not California, he promised Brannan that he could take the Mormon Battalion to California. What has not been brought out in other works is that Sam Brannan felt that Brigham Young had deceived him.

Many unknown facts, some admittedly trivial, have been added which are mentioned in the body of this paper. Two important new additions to the subject are that the potential of New Hope is discussed, and that its abandonment was also brought about by the dissolution of Sam Brannan and Company.

Organization

This thesis is organized into nine separate chapters. The "Introductory Chapter", of which this is a

part, contains such things as a statement of the problem and the justification of its importance, including its delineations. It briefly discusses the literature about the subject and then looks at the papers contribution to the topic. The first chapter ends by giving a summary of the organization of the thesis.

In order to understand how New Hope originated, the second chapter, "Sam Brannan and the Mormon Westward Movement", was written to give the reader necessary background information. This chapter is followed chronologically by the chapter, "Mormons in California". Here one follows the ship Brooklyn from New York to its landing in Yerba Buena (San Francisco) and then traces Brannan's preparations to establish New Hope. The next chapter, somewhat independent of the first two, deals with the "San Joaquin Valley". Its purpose is to examine the kind of environment the Mormons were moving into, to acquaint the reader with those who would soon be their neighbors, and to give a short history of the area.

"New Hope" is the title of the fifth chapter. The internal affairs of this small colony is the main thrust of this section. It deals with, in chronological order, the troubles, achievements, hopes, and failures that those involved experienced. The next sub-division of the thesis is "Samuel Brannan Meets Brigham Young". This covers Brannan's decision to go and meet Brigham Young, and the politics involved in Brannans trying to

get more members to follow him to California. This meeting doomed New Hope. The following section, "Visitors", looks at some short accounts of those who visited New Hope. This is a somewhat independent part because it would have disrupted the sequence of events if it had been placed in other chapters.

The eighth chapter, "Abandonment", looks at the reasons why the colony broke up and what happened to the land and all the supplies. The "Epilogue" discusses what the Mormons contributed to the area and the dedication of two monuments in remembrance of the Comet and New Hope.

Delineation

It is important to note that this study will not focus on general Mormon activities in California, nor on the life of Sam Brannan or other Church leaders, except in their relation to New Hope.

CHAPTER II

SAMUEL BRANNAN

AND

THE MORMON WESTWARD MOVEMENT

Samuel Brannan has been called a dreamer, an empire builder, a modern day Moses, and a promoter. He was a prominent citizen in California, wielding much power and influence. Unknown to many, he was also the father of a small agricultural settlement christened New Hope; a settlement which may have become the home of thousands. Yet regardless of its potentials, its growth was abortive.

At the age of sixty-four Thomas Brannan became the proud father of another son.¹ Samuel Brannan was born in Saco, Maine on March 2, 1819 and little did his father suspect that he was to become both a millionaire and famous in California history. Brannan left home at the age of fourteen, though it is not known why, and went with his sister and brother-in-law to live in Painesville, Ohio. Being the last of eight

¹Florence Dunlap, "Samuel Brannan", (Masters Thesis, University of California, 1928), p. 4.

children and leaving home at an early age may have helped to develop an aggressive personality in Brannan.

Painesville was near Kirtland, Ohio, which at the time, was the headquarters of the Mormon Church.² During his youth, when the religious appeal is often strongest, Brannan listened to the Mormon missionaries, and shortly thereafter, was baptized into the Latter-day Saint Church. In Ohio he studied the printing trade and also worked on the Mormon temple in Kirtland.³ The Panic of 1837 probably caused Brannan to leave Ohio.

. . . great excitement in land speculation . . . prevailed, in 1836-37, and he betook himself to the scene of the action: but the great crash came and like many other enterprising young men he too sustained a temporary loss.⁴

Brannan then traveled around and worked in various Eastern States. He published a newspaper in New Orleans and one in Indianapolis.⁵ About a year

²The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will hereafter be referred to as the Church, or the Mormon Church and the members will be referred to as the Saints, brethren, or Elders.

³Joseph Smith, History of the Church, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1902), 2:206-208.

⁴Hubert H. Bancroft, "Honorable Sam Brannan a Biographical Sketch", (Original in the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1882). Also all of the quotes in this thesis will be left in their original form.

⁵Dunlap, p. 5.

later he returned to Ohio and was called to serve a mission for his church.⁶

Brannan was next sent to New York to assist in publishing a Mormon newspaper called The Prophet and to preach the gospel. In New York he devoted all his energies to the "Society for the Diffusion of the Truth in the Church of the Latter-day Saints."⁷ He soon became a leader of the Church in the area, publisher of the paper, and he also wrote and printed tracts for missionary work.

Brannan traveled throughout the Northeast preaching in several branches. Due to his good conduct and zeal he was appointed President of the branch of the Church in New York City and presided over the congregation there.⁸

After the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Orson Pratt was sent to preside over the members in the eastern part of the United States. In April of

⁶W. Ray Luce, "Samuel Brannan, Speculator in Mexican Lands", (Masters Thesis, Brigham Young University, 1969), p. 8. Also in Sam Brannan and The California Mormons by Paul Bailey (Los Angeles: Western Lore Press, 1959) p. 36. After serving a few months in Ohio, Brannan had to return home because of malaria.

⁷Dunlap, p. 5.

⁸"Conference Report", The Prophet (New York), 2 November, 1844.

1845 Pratt accused Sam Brannan and William Smith, brother of Joseph, of,

. . . corrupting the Saints, introducing among them false doctrines and immoral practices by which many of them have stumbled and been seduced from virtue and truth . . . while many had been turned to various dissenting parties.⁹

A notice soon appeared in the Nauvoo Neighbor, a church newspaper in Illinois, announcing that Brannan had been disfellowshipped.¹⁰ He hurriedly traveled to the Church headquarters, which had been moved to Nauvoo, Illinois to clear up the matter, but before he arrived the order was rescinded and he was fully reinstated in his former membership and position.¹¹ He was also given the assignment of asking Governor Ford of Illinois to use his office to protect the Saints.

It was a difficult assignment, for ever since Joseph Smith founded the Mormon Church in 1830, he and his followers had been persecuted and driven out of one area after another. Possibly due to the past sufferings of his people, Smith may have begun to ponder the question of where his people could live in peace. After much thought, Joseph Smith prophesied on August 6, 1842

⁹Parley P. Pratt, Autobiography of Parley P. Pratt (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1964), pp. 374-75.

¹⁰Nauvoo Neighbor (Nauvoo, Illinois), 16 April 1845.

¹¹B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 6 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1930), 3:38.

that the Saints would move west to the Rocky Mountains to establish their "Zion".¹² Yet despite this prophecy, Elder Smith also considered other places beyond the Rockies. He and other leaders of the Church began studying and collecting all the information they could about the West.

As the Saints continued to suffer affliction in Nauvoo and other areas, Joseph Smith, in 1844, asked the church authorities to:

Investigate the locations of California and Oregon, and hunt out a good location, where we can remove to after the temple is completed, and where we can build a city in a day, and have a government of our own. Get up into the mountains where the devil cannot dig us out, and live in a healthful climate, where we can live as old as we have a mind to.¹³

Other areas which were also under consideration were Texas, Vancouver Island, Lower California, the headwaters of the Colorado River, and the Great Basin area.¹⁴ The leaders of the Church were studying maps and journals, scouting parties were planned, and there was much speculation and talk among the members as to where they would settle.

¹²Joseph Smith, 5:85. For a more detailed study of the Mormon westward movement, see Clark Christian's Masters Thesis, "A Study of Mormon Knowledge of the American Far West" Brigham Young University, 1972.

¹³Joseph Smith, 6:222.

¹⁴Christian, p. 110.

This speculation seemed to cause some confusion on the subject of where the Saints were going to settle. Did they really know at the time of the expulsion of the Mormons from Nauvoo? Did only a few of the leaders know? A key question in the establishment and abandonment of New Hope, and in the apostacy of some of the California brethren, is this: Did Sam Brannan know where the Church would finally locate?¹⁵

It is quite possible that Joseph Smith had a tentative plan of making Salt Lake the center of the Mormon Empire and then there would also be many other areas of settlement (stakes) set up throughout the West to strengthen the Church.¹⁶ Yet it appears that Brannan did not know of President Smith's plans. Also, the evidence suggests that Brigham Young, Joseph Smith's successor, was not completely sure of the course he would follow until after Sam Brannan had already sailed for California.

As a culmination of the troubles which plagued the Mormons from Palmyra to Nauvoo, it was officially decided, and then announced in the October 1845 General

¹⁵It is strong belief in "Mormon mythology" that, at least, both Joseph Smith and Brigham Young knew before Nauvoo was abandoned that the Saints would locate by the Great Salt Lake.

¹⁶Christian, p. 110.

Conference of the Church that the Saints would remove en masse to the west.¹⁷

As leader of the Church after the murder of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young issued a circular to all the Saints in the United States and England informing them of the planned exodus.¹⁸ It appears that Young wanted all of the church members scattered throughout the Eastern United States and the British Isles to settle in the Western United States.

In New York, Elder Brannan was busy attending to his duties with the newspaper and watching over his small flock. In November, 1845, Brannan received a letter from Parley P. Pratt with some very important information and instructions.

Our Apostles, assembled in meeting, have debated the best method of getting all our people into the far west with the least possible hardship. We have read Hasting's account of California and Fremont's Journal of Explorations in the west, and we have concluded that the Great Basin in the top of the Rocky Mountains, where lies the Great Salt Lake, is the proper place for us. I enclose to you a letter of instruction from the apostles, authorizing you to lead the group of Saints in its exodus from New York City and the Atlantic seaboard. Brother Brigham is, this day, sending a letter to my brother, Orson, directing him to call a conference

¹⁷Erastas Snow Journal, (Utah Historical Society Library: Salt Lake City), 3:23.

¹⁸Joseph Smith, 7:478-480.

of all Saints in your mission to lay before them the plan to emigrate by water from New York.¹⁹

As part of the general westward movement, Brannan was instructed by Brigham Young to lead a group of the Saints from the East. On November 8, 1845, the brethren in the East were informed that Brannan was officially appointed to "preside over, and take charge of the company that goes by sea; all who go with him will be required to give strict heed to his instructions and council."²⁰ He was told to outfit a ship and take it around the Horn to San Francisco.²¹ In November:

Brannan laid before the congregation his instruction from the authorities of the church directing him to go by water, and called upon all who wanted to accompany him to come forward at the close of the meeting and put down their names.²²

Both before and after Brannan's new assignment, there had been much talk of settling in California. President Young had written that "within one year many

¹⁹Leo J. Muir, A Century of Mormon Activities in California 2 vols. (Salt Lake City, Deseret News Press, 1952) 1:30.

²⁰Joseph Smith, 7:516.

²¹Brigham Young to Sam Brannan, 15 September 1845, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

²²Journal History of the Church, 12 November 1845, p. 2, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City). This is a daily record of the Church made up of journal entries, discourses, letters, sermons, newspaper articles, and minutes of meetings.

of our brethren will be planted on the coast of the Pacific or nearby to receive their friends from the islands."²³ A month later, President Young wrote to Brannan that he "wished Brannan, his press, paper, and ten thousand of the brethren were in California at the Bay of San Francisco, and if you can clear yourself and go there, do so."²⁴ Elder Young also instructed the members in England "to send no more emigrants here (Nauvoo); but let them wait in England until they can ship for the Pacific Ocean, say the Bay of St. Francisco."²⁵ These last two communications of President Young are extremely important. Brannan had previously been told by Parley Pratt that the Great Basin "is the proper place for us" but now Brigham Young was talking about the coastal area of Alta California. This could have easily led Brannan to believe that the Church had changed what was to be the final gathering place.

Meanwhile, during the summer of 1845 Sam Brannan had been studying about California. He talked to politicians and explorers (Lansford Hastings in particular) about settling the area, and he published articles

²³Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 2 August 1845, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

²⁴Brigham Young to Sam Brannan, 15 September 1845, Also located in History of the Church, 7:444-445.

²⁵Brigham Young to Wilford Woodruff, 16 October 1845, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

from Hasting's book, An Emigrants Guide to California, in the newspaper. Eventually Brannan came to the conclusion that California was "a portion of the New World . . . which God made choice above all others."²⁶

In the fall and winter Sam Brannan and Parley P. Pratt visited the various branches in the East to recruit members and obtain money to charter a ship. It was hoped that those that wanted to go by sea to California would be sufficient to require several ships. Brannan's newspaper office at No. 7 Spruce Street in New York became the council chambers for all the preparations.²⁷

Orson Pratt, Parley's brother and Elder Brannan's superior, preached that it was a sin not to leave the East and go to California.²⁸ He said, "We do not want one Saint to be left in the United States after next spring. Let every branch in the East, West, North, and South be determined to flee out of Babylon."²⁹ He was quite optimistic and hopeful that all would go. In a conference he said "If all want to go charter half, or

²⁶New York Messenger, 2 August 1845.

²⁷Millennial Star (Liverpool, England), 1 February 1846, 7:37.

²⁸Roberts, 3:25

²⁹Times and Seasons, 1 December 1845, 6:1042.

a dozen vessels and fill each with passengers, and the fare among so many will be but a trifle."³⁰ Orson Pratt said that "Elder S. Brannan has been counselled to go by sea" because the cost would be cheaper than traveling overland.³¹ Members from nearly all the New England and Middle States signed up for the voyage. They were mostly farmers and mechanics from the rural districts, but almost all the trades were represented.³² When things were finally organized, a Mormon group of 70 men, 68 women, and 100 children took passage on the Brooklyn.

Brannan purchased \$16,000 worth of equipment for the venture and it is said that he took agricultural and mechanical implements for eight hundred men.³³ This raises a question as to why Brannan bought so many supplies when so few were going with him. The answer may be that he was anticipating the arrival of Brigham Young and the main body of the Church on the California coast.

Meanwhile, some very important communications took place between Brannan and Young, in the months

³⁰Roberts, 3:25.

³¹Times and Seasons, 1 December 1845, 6:1042.

³²Edward C. Kemble, "The Voyage of the Brooklyn", In Among the Mormons, p. 186. Also found in the Sacramento Daily Union, 11 September 1866, under the title "Twenty Years Ago".

³³Luce. p. 15.

before the eastern brethren set sail, which sheds some light on the conditions surrounding the westward movement. Brannan had written President Young asking him where the intended location of the Church would be. Young answered by saying, "In answer to your letter according to your request I will say we have not determined to what place we shall go."³⁴ Elder Young may have said this for two possible reasons: either because he did not really know, or he was trying to keep it a secret from his enemies.

On January 12, 1846 Brannan wrote to President Young:

I have received positive information that it is the intention of the Government to disarm you after you have taken up your line of March in the spring, on the ground of the law of nations, or the treaty existing between the United States and Mexico. "That an armed posse of men shall not be allowed to invade the Territory of a foreign nation."³⁵

Young received the letter and his record of it helps one to see that he also thought that government interference was a real threat.

³⁴Brigham Young to Sam Brannan, 26 December 1845, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City). Brigham Young also heard a rumor started by Governor Boggs that the Federal Government would try to stop the Mormon migration, so he tried to keep his destination a secret.

³⁵Sam Brannan to Brigham Young, 12 January 1846. Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847. (edited and published by Elden J. Watson, Salt Lake City, 1971) p. 35.

This evening, I read a letter from S. Brannan in which he said he had ascertained from Amos Kendall, the late Postmaster General, that the government intended to intercept our movements by stationing strong forces in our way, to take from us all fire arms on the pretense that we were going to join another nation.³⁶

In order to appease the "government" Brannan next made a deal with an influential group of government officials known as A. G. Benson and Company in hopes of avoiding any federal intervention in the Mormon migration. He signed a contract with the company and sent it to President Young, but Young would not agree to any part of it so the contract was rejected.³⁷

In order to prevent the federal government from prohibiting the Saints from leaving New York, Brannan wrote to Young, "I declare to all that you are not going to California, but to Oregon, and that my information is official."³⁸ Two weeks later Sam wrote again saying:

I shall select the most suitable spot on the Bay of San Francisco for the location of a commercial

³⁶Ibid., p. 24

³⁷Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847, p. 40.

³⁸Sam Brannan to Brigham Young, 12 January 1846, Found in The Life of Brigham Young, Edward Tullidge, (New York, 1877), p. 21. Oregon at this time was jointly occupied by England and the United States. Brannan said that he was going to Oregon so that the Federal Government would not interfere. The Federal Government may have been apprehensive that the Mormons would join up with Mexico.

city. When I sail, which shall be next Saturday at one o'clock, I shall hoist a flag with 'Oregon' on it.³⁹

Brannan, like Young, was obviously trying to maintain a veil of secrecy as to where the Church was going.⁴⁰

The key issue for the Mormons of Brannan's group was the question of where the Church was going to locate. Out of this problem grew ill feelings and some apostasy. It appears that Brigham Young had led Brannan to believe that the Church would settle in what is now present day California. This can be seen in a letter which Brannan wrote to Wilford Woodruff saying that they would "strike hands on the shores of the Pacific in one year."⁴¹

The misunderstanding of where the Church was going to settle may have arisen because of poor communications and the shroud of secrecy surrounding the exodus.

³⁹Ibid., 26 January 1846, p. 21-23.

⁴⁰An interesting piece of information about settling in California can be found in a speech given by Brigham Young in 1863: "Before we left Nauvoo, members of Congress made a treaty with the Latter-day Saints . . . We agreed to survey and settle California--we drawing the odd numbers and the Government the even numbers; but I think the President was precipitated into the Mexican War, and our prospective calculations fell through, otherwise we should have gone into California and settled it. Many of you were not aware of this." Millennial Star, 19 December 1863, 25:805. Young was obviously referring to the A. G. Benson and Company contract. This statement was made twenty years after the event and is probably incorrect because he had refused to have anything to do with the company.

⁴¹Sam Brannan to Wilford Woodruff, 26 December 1845. (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

Another important factor was that in 1846 California was thought of as being anywhere west of the Rocky Mountains. Thus both Brannan and Young could speak of California yet have widely different views of where the best place for a settlement would be. Also, when President Young mentioned the Pacific Coast or other areas of settlement, it was always on a tentative basis, which Brannan did not realize. The speculation of the members of where they would locate, as can be seen in many journals, undoubtedly added confusion. Also, especially after the Brooklyn set sail, the migration was not well coordinated. Yet from Brannan's actions, which will be examined later, it becomes evident that he sincerely felt that the whole church would come to the coastal area of California. While on the island of Juan Fernandez he wrote that he was bound for "California," with a load of Saints, and that "the body of the Church would emigrate there the next year."⁴²

Shortly after his arrival in the Great Basin, Brigham Young wrote:

About the same time the "Brooklyn" sailed from New York, we left Nauvoo with a large emigrating company of Saints, taking our course westward; yet, like Father Abraham, journeying we knew not whither; our only object being to find a resting

⁴²Journal History of the Church, 8 April 1849, p. 4.

place, a place of peace and safety for ourselves, for our families, and our friends.⁴³

Yet as time passed, Brigham's vision as to where the church would settle became clearer. In June 1847, he wrote to Brannan that "The camp will not go to the west coast or to your place at present they have not the means."⁴⁴ Again President Young gave Elder Brannan the impression that he was going to the Pacific Coast. Unfortunately for Brannan, a short time later the Salt Lake area was decided on as "the right place." Some Mormon historians say that the site had been revealed to President Young in a vision and awaited only discovery, for as has been stated, accurate geographical knowledge of the western country was lacking.⁴⁵ However it may have been, Young's decision was made and the Saints took up their abode in the Great Basin in spite of where Sam Brannan had settled.

⁴³Journal History of the Church, 7 August 1847, p. 5.

⁴⁴Journal History of the Church, 3 July 1847, p. 3. Letter of Brigham Young to Sam Brannan dated 6 June 1847. It is evident that Brannan never received this letter. He met Young three weeks later on the Green River expressly to find out why he had not heard from him. Evidence also suggests that Young requested Brannan to meet him in the mountains; this will be discussed in Chapter six.

⁴⁵Journal History of the Church, 28 March 1848, p. 2. A few of these historians are Larry Porter, Ivan J. Barret, and Russell R. Rich.

Thus it becomes apparent that after this decision, the real purpose of Brannan's colony on the coast was to be a "resting" or "stopping" place for the Saints on their way to the main location in the Great Basin. Brannan was mistaken in his opinion that the whole church would settle near San Francisco.

Many of the "gentiles" also had the idea that a large Mormon colonization effort would take place in California. An article in the New York Sun read "The Mormons leave for San Francisco in a short time and they intend by next spring to have a body of 100,000 persons there."⁴⁶ Also the American consulate at Monterey, Thomas O. Larkin, received a letter saying "By the papers I see that several parties are about starting from the West, for California, these with the Mormons will increase the 'foreign influence' and hasten the time when another annexation will be asked for."⁴⁷ In the minds of many central Californians, New Hope was to be the new Mormon Mecca.

While traveling across the plains and the oceans the brethren in both parties were singing about what they thought would be their new home: California.

⁴⁶ New York Sun, 24 December 1845.

⁴⁷ John H. Everett to Thomas O. Larkin. Boston, 26 March 1846, The Larkin Papers, 4:267.

The Upper California, O that's the land for me!
 It lies between the Mountains and the Great
 Pacific Sea;
 The Saints can be supported there,
 And taste the sweets of liberty,
 In Upper California-o, That's the land for me!

We'll go and lift our standard, we'll go there
 and be free;
 We'll go to California; and have our jubilee;
 A land that blooms with endless Spring,
 A land of life and liberty.
 With flocks and herds abounding-o, that's
 the land for me!
 Then join with me, my brethren, and let us
 hasten there,
 We'll lift our glorious standard, and raise
 our house of prayer
 We'll call on all the nations around
 To join our standard and be free
 In Upper California-o, that's the land for me.⁴⁸

The chorus of another song that they sang
 went like this:

To California's land we'll go
 Where from the Mountains wine doth flow;
 A land of peace and liberty,
 To California, go with me.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ann Eliza Young, Wife Number Nineteen,
 (Hartford, Connecticut: Dustin, Gilman and Co., 1876),
 p. 116.

⁴⁹ Millennial Star, 1 February 1849, 11:47-48.

CHAPTER III

MORMONS IN CALIFORNIA

Under the direction of twenty-six year old Sam Brannan, a ship named Brooklyn was chartered in New York for \$1,200 a month.¹ Each Mormon adult was to pay fifty dollars for passage and twenty-five dollars for food, while children went for half fare.² On December 29, 1845, Brannan told those who were going:

We have now but little better than four weeks to purchase our provisions and stores, also casks to hold water, and get everything on board to serve us on the passage; to do this, we want your money before you can all get here, that the ship may not have anything to prevent her from sailing at the appointed time--time with us is money--also, to pay the charter money.³

Brannan probably collected well over \$15,000 from those who were going on the voyage.⁴ In addition to

¹Norma Baldwin Ricketts, The Mormons and The Discovery of Gold, (Placerville: The Pioneer Press, 1966), p. 3.

²Muir, 1:31.

³Millennial Star, 1 February 1846, 7:36. Brannan did not pay the whole passage before the voyage because he needed to buy supplies.

⁴A few non-Mormons went on the voyage and paid a higher fare. In Brannan's papers there was a receipt

this he also contracted to carry freight. "I have chartered the whole ship, put her in the market and have already obtained one thousand dollars worth of freight for the Sandwich Islands, and a good prospect for more."⁵ Apparently Brannan obtained more freight contracts because three days before sailing he wrote:

The ship is now loaded, full to the hatchings, about five hundred barrels of which we leave at the Sandwich Islands, and the remainder is ours.⁶

The money that Brannan collected from the passengers, from the freight, and from donations may account for the \$16,000 worth of supplies he had purchased for the venture. A great part of the supplies may also have come from those who were going. They had been told:

Bring all your beds and bedding, all your farming and mechanical tools, all your poultry, beef, pork, potatoes, and anything else that will sustain life. You had better pack your things in boxes with hinges to the cover,

of one such man: Received of J. A. C. Austin five hundred and five dollars for emigration on the ship Brooklyn. (Sam Brannan papers, Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

⁵Sam Brannan to Brigham Young, 12 January 1846, Manuscript History of Brigham Young, p. 36

⁶Sam Brannan to Brigham Young, 1 February 1846, Manuscript History of Brigham Young, p. 59.

instead of barrels; the boards will serve some useful purpose at your journey's end. Don't forget your pots and kettles, with your necessary cooking utensils."⁷

All these supplies were to prove useful in their new environment.

The 450 ton vessel was filled with 238 Saints who were bound for Alta California, which was then a part of Mexico. They were then to proceed to meet the main body of Saints wherever they settled. They set sail on the same day that the first wagon train left Nauvoo, Illinois, February 4, 1846.

Brannan obviously expected others to follow him to California by sea because three days earlier he had written, "I received a letter from the West a few days

⁷Millennial Star, 1 February 1846. It has been suggested that the \$16,000 worth of supplies came from A. G. Benson and Company. Strangely there is no mention of this in any of Brannan's papers. However, in a contract (January 1846) between A. G. Benson (representing Amos Kendell and others) and Sam Brannan (representing the Mormon Church) there are some hints that monetary assistance was offered to Brannan. Along with letting the Saints leave the United States unmolested, Benson said that his company would "extend to them facilities for emigration, especially by sea, and afford them great commercial facilities and advantages at their new homes and facilitate trade with them in their new settlement." Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847, pp. 38-40. Yet no records have been found that would indicate that Brannan received monetary assistance from Benson. It also seems unlikely that Benson, or any good businessman, would give Brannan \$16,000 without any collateral when he was leaving the country.

ago, informing me that a man would be sent as soon as I am gone, to raise another company."⁸

During the voyage, the Elders got together and formed a joint stock company. Brannan planned to create a society based on cooperative ownership and cooperative effort. They named it Sam Brannan and Company, and its purpose was to help one another get settled when they landed in California. One of the provisions drawn up was "They would, with one accord, make preparations for the members of the Church who were coming overland."⁹ All the monies were to be given to a common fund for a period of three years for the benefit of the entire group. If any of the Saints were rebellious, they would be cut-off and lose their portion.¹⁰ Augusta Joyce Cocheron recorded this event in her diary and said:

During the voyage a contract was drawn and signed by the company, covenanting to give the proceeds of their labors for the next three years into a common fund which all were to draw

⁸Millennial Star, 1 March 1846, 7:77, Sam Brannan to Brother Hedlock, 1 February 1846.

⁹William Glover, "The Mormons in California", MS.

¹⁰Sam Brannan was able to coerce the members into such an agreement because he was their ecclesiastical leader, and because he also had control of the \$16,000 worth of cargo that the Saints had purchased. So it appeared to be advantageous to join the company.

their living, as a limited communism was contemplated to be put into operation for convenience and protection. Some months afterwards a number of the signers 'backed out', others faithfully keeping their promise through adversity and prosperity.¹¹

Sam Brannan and Company would become the future cause of much contention and discontent among the group.

The Brooklyn took six months to sail around the Horn to Yerba Buena, a total of 18,000 nautical miles.¹² It landed on July 30, 1846, shortly after the Bear Flag revolt. To Brannan's alleged disappointment, he found his group under the same power they had been trying to escape, the United States!¹³ Yet he could not have been too upset because it saved him money that he did not have.

We arrived here about three weeks after the United States Flag was hoisted and the country taken possession of by the Americans, which exempted us from paying a heavy bill of duties, which would have amounted to about twenty thousand dollars.¹⁴

At the same time that the Brooklyn landed, another group of Mormons, stronger and larger, was also

¹¹Andrew Jenson, Historical Record, 9 vols. (Salt Lake City, 1882-1890), 8:876.

¹²The name Yerba Buena was later changed to San Francisco.

¹³Russell R. Rich, Ensign To the Nations (B.Y.U. Publications Provo, Utah, 1972), p. 32.

¹⁴Millennial Star, 15 October 1847, 9:307.

on its way to California. This group, the five-hundred men of the Mormon Battalion, would leave their imprint on California history. Some of these men would help in the building of a small Mormon community on the Stanislaus River. The Mormon Battalion and its relation to New Hope will be discussed in a later chapter.

The population of Yerba Buena in 1846 was between one hundred and two hundred inhabitants.¹⁵ The arrival of the Brooklyn more than doubled the population and made Yerba Buena a predominantly Mormon town. The people of this sleepy little village were not too alarmed at this "Mormon invasion" and both Mormons and gentiles quickly made friends. Yet this rapid increase in population was to cause severe shortages in housing, food, and other commodities.

The Mormons began working shortly after their landing. Sam Brannan and Company contracted to cut redwood lumber to pay Captain Richardson the \$1,000 balance due on their fare.¹⁶ The whole trip had probably cost around \$8,000. Yet Brannan was worried about financial matters. His friend Orson Hyde counselled him by writing:

¹⁵The Bay of San Francisco, (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1892), 1:200.

¹⁶Muir, 1:35.

Be not troubled about money, whether it be much or little, that you have taken. I could wish you had fifty thousand dollars. Only make good use of the money you have and when you pay it away, make it tell in favor of Zion.¹⁷

Brannan was later to become very astute in financial matters.

Discontent has arisen on the voyage, and now some of the brethren were quarreling over policies of Sam Brannan and his company. These problems came to a head with the first American jury trial in Yerba Buena. Sam Brannan was accused by some of the members of misusing the companies funds. He was acquitted, but his prestige probably suffered.

In order to avoid further discord, Brannan conceived a colonization plan to help unify the group and to better prepare for the coming of Brigham Young and his 15,000 followers.¹⁸ This plan would also alleviate the food shortage in San Francisco, contribute to the employment of church members, and help his people become self sufficient and economically secure.¹⁹

¹⁷Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September 1846, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

¹⁸The number 15,000 refers mostly to the Mormons in Missouri, Illinois, and other Western states. It was hoped also, that thousands more would be coming from the Eastern states, and especially from Great Britain.

¹⁹Wheat at this time was selling for the extravagant price of one dollar per bushel and it would have been a very profitable activity for the brethren to engage in. (Millennial Star, 1 January 1847, 9:307.)

Sam Brannan had learned from those who had been in the San Joaquin Valley that it was a vast wonderland and ideal for settlement. While talking to John C. Fremont one day, Fremont told him, "Two years ago on my first trip over the Sierras, I camped at the confluence of the San Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers. It was as scenic as Switzerland, balmy as Italy, and fertile as the Nile Delta."²⁰ Ezekiel Merritt, an old trapper who was helping Colonel Fremont, was said to have drawn a crude map of the area he considered "purtiest of all", the San Joaquin.²¹

According to Solano County History, page 312, a site was proposed by Lansford W. Hastings.²² Also, Thomas O. Larkin, the American consulate at Monterey, in a letter to the Secretary of State dated April 2, 1846 said "L. W. Hastings is laying off a town at New Helvetia for the Mormons."²³ Apparently the place did not seem to suit the Mormons.

²⁰Annaleone D. Patton, California Mormons by Sail and Trail, (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1961) p. 21. Mrs. Patton does not footnote the source of this quote.

²¹Paul Dayton Bailey, Sam Brannan and The California Mormons, (Los Angeles: Westernlore Press, 1943), p. 80. This reference, as the last one, is not footnoted as to its source.

²²Bancroft, 5:552. Bancroft says the site was at Montezuma, where Hastings resided for several years.

²³Thomas O. Larkin to the Secretary of State, 2 April 1846, The Larkin Papers, edited by George Pl Hammond, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1953),

With a good location in mind, Brannan began formulating plans to establish an agricultural settlement. He purchased a small boat, put a sail on it, made it seaworthy, and christened it, Comet.²⁴ A non-Mormon who had made the trip with the Saints to San Francisco said:

About the same time the new organization bought a ship's longboat and set her sloop-rigged up the San Joaquin, with a party on board to make the first venture in farming, and formed the first settlement in the San Joaquin Valley."²⁵

The party, chosen by Brannan, consisted of twenty members for the colonization effort.²⁶ These men were selected

²⁴Patton, p. 21 says, Sam Brannan, at Marsh's Landing was persuaded by Dr. Marsh to buy a discarded whale boat, but again, there is no footnote. Edward C. Kemble, Sam's assistant printer, said it was a ship's longboat. Other authors have described it as a sloop, schooner, sailboat, and launch. One author says it was the Brooklyn's longboat. There is obviously a lot of speculation and little documentation. Scott says that the boat was rented, but she is presumably wrong because Sam offered it for sale in 1847. The Comet was probably a ship's longboat with sloop rigging.

²⁵Edward C. Kemble, "Twenty Years Ago," Sacramento Daily Union, 11 September 1866.

²⁶Campbell, Carter, Patton, and other authors give this figure as twenty men, while Gilbert and Baldridge say there were thirty men. The former figure is probably correct and comes from a letter of Brannan's, published in the Millennial Star, in which he says "about twenty of our number are up at the new settlement". Where both groups of authors err is that they say they were men, when in reality there were also women. The number thirty probably comes from the account of Peckham in which Sparks told him that about thirty Mormons had left Yerba Buena in a schooner. Peckham says they were all men. Some of the brethren undoubtedly went to help the

because of their experience in agriculture, carpentry, and other professions. William Stout was appointed leader of the ranch by Elder Brannan.

In anticipation of the arrival of Brigham Young, and with the desire to provide for the wants of the Saints, the projected nucleus of the new Mormon empire was named New Hope. In Mormon annals it is called New Hope, but in the history of California it is called Stanislaus City due to its location on the Stanislaus River. Here was to be an enduring agricultural community, a haven of peace and security for many thousands of people. It was called New Hope by the Mormons because of their new hope in a new land.

It is fairly evident that the Brooklyn Mormons expected all the Saints to gather in California. In January 1847 Brannan wrote:

There has been no arrival in the country this fall, from those coming by land; but we are anxiously waiting for them next season.

the others get started and then returned, leaving about twenty permanent settlers. As for Peckham's "all men" statement, either he was wrong, or some women came later. Due to the hardships of starting a new colony few women would have wanted to go. Most of the families were waiting in San Francisco until the land was settled and then planned on joining their fathers and husbands. For the most complete list of people who were at New Hope see appendix one.

We are now all busily engaged in putting in crops for them to subsist upon when they arrive.²⁷

He also went on to say "We are every day anxiously looking for the arrival of another ship load of emigrants. Two have been reported here to have sailed: one from New York and the other from Boston."²⁸ Brannan's final advise was "to those wishing to emigrate to this El Dorado of the West, by all means come by water in preference to land, the advantage you will appreciate for years to come."²⁹

At this time Brannan had no doubt that others would be coming. During the winter of 1846 he received a letter from Apostles Hyde, Pratt, and Taylor, telling him:

The property that has been sent by you in the ship, and the owners here, or gone by land, it will be for your interests to see that it is carefully preserved for them when they come, as a thousand jealousies may have arisen about it.³⁰

²⁷ Joseph and Herman Smith of the Reorganized Church, Church History, L.D.S. 1844-1872, (Lamoni, Iowa, 1900), 3:187-189.

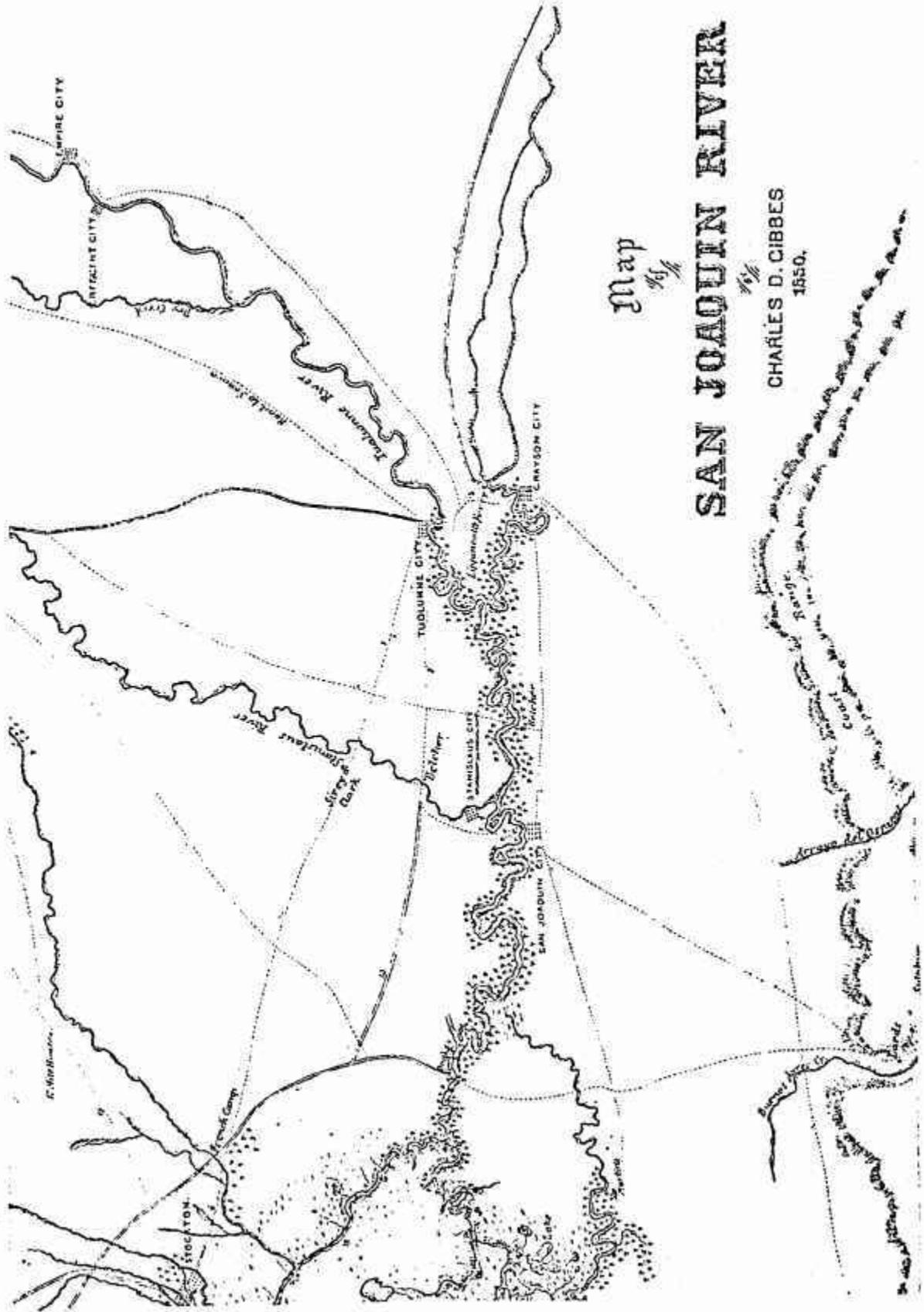
²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September, 1846, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City). Written in New York and received by Sam Brannan in San Francisco.

Even many of the "Big Guns", as Brannan called them, in the Church thought that the body of the Church would be moving to the Pacific Coast. These three apostles also thought that they would be traveling to Alta California. They wrote, "The Mormon Battalion will be on the Pacific before we shall."³¹

³¹Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September 1846, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).



Map
1/4" = 1 mile

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER

CHARLES D. CIBBES
1850.

CHAPTER IV

THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY

I think when God laid out the measurement
Of this old world and all the firmament
He made a blue print of all things to be,
Of mountains, rivers, valleys and seas.
And then he drew in geometric lines
To show where sturdy oaks and towering pines,
And other trees, a multitude, should stand,
When from the rumbling deep there came the
land,
Ere work was finished on creation's plan
He took exquisite pains to give to man
A place where all the elements conspire,
In fadeless colors set with living fire,
To paint a picture lovely to be seen,
So made the Valley of the San Joaquin.

Carl Crowson
"The Valley of the San Joaquin"

The first inhabitants of San Joaquin County were the Ya-che-kos Indians. They were a strong tribe of about two thousand people. They lived in tule reed huts and foraged the land for food.

The Indians of the San Joaquin lived in an abundant land. The grass grew over six feet in height and was teeming with squirrels, rabbits, quail, elk, deer, antelopes, bears, mountain lions, and coyotes. The streams, whose banks were covered with blackberries and strawberries, abounded with salmon, trout, and sturgeon.

As to the seasons, they had but two, summer and winter. Travelers through the area said that the climate was superior to that of Naples, Italy, and that it was unsurpassed for its salubrity. So mild is the winter that roses often bloom throughout the year.

Before the Mormons came to this beautiful valley it was visited by a few explorers, trappers, and settlers. The first white man to enter the San Joaquin Valley, so far as is known, was Lieutenant Gabriel Moraga. As he left Mission San Jose and traveled east in 1806, he named the San Joaquin River after the father of the Virgin Mary, whose name was believed to be Joaquin.¹ After Moraga's discovery of this fertile valley a score of trappers soon followed.

In 1826, Jedediah Smith came in search of fur bearing animals as did Ewing Young in 1832. In the valley they both found thousands of raccoons, otter, badger, beaver, and other fur bearing animals.

Under the leadership of John McLeod, the Hudson Bay Company trapped in the valley during the seasons from 1828 until 1845. They were soon joined by other trappers who were principally French Canadians, until there were about four hundred fur men in the valley.²

¹George H. Tinkham, History of San Joaquin County (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1921), p. 60.

²Ibid., p. 46.

Two other men who were known to have been in the area in the 1840's were Lansford Hastings and Ezekiel Merritt. Hastings, who wanted to promote settlement described the valley in glowing terms:

The largest valley in the whole country is that skirting the Sacramento and lateral streams. This beautiful expanse leads inland from the bay of San Francisco for nearly four hundred miles, almost to the base of the California mountains, and averages between sixty and sixty-five miles in width. These valleys are comparatively well timbered with several varieties of wood. The soil as well as the climate is well adapted to the cultivation of all kinds of grain and vegetables produced in the United States. Perhaps no country in the world is possessed of a richer or more fertile soil, or one capable of yielding a greater variety of production.³

The next well known traveler through the area was John C. Fremont on a United States Government expedition in 1844. As he passed by French Camp, the trappers outpost near the San Joaquin and Stanislaus rivers, he was so impressed by the beauty that he recorded in his journal:

The California poppy of a rich orange color was numerous. Today elk and several bands of antelope made their appearance. Our road now was one continued enjoyment, and it was pleasant with varied flowers and scattered groves, and out of the warm green spring to look at the rocky and snowy peaks.⁴

³Millennial Star, 1 April 1848, 10:111

⁴Tinkham, p. 47.

The soil was soon to attract a small number of farmers and rancher. C. D. Gibbs, a surveyor for the area in 1850, said:

In a typical section the soil consists of six feet or more of fine alluvial river and tidal silts, intimately comingled with partially decayed vegetable matter, undecomposed plant roots, stems, and fibers occuring in great profusion.⁵

During 1846 two distinct colonies and four ranches were begun in San Joaquin County. Charles M. Weber had bought the French Camp grant of eleven leagues from Mexico. He persuaded a small group of farmers to settle the area under the leadership of Napoleon Schmidt.⁶ They began building in November but soon left because of the Mexican-American war.

At approximately the same time, Sam Brannan started his colony of Mormons at New Hope, or Stanislaus City, only a few miles west. A more complete account of this will be given in the following chapters.

The four ranches were settled by Dr. I. C. and James Isbel on the Calaveras river, Turner Elder on Dry Creek, Thomas Rhoads, a Mormon, on Dry Creek, and Thomas Pyle on the Mokelomne river.

There were three other well known and established

⁵Ibid., p. 35.

⁶Col. F. T. Gilbert, History of San Joaquin County (Oakland: Thompson and West, 1879), p. 19.

ranches within thirty miles. These were the ranches of Thomas Marsh, Senor Maria Amador, and Robert Livermore. All three would play a part in the growth of New Hope.

CHAPTER V

NEW HOPE

Where then in Eden; Ah, why should I tell
What every eye and bosom knows so well?
Why name the land all other lands have blest
And traced for ages to the distant west?
Why seek in vain the historic page
For Eden's Garden and the Golden Age?
Here, brothers, here, no further let us roam,
Here is the Garden, Eden is our home.

William H. Rhoads

In the fall of 1846, either in September or November, Brannan was ready to launch his new project.¹ He walked down to Clarke's Point to make some last minute inspections of the Comet.² It was filled with seed wheat, agricultural implements, wagons, food supplies, seed for various other crops, tools, and weapons. It was said that they had enough provisions to last for two

¹Scott says that Brannan and Origin Mowry made a preliminary trip up the San Joaquin looking for suitable farm land. Whether they went as far as the Stanislaus River is doubtful, but Scott also claims, though not footnoted, that two preliminary trips were made in which equipment and seeds were carried up the river.

²Paul Bailey, The Gay Saint, Story of Sam Brannan, (Hollywood: Murray and Gee, 1948) p. 131.

years. These supplies had been purchased with funds from Sam Brannan and Company and many of the provisions came from the Brooklyn.

Some of the people on board the schooner were: Sam Brannan, William Stout, Alondus Buckland, William Evans, Cyrus Ira, Origin Mowry, Joseph Nichols, John Joyce, Thomas Thompkins and his father-in-law.³ There were about thirty in all. The settlement was to be started with approximately twenty of the Saints. After the ground was broken and houses were erected their families and friends were to join them. It was hoped that by the time Young arrived the colony would be flourishing. Ten of the thirty men went along to help the others get started and after a few days they would return to San Francisco with the boat. As the tide came in, they set sail for Marsh's Landing.⁴

Brannan also planned to send a man overland to New Hope. Quartus Sparks, and his new friend R. F. Peckham who had jumped ship, were to travel from Yerba Buena by land and go to the ranch of Robert Livermore

³There were at least three women at New Hope. Thompkin's wife and his two daughters, Amanda and Jane, may also have been aboard the boat and were overlooked or not mentioned by those recording the event. It is also possible that they came to New Hope on another trip.

⁴This is by present day Antioch.

to buy a yoke of oxen for the New Hope colony.⁵ From Livermore's ranch, they were then to go to Marsh's landing to meet the Comet. As the hours passed by while riding their mules along the dusty trails, they talked about the past when they had both been schoolmasters. Sparks then invited Peckham to help found New Hope "even though he could not promise him wages."⁶ Peckham, having few alternatives, was eager to go.

They arrived at Mission San Jose in the late afternoon about an hour before sunset, but had to push on in order to meet the schooner at Marsh's landing. It was thirty miles to Livermore's ranch and another thirty to Dr. Marsh's. Both these hardy adventurers became lost after dark and traveled until 11:30 p.m., when they saw a light. They decided to wait until morning before traveling on.⁷

⁵R. F. Peckham, who was nineteen years old, was not a Mormon. He had jumped the whaling ship Magnet and wandered about for three days when he came across two Mormons, Julius Austin and Quartus Sparks, in a small undecked schooner on Mission Creek. Peckham was afraid of being caught if he returned to San Francisco, so he decided to go into the interior with Sparks. He was later to become a judge in San Jose.

⁶San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

⁷That night, because of the cold, Peckham decided to cross a marsh that was in their way. Half way across, he called to Sparks but he would not come. Sparks then proposed that Peckham carry him across the water on his shoulders and Peckham agreed. "About half way across, Peckham slipped and both men plunged into the cold water. No prayers were said by Elder Sparks, nor did he even

In the morning, they traveled another two miles and found that they had taken a wrong turn and were now at the ranch of Jose Maria Amador. The two wanderers were fed, given a saddled horse, and a guide led them to the home of Livermore, where they arrived about 9:00 a.m. After purchasing a yoke of oxen and a span of mules, it took them twelve hours to get to Marsh's embarcadero.⁸

Here they found the schooner with "about thirty Mormon passenger, all men, and armed with rifles and revolvers to defend themselves against any attacks by Indians."⁹

Peckham decided to take the boat upstream while Sparks took the oxen by land to New Hope. According to Peckham, they were guided by a crude chart made for them by the trapper Merrit.¹⁰

It took the Comet two days to sail up the rest of the river, and it landed near the junction of the San

claim that by this baptism Peckham had been made a member of The Mormon Church." (This account may be found in the San Jose Pioneer, 22 June 1877.)

⁸Sparks was surprised to find a fellow Mormon, John M. Horner of the Brooklyn, living with Dr. Marsh.

⁹San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

¹⁰San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers,¹¹ The boat stopped near present day Mossdale on the east side of the river where they camped for the night.¹² In the morning, they crossed to the north side of the river and proceeded a mile and a half above its conjunction to the location selected for the farm. Here they would build in preparation for the coming of the Mormon Saints.

At its founding it is quite doubtful that either Sam Brannan or William Stout had an orderly master plan for their new community as did Joseph Smith for Nauvoo or Brigham Young for Salt Lake City. This does not mean that they were not expecting large numbers or that they were unorganized. The immediate necessity was to plant crops, get settled, and build homes. Besides, fertile land was abundant; the few houses which were erected were a distance apart from each other; Brigham Young would not arrive on the coast until months later; and Brannan had other matters to attend to. If Brigham Young had come to California, or had the colony prospered, Brannan surely would have planned for and devoted his

¹¹From Yerba Buena by water, the distance is about one hundred miles to New Hope and by land it is about eighty-five miles.

¹²Gilbert claims that they stopped near the point where the Central Pacific Railroad crosses, Peckham says it was near the Western Pacific, and Tinkham says the Southern Pacific. The author did not know that Mossdale was such a railroad center!

attention to it as he did to his other enterprises.

After hauling their equipment overland, which probably took several trips, they began work the same day.¹³ A western style log house was one of the first projects undertaken. Peckham and Cyrus Ira built a Pulgas Redwood saw mill and cut boards for the floor from oak logs. The roof was then covered with oak shingles that had been made by hand.¹⁴ Soon after things got underway, Sam Brannan and a few others returned to San Francisco because of other duties, leaving about twenty of their number behind.

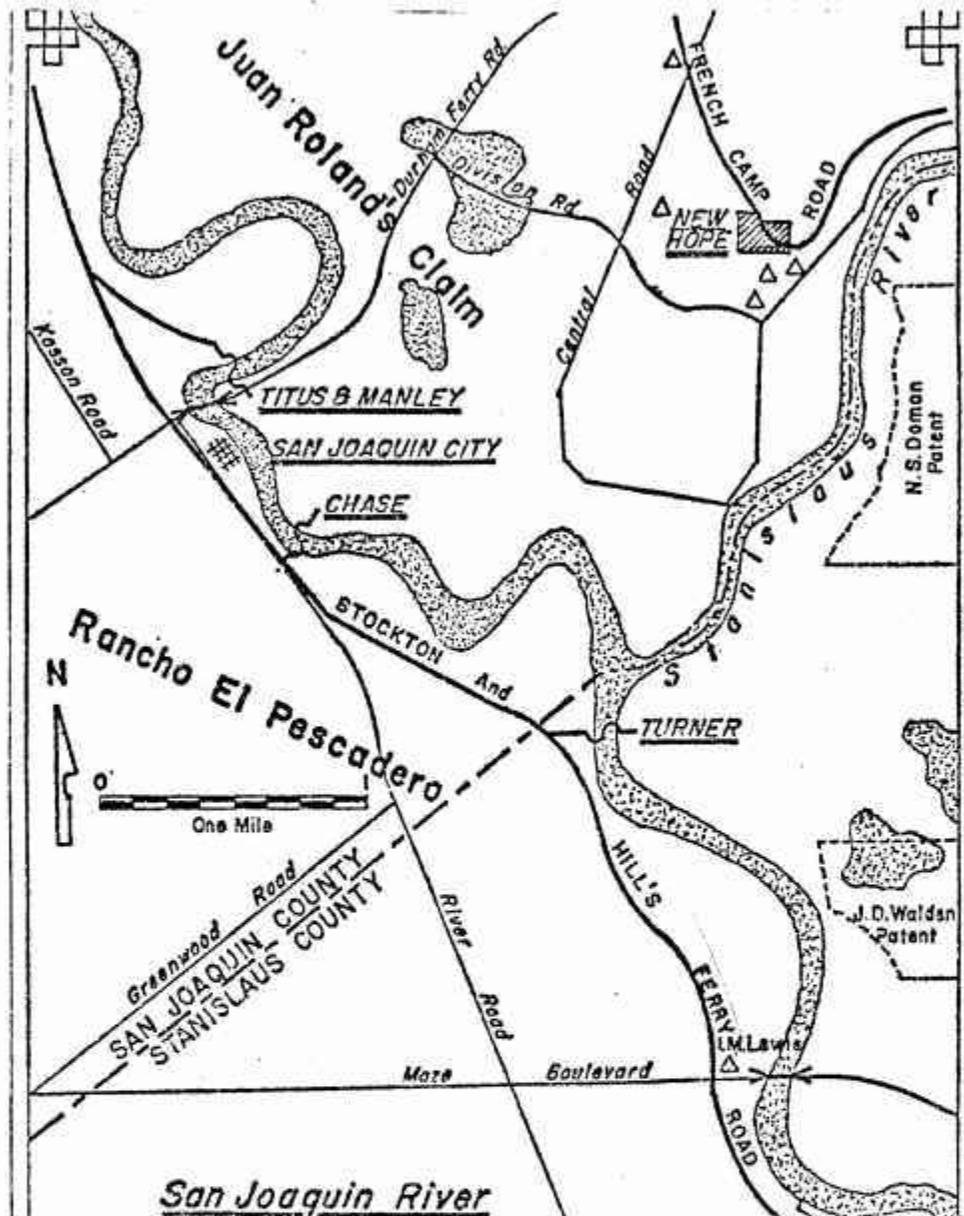
As soon as the dwellings were begun, about eighty acres of land were cleared and plowed. While some of the brethren were sowing wheat, others were building a fence. Oak trees were cut up and put end to end and were then covered with branches. By the middle of January, 1847, the whole field was planted and enclosed.¹⁵

Each night as the small group would retire, a picket guard was kept around the house. They had heard that two years before a man by the name of James Lindsay,

¹³For a list of some of the goods, see the for sale ads in Chapter 5.

¹⁴Eldredge says that the houses were made of adobe, but he is not correct.

¹⁵San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.



Whether or not this is the site of the old New Hope is purely conjecture, but it appears as the only field being cultivated in the area at the time that might conceivably fit the distance of approximately one and one half miles above the mouth of the Stanislaus. Also, at the time this survey was made the winter road or branch of the Mariposa Road from French Camp passed this location, with its several houses in the area as shown.¹⁶

¹⁶ Map and explanation by Jack Brotherton, 2 May 1971, found in the Modesto Bee.

who had lived near by, had been killed by the Indians and his hut burned.¹⁷ According to Peckham, "the Indians never troubled the Mormon colony but the latter were always on the alert."¹⁸

The abundance of the land proved to be a blessing to new settlers. The only provisions which needed to be sent up the river to the colony were unground wheat, sugar, and coffee. Wild berries, fish, and other game were plentiful. Peckham said that "Meat enough could be got in three hours by one man, to last the colony a week."¹⁹ Bear's oil was used to make lard for culinary purposes. They had a small hand mill and everyone had to grind their own wheat and do their own cooking. The men were busy, and little washing or house cleaning was done.

The brethren now began to diversify their activities. Some of them were planting a vegetable garden of carrots, tomatoes, peas, and potatoes while others were out sowing a red top grass with which to fatten their cattle. The more experienced farmers

¹⁷In the summer and fall of 1847, the Indians raided San Jose, Weber's settlement, Livermore's ranch, Sam Ramon, Pacheco, and the Martinez Valley. Charles Weber then led a group against the Indians.

¹⁸San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

¹⁹San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

among them were making irrigation ditches for the crops. A bucket was attached by a rope to the end of a long pole and by this method water was taken from the Stanislaus and dumped into the little canals.

On January 1, 1847, Sam Brannan wrote to the rest of the Saints:

We have commenced a settlement on the river San Joaquin, a large and beautiful stream emptying into the Bay of San Francisco; but the families of the company are wintering in this place, where they find plenty of employment and houses to live in; and about twenty of our number are up at the new settlement, which we call New Hope, ploughing and putting in wheat and other crops, and making preparations to move their families up in the spring, where they hope to meet the main body by land some time during the coming season.²⁰

Things were progressing well until William Stout, following in the footsteps of Brannan, called the brethren together to give them a short speech:

Now boys we have got through putting in our crops and have got it fenced in, now go to work, each of you and select a good farm of 160 acres, and make out the boundaries; we will go to work and put up houses, one at a time, so that by the time the crop is ready to harvest, you will all have your homes and farms. But I selected this place; this house and this farm is mine.²¹

²⁰Millennial Star, 15 October 1847, 9:306. New Hope has also been called Stanislaus City by many historians and map makers.

²¹San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

The men were disenchanted with Stout's usurpation because all improvements were to belong to Sam Brannan and Company and held in common trust. The Comet was untied and Brannan was quickly sent for to solve the problem. This incident probably occurred in early January.

Upon Brannan's arrival, a meeting was held and a resolution adopted that the house and farm would be reserved for the Twelve Apostles. Stout was so embittered by Brannan's decision that he left the settlement a few days later and never returned.²² This was just the beginning of several problems which would cause about half of the colonists to leave.

The pioneer hardships of starting a new settlement surely caused some discontentment. A few of the men were lonely for their wives and children and were upset that those who were at San Francisco had the conveniences of civilization. Some of them probably began looking for an excuse to leave. A natural disaster would soon provide them with the pretext they needed.

Heavy rains and a flood in late January put an added strain on the little colony. Jane Thompkins, the daughter of Thomas Thompkins, recorded the event:

²²Young and Scott both give the impression that Stout later returned and was one of the last to leave, but they are probably incorrect. At any rate Stout left the settlement early in its life and moved to Santa Cruz where he went into business with two other men who had been at New Hope, Moses A. Wede and George Sirrine.

Shortly after locating on the Stanislaus river my father was ill with chills and fever, and he was just recovering from his long illness when we had a heavy flood in the early winter of 1847, and it was necessary for father and mother to carry my sister and I out of the house on their backs, the water at times reaching above our waists.²³

After the water had subsided, they returned home and gathered up their belongings. With their wagon loaded they went north to the ranch of Jack Smith on the Yuba River. In talking about the flood, Peckham said:

The river under the influence of the rain rose and fell very rapidly, eight feet an hour on the perpendicular was marked. Almost the middle of January, 1847, the river overflowed its banks and the whole country was under water for miles in every direction.²⁴

This inundation destroyed a large portion of the crops and work of the New Hope settlers.

Peckham had started a cabin on the south side of the river, which was never completed, and had made himself a dug-out oak canoe. He also became disgusted with the prospects of New Hope. He had no shoes to wear and was almost destitute of clothing. He was going to leave shortly after the flood with Cyrus Ira, but backed out at the last minute. Peckham left New Hope at 10:00 a.m. on January 26, and headed for San Jose.

²³Manuscript History of the California Mission, MS. (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City) Vol. 1, 1847. Jane was three years old when the flood took place.

²⁴San Jose Pioneer, 23 June 1877.

At Yerba Buena, Elder Brannan had heard of the flood and he wrote to the Saints at New Hope on February 13.

Beloved and Respected Brethren: I shall be up with you by the next launch without fail--and then we will all take a trip into the mountains and make some new discoveries. I hope you will not get discouraged but press onward and trust in God, and that the strong will not be overcome by the faint-hearted. "He that sticks to the wreck will save his wages," and he that leaves it (wreck) will lose it--for the ship is not going to sink--if she does let us go to the bottom together--but believe me she is not. Don't be ravenous to make money and get rich, or you might forget God and die--hang to the truth and your covenant and God will reward you if nobody else don't--new things are springing up--things are working just right, and if the Lord wants to destroy our crop of wheat up there let his will be done, not ours. He knows what is best, better than we, and he has the helm (helm) and will do just what is right. Have your horses ready and we will go to the mountains and see the Indians, without fail.²⁵

The Comet probably carried Brannan's letter up to New Hope on its next trip. The letter not only gave encouragement to the Saints, but it also hinted about going to see President Young.

Along with the letter went much needed supplies to the struggling little ranch. Brannan had been given permission by his superiors to use the cargo from the Brooklyn, which he was storing for the emigrating Saints, if he needed it. Apostles Hyde, Pratt, and Taylor had written:

²⁵Sam Brannan to the Saints at New Hope, 13 February 1847, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

If however you should need the property that was sent by you, or some portion of it, to get along with, of course you should use it and keep a proper account of the same.²⁶

With their new supplies, those who stayed on at New Hope replanted their crops, repaired damaged fences, and began building more homes.

²⁶Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September 1846, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

CHAPTER VI

SAMUEL BRANNAN

MEETS

BRIGHAM YOUNG

On December 5, 1846 Brannan wrote from San Francisco to President Brigham Young:

Tomorrow we have another opportunity of forwarding to you a few lines by way of Panama . . . Could 2 or 3 hundred families of our people be thrown into this town, within 4 years the wealth and influence of this place could be entirely to our interest. I hope you will take this point into consideration, I do not say this with a view of dictating, but from my unceasing anxiety and interest for the promoting of the cause of Zion.¹

From this letter it appears that Brannan was beginning to have doubts about where President Young was going to locate, or it may have been written as a gentle reminder that he was still waiting for him.

At the beginning of the new year, January 1, 1847, Elder Brannan resolved that "As soon as the snow is off the mountains, we shall send a couple of men to meet the

¹Samuel Brannan to Brigham Young, Journal History of the Church, 5 December 1847, P. 1.

emigration by land, or perhaps go myself."² Brannan was to keep his new years resolution by going himself.

This decision to meet President Young was obviously influenced by a letter he had received from Orson Hyde, Parley P. Pratt, and John Taylor, all of whom were his superiors. This letter was written in New York while these three missionaries were en route to England. It was mailed to San Francisco and in it they told Brannan:

We shall be highly pleased to meet you, or someone, in the mountains, from your company about the 4th of July next, to report progress, and tell us something of the best places for location.³

Of course Brannan was anxious to tell them that the best place would be New Hope for the farmers and settlers, and San Francisco for those who wished to engage in business. Brannan must have become jubilant as he read towards the end of the letter that "You will probably have plenty of Mormons in California in the course of a year."⁴ Besides, for what ever motive, Sam Brannan was always happy to increase his authority and power.

²Millennial Star, 15 October 1847, 9:306-307.

³Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September 1846, written in New York, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City.)

⁴Ibid., 5 September 1846. It is not known exactly when Brannan received this letter but he carried it with him when he went to meet Young.

On Sunday, April 4, Elder Brannan, with four companions and fifteen horses and mules, left San Francisco. He had two purposes in mind. First he was going to give encouragement to those at New Hope, and secondly he was going to see why Brigham Young was taking so long in arriving. Brannan probably arrived at New Hope on Monday the fifth. When he arrived, he attempted to lift the morale of the people by telling them that he was on his way to see Elder Young and that he would personally guide the body of the Church back to New Hope. He may also have asked if anyone would like to go with him but no one volunteered because they were all too busy building and planting. Brannan admonished them to have things ready for President Young's arrival.

He was pleased with the three log houses, two corrals, and ferry that had been completed, and with the other buildings underway. Yet in spite of this progress, about eight of their number had vacated, leaving only ten or twelve settlers.⁵

Elder Brannan and his companions may have spent a week or more at New Hope engaging in the general activities of pioneer family life. The cross cut saw and three wooded ploughs were put to use in the early morning hours, while tending the grazing cattle or hunting

⁵California Star 12 April 1847

occupied the time of others. The blacksmith was kept busy, along with the carpenters, repairing the wagons and farm tools. They may have even spent an enjoyable evening fishing off the ferry and later playing cards.⁶

Leaving New Hope, Brannan traveled east via Sutter's Fort. Departing the fort on April 26, he crossed over the Sierras, encountering the same snow which had already trapped the Donner Party. Brannan wrote of his troubles saying that "During our journey we endured many hardships and fatigues in swimming rivers and climbing mountains."⁷ He finally met Young on the Green River (in present day Wyoming) on June 30, 1847. Orson Pratt recorded Brannan's arrival:

This afternoon towards sundown, Mr. Samuel Brannan arrived in camp from the Bay of San Francisco on the Pacific; he was the gentleman whom we appointed in the city of New York to take charge of a company of our church and conduct them by ship to Upper California by way of Cape Horn. Since that, Brother Brannan had for most of the time been engaged in locating a colony of the Saints on the San Joaquin River.⁸

⁶In the chapter "Abandonment" a list of the articles are given in advertisements in The California Star. From these provisions one can draw a mental picture of many of the activities at New Hope.

⁷Louis J. Stellman, Sam Brannan, Builder of San Francisco, (New York: Exposition Press, 1953), p. 80.

⁸Millennial Star, 1 June 1850, 12:161.

Albert Carrington, Brigham Young's secretary, also wrote of Brannan's arrival and he said of New Hope that "most of our people in California are intending to settle in the San Joaquin country, rich and fertile, climate fine and healthy."⁹

The next day, July 1, Brannan informed the group that they were now in California and that Captain Sutter wished them to come and settle near him.¹⁰ On July 2, 1847, another meeting was called at which time Brannan gave a detailed report on the condition of the country.¹¹ Thomas Bullock recorded his impressions of what Brannan said: "Salmon in the river San Joaquin-weight 10 or 12 pounds, clover as high as the horses belly, wild horses scattered all over the plains, geese in abundance."¹² On July 3, Brigham Young wrote to Apostles Lyman and Rich:

⁹Journal History of the Church, 3 July 1847, p. 4.

¹⁰Wilford Woodruff's Journal, 1 July 1847, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City). If Brannan told the Saints that they were now in California, then he too felt that California included an extensive area. Nevertheless, Elder Young had often mentioned the Pacific Coast which gave Brannan the impression that the Church was going to locate in present day central California.

¹¹Thomas Bullock's Journal, 2 July 1847, p. 16. (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

¹²Ibid.

The brethren are making a settlement on the San Joaquin river, about seventy-five miles southwest from the bay and have 150 acres of wheat growing besides potatoes, etc. Expecting us to help eat it; but our destination is the Great Basin, or Salt Lake, for the present at least to examine the country.¹³

The next day Brannan was counseled by Young on "how to proceed in California for the best."¹⁴

Brannan told Young of his many successes. He mentioned the influence of his newspaper, the friendliness of the "gentiles" towards the Mormons, the great potentials of the central California area, and his successful little colony on the Stanislaus River. He also spoke of the few converts that had been gained.¹⁵

Nevertheless there were some pressing problems which needed to be solved. Brannan had lost some of his prestige because many of the Brooklyn Saints were drifting away and did not respect his authority.¹⁶ This

¹³Journal History of the Church, 3 July 1847.
p. 3.

¹⁴Thomas Bullock Journal, 4 July 1847, p. 18.

¹⁵Reva Scott, San Francisco's Forgotten Jason; Samuel Brannan and the Golden Fleece. (New York: MacMillan Company, 1944), p. 168.

¹⁶Brannan had not yet been able to pass through either the Kirtland or Nauvoo Temple (receive his endowments) and there learn many of the secret teachings of the Mormon Church. But some of the Brooklyn Saints had done so and felt that they were superior or at least knew more than Brannan. Brannan said that this was a cause of some of his problems.

was in part due to his own jury trial and the fact that he had been quick to excommunicate various members.¹⁷ Another problem was the failure of those who had entered into the contract on the Brooklyn to keep their covenant. Brannan told Young that "others who had entered into the original contract of two years have broken that contract."¹⁸ In order to help solve this last problem President Young wrote a month later to the members in California:

And we feel to say to those who are unitedly engaged with Brother Brannan in laboring unitedly for the good of the whole, that the poor, the widows, and the fatherless may not want, that you will be blessed if you keep your contract to the end of the two years, and labor diligently in your several occupations; and when that time shall expire, we hope you will be able to cancel all your obligations.¹⁹

It is very probably that Brannan felt that all of his problems, and some of the Prophet's would be solved if they would just move to California. Brannan had traveled far to lay his case and he gave a glowing description of the California "Eden." Yet President Young frustrated Elder Brannan when he said, "The camp

¹⁷Stellman, p. 83.

¹⁸Journal History of the Church, 7 July 1847, p. 10.

¹⁹Journal History of the Church, 7 August 1847, p. 9.

will not go to the west coast or to your place at present they have not the means."²⁰

Brannan was too energetic to allow himself to become discouraged by Young's first rebuffs and he felt that in a short time President Young would change his mind.²¹ Perhaps he thought that a period of time was needed to let the Mormon Prophet grasp the grandeur and potentials of California. On July 4, Elder Brannan was given an assignment which greatly encouraged him. President Young wrote:

The council decided that Sergeant Thomas S. Williams, one of the brethren of the Mormon Battalion who had overtaken the pioneers on the Green River, should return to meet Captain James Brown and the Battalion Company from Pueblo, accompanied by Samuel Brannan, and inasmuch as they had neither received their discharge, nor full pay, Brother Brannan should tender them his services as pilot to conduct them to California.²²

Brannan probably went joyfully about fulfilling his new duties thinking that Young was reconsidering his position. Brannan may have felt that the time he

²⁰Journal History of the Church, 3 July 1847, p. 3.

²¹Bailey, p. 103.

²²Brigham Young Journal, 4 July 1847, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City), 1847. Also in Manuscript History of Brigham Young 1846-1847, p. 562. It is also possible that President Young only wanted Brannan to take fifteen or twenty of the brethren to the coast, leaving the rest of them at Salt Lake. If this is true, Young made this decision after Brannan had already left. William Clayton Journal, 8 July 1847, p. 286.

would be absent would provide a long enough period for Young to realize what a paradise California really was. Besides, even if President Young did not have the same vision as himself, at least he would be able to bring the approximately 150 men, 30 women, and 40 children of the "sick detachment" of the Mormon Battalion to the Pacific Coast.²³ After all the Prophet Young had said "to conduct them to California."²⁴ Brannan knew that 220 people, most of whom were men, would more than double the size of his flock. He also knew that many families would later follow in order to be with their husbands and fathers. The influx of these new Saints would help him to keep his promise to those at New Hope and also curtail his rapidly waning influence. Brannan probably felt that there was still hope for New Hope.

On Tuesday, July 27, at 8:30 p.m. Elder Brannan guided the "sick detachment" into the Salt Lake Valley where President Young and the Saints were now located.²⁵ Brannan's worst fears were soon confirmed when he saw

²³Muir, 2:58. Also in Joseph Smith, 3:360.

²⁴Brigham Young Journal, 4 July 1847, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City), 1847.

²⁵William Clayton Journal, 27 July 1847, (Salt Lake City, Deseret News, 1921) p. 324.

that a city was being planned. When the Prophet told him that the Salt Lake area was to be the center of the Church, Brannan undoubtedly began to recount the manifold assets of the Pacific Coast. Brannan's thoughts at this time have been best guessed at by Paul Bailey:

Mentally Sam compared this sun-swept picture of blue desolation with the great land he felt to be of more certain promise to the west. He thought of California's wide, navigable rivers, and compared them with the puny creeks, and the brush-choked dribblet Brigham had named "The Jordan River". He thought of California's gentle climate and compared it to the dry and blistering mountain heat, and the viscous winters and howling winds so surely a part of this wilderness. He thought of New Hope, with its bottomless black soil, its endless procession of wild life and game. And like a sickening echo he heard the mourning wail of the coyote.²⁶

At the same time Sam Brannan was dealt another crushing blow when President Young told him that he would not be able to conduct the Mormon Battalion to California because they were also going to stay in Salt Lake City.²⁷ Brannan's dreams must have been shattered.

Brannan and Young each had different visions of "Zion". Brigham recorded his meeting with Brannan by writing:

We met Samuel Brannan and a few others from California, and they wanted us to go there. I

²⁶Bailey, p. 105.

²⁷Bailey, p. 106.

remarked, 'Let us go to California, and we cannot stay there over five years; but let us stay in the mountains, and we can raise our own potatoes and eat them; and I calculate to stay here.'²⁸

Brigham proved to be right and wrote in October, 1848:

If we were to go to San Francisco and dig up chunks of gold, or find it here in the valley it would ruin us. Many wanted to unite Babylon and Zion; its the love of money that hurts them. If we find gold and silver we are in bondage directly. To talk of going away from this valley we are in for anything is like vinegar to my eyes. They that love the world have not their affections placed upon the Lord.²⁹

The gold rush may have crippled the Mormon Church if they had settled in California because they probably would not have achieved social and spiritual solidarity. Nevertheless, Elder Brannan's meeting with President Young had doomed New Hope.

As persistent as Brannan was in describing the beauty, the wonders, and the advantages of California, Young still refused to go there. Elder Brannan could not believe that Brigham Young preferred this alkali desert to his beautiful California.

Brannan must have begun to wonder about Young's credibility. Even Apostles Hyde, Pratt, and Taylor

²⁸Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, (Liverpool: 1854), 12:231.

²⁹Frank A. Golder, The March of the Mormon Battalion, (New York: The Century Co., 1928), p. 246. Also in Muir, 1:28.

had told him to find "the best places for location," not the worst.³⁰ The seeds of unbelief and discontentment were probably firmly planted in Brannan's mind.

Nevertheless, in order to demonstrate his devotion to the Church and to reaffirm his allegiance, Elder Brannan, with others, was rebaptized on August 7, 1847, in Salt Lake City by Heber C. Kimball. He was then reconfirmed a member of the Church that same day by Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff, and Amasa Lyman.³¹ Rebaptism was a common practice in the Church at this time and Brannan may have overcome any bad feelings he had towards Brother Young by realizing that his predicament was not devoid of compensations. He would remain the titular head of the Church in California and plenty of the Saints would stay there.³² Besides, in his capacity as an ecclesiastical leader the Church tithes would pass through him, an "opportunity" that later proved corruptive.

Before Brannan left Salt Lake City to return home, President Young wrote:

And now, brethren and sisters, we feel to say to you that we are satisfied, as far as we have

³⁰Orson Hyde to Sam Brannan, 5 September 1846, (Church Historians Office, Salt Lake City).

³¹Letter from the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to Clint McCready, 14 May 1975.

³²Stellman, p. 85.

been informed, with the proceedings of Elder Brannan. We believe he is a good man and that it is his design to do right.³³

A main problem was that Brannan was in fact embittered and would soon be led away after various temptations.

That same day Brigham Young gave Samuel Brannan and Captain Brown a letter for the San Francisco Saints. It said:

We say to you, all, and to all the Saints in California, you are in a goodly land . . . let no one discourage you from coming to this place . . . not that we wish to depopulate California of all the Saints, but that we wish to make this a stronghold. . . . It is desireable that there should be a stopping place, resting place for the Saints on the West of the mountains. . . . We know not but your settlements on the San Joaquin is the best location for this purpose that you can find; if so it is the right place for you to labor upon to make a stronghold for the present.³⁴

Brannan started back for San Francisco on August 9. He must have been pleased that Young's letter did not recommend that California be abandoned.

On his return to California, Brannan encountered on September 6, a group of 200 of the Mormon Battalion who had been discharged at San Diego and were going east to meet the body of the Church.³⁵ Daniel Tyler recorded

³³Journal History of the Church, 7 August 1847.

³⁴Muir, 1:28.

³⁵Journal History of the Church, 18 September 1847, p. 1.

the meeting:

Leaving the tragic scene (the Donnor Party) on the morning of the 6th of September we resumed our journey, and in a short time met Samuel Brannan returning from his trip to meet the Saints. We learned from him that the pioneers had reached Salt Lake Valley, but his description of the valley and its facilities was anything but encouraging. Among other things Brother Brannan said the Saints could not possibly subsist in the Great Salt Lake Valley as, according to the testimony of the mountaineers, it froze there every month in the year, and the ground was too dry to sprout seeds without irrigation, and if irrigated with the cold mountain streams, the seeds planted would be chilled and prevented from growing, or, if they did grow, they would be sickly and fail to mature. He considered it no place for an agricultural people, and expressed his confidence that the Saints would emigrate to California the next spring.³⁶

Tyler asked Brannan if he had given his views to President Young, and Brannan replied that he had. On further inquiry as to how his views were received Brannan said that "The President laughed and made some rather insignificant remark; but when he has fairly tried it he will find that I was right and he was wrong, and will come to California."³⁷ Tyler finished recording the event by writing:

He thought all except those whose families were known to be at Salt Lake had better turn back and labor until spring, when in all probability the

³⁶Journal History of the Church, 16 October 1847.

³⁷Ibid., 16 October 1847. Also found in the Journal of Daniel Tyler, p. 315.

church would come to them; or, if not, they could take means to their families. We camped over night with Brannan.³⁸

This proved to be good advice because there was a severe food shortage in Salt Lake the first year. Many of the Battalion men followed Brannan's counsel and went to work in central California.

On the tenth of September Brannan arrived at Sutter's Fort. In his journal John Sutter wrote that "Mr. Sam'l Brannan returned from the Great Salt Lake, and announced a large emigration by land."³⁹ Brannan may still have been hopeful that Young would change his mind and come to California. The next day, September 11, Brannan left Sutter's Fort and traveled to New Hope. Sutter also recorded this event: "Mr. S. Brannan left this morning for the San Joaquin, lent him the gray mule of Mr. McKenzie."⁴⁰

Brannan probably dismounted at New Hope around noon on the twelfth. The settlers who gathered around him were sad to hear that "the Saints would not be coming this season". He spent approximately five days

³⁸Ibid., 16 October 1847.

³⁹John Augustus Sutter, New Helvetia Diary, 1845-1848 (San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press, 1939) p. 76.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 77.

there organizing, encouraging, and generally helping the little colony.

Brannan finally arrived home in San Francisco on September 18, 1847, after six months absence. William Glover, who was left in charge, and others were anxiously waiting to hear when Brother Young would be coming. The news that he would not come "this year" undoubtedly depressed many. Brannan's newspaper, The California Star, ran a short article concerning his arrival.

Mr. S. Brannan, publisher of this paper, after an absence of nearly 6 months, arrived at this place on Friday morning last. . . . Mr. Brannan said among other things that . . . they (the Mormons at Salt Lake) contemplate opening an entire new road to this country, in connection with the present rendezvous, and which completed, they move en masse to the valleys of California.⁴¹

President Young undoubtedly wanted to link Salt Lake City with the Pacific Coast and perhaps it is this fact that led Brannan and others to cling to the belief that the Church would yet move to the coast. Brannan either misunderstood what Young had said to him or purposely exaggerated in order to maintain his personal interests. Yet in October, Brannan wrote to Young:

Governor Mason spoke in the most flattering terms of our people and the course they were pursuing especially in relation to their policy of settlement of the Great Salt Lake and opening

⁴¹Muir, 2:59.

a new road to California. The project is also very popular with the people, but many say they would rather have seen you come in this season.⁴²

Brannan's actions show that he was both optimistic and persistent.

On September 19, Elder Brannan wrote to Jesse C. Little trying to persuade him of the benefits of moving to California.

I reached my home yesterday in good health. . . I found everything on my return far better than my most sanguine expectation. The Mormons are A No. 1 in this country, . . . Here will be the great emporium of the Pacific and eventually of the world.⁴³

Brannan, with an eye now turned to material gain, was telling his friends that the Great Basin was not "the right place".

Samuel Brannan would not give up trying to persuade Brigham Young to send him more brethren. Shortly after Brannan had arrived at his residence he wrote President Young saying, "I hope it may be counted wisdom by your council for one of your number to visit us next fall."⁴⁴ Brannan meant one of the twelve apostles, of the Church. If an apostle were sent to San Francisco

⁴²Journal History of the Church, 30 October 1847, p. 9.

⁴³Muir, 1:59

⁴⁴Journal History of the Church, 17 October 1847.

or even to New Hope it would have had a positive affect on the area. It may have caused other Elders to come to the coast with their families and it would have given the appearance that it was alright with President Young to settle on the coast.

In the same letter Brannan also informed the Prophet that he had dissolved Sam Brannan and Company.

On my return home I deemed it most prudent to dissolve our company association, from the fact that a great many were idle and indolent, and would try to live upon the hard earnings of a few, and at the same time it would leave me less incumbered to perform the duties involved upon me⁴⁵ in sustaining the interest of the cause of Zion.

The dissolution of Sam Brannan and Company was like signing the death certificate of New Hope. To those at this small settlement who had struggled, suffered, and labored together unselfishly, who had given freely of their time, money, and energies in this joint enterprise, New Hope became a "Lost Hope".

Almost a year later, Elder Brannan wrote again to President Young and reverted back to his old theme of trying to increase the number of Saints in California.

I sincerely hope that another year will not pass away until I have the pleasure and happiness of receiving 'One of the Twelve' in this place. I feel assured in saying, that the good results

⁴⁵Ibid., 17 October 1847.

that would arise from it would pay a thousand fold to the cause and interest of Zion.⁴⁶

In this same letter Brannan continued his theme by saying:

There is a powerful party in this country that wishes you to come here and take possession of the valuable lands in this country, on this subject though, I shall no more, it is no prerogative of mine to dictate.⁴⁷

Unfortunately Samuel Brannan turned his back on the Mormon Church in the early 1850's probably because of dissatisfaction with the Church and because of other interests. Later, when missionaries visited him in California he wanted nothing to do with them.

In 1849 Brannan may still have been planning to revive New Hope or to start another agricultural colony. Evidence to this effect is found in a letter from T. H. Green to Thomas O. Larkin in which Mr. Green says, "Brannan is going to lay out a town on the Estanashlau which I think will do well."⁴⁸

Some of the Battalion members who returned to California went to New Hope to help harvest the crops. Yet in spite of this added help, the news that New Hope

⁴⁶Journal History of the Church, 20 March 1849, p. 2.

⁴⁷Ibid., 29 March 1849, p. 6.

⁴⁸T. H. Green to Thomas Larkin, 28 March 1849, The Larkin Papers, 8:193.

would not become the center of the Mormon Church, combined with the knowledge that their beloved Prophet and the Saints were settling in Salt Lake City, caused many to decide to leave as soon as possible.⁴⁹

New Hope had provided an opportunity for the members to acquire lands of their own and learn the science of California agriculture. But it had not proven to be, as Brannan had hoped, the "center stake" of Zion.

⁴⁹William Glover, "The Mormons in California," MS.

CHAPTER VII

VISITORS

During the winter and summer of 1846 and 1847 New Hope had various visitors and many people knew of its existence. Records were not kept at this little colony so one has to look at other sources to find out who the visitors were; and there were probably many more who went unrecorded. Nevertheless their short accounts provide one with small tidbits of information about the farm and its inhabitants.

The person who frequented New Hope the most was probably Sam Brannan. He helped found it and was concerned with its growth and progress. It is known that he went there to settle the William Stout problem and that he returned on April 6, on his way to meet Brigham Young. He was undoubtedly there many more times.

During the month of March 1847, a man by the name of Agricola was at, or passed by, New Hope. He then wrote an article about the San Joaquin Valley which was printed in Brannan's paper on April 17. He wrote:

In ascending the stream we first met with the Stanislaus, a clear, rapid, mountain stream, some forty or fifty yards wide, with a considerable

depth of water in its lower portion. The Mormons have commenced a settlement called New Hope, and built some two or three houses near the mouth.¹

On April 5, the San Joaquin Saints were probably surprised to see Sam Brannen, Charles Smith, and two non-Mormons. They were on their way to Sutters Fort, and Salt Lake with fifteen horses and probably only stayed for a short time.

Tule Rover was the next sojourner, at New Hope, arriving around April 12, only a few days after Brannan had left on his way to meet Brigham Young. He also wrote an article for Brannan's paper in which he said:

I visited, and made a noontday halt at New Hope, on my way hither. The settlers (some 10 or 12 in number) appear contented and energetic--have three or four houses completed, and as many more under way.²

This account informs us that by April of 1847 about half of the original twenty settlers had left New Hope, but that those who remained were not discouraged. They continued building under the illusion that hundreds more would be coming.

¹The California Star, 17 April 1847. This same account also appears in What I Saw in California, by Edwin Bryant. He says Dr. Marsh, of Marsh's landing, wrote it. It is quite plausible that Marsh was also a visitor at New Hope.

²The California Star, 17 April 1847. Thanks to Tule Rover, we know about how many of the Saints had left New Hope.

The most extensive account of anyone who went to New Hope is given by Addison Pratt. He had arrived in San Francisco on his way home after serving a mission in Tahiti. He recorded:

It was near harvest time, when I arrived, and Mr. Brannan and his company had opened a farm on one of the tributaries of the San Juaquin River, where they had sown nearly 300 acres of wheat; and as I had been used to wheat-harvesting, while working on a farm, I proposed to go and help them. The proposition was readily accepted, and on the 17th of June (1847) we started for the farm in an open launch. Our route was a circuitous one and the distance about 150 miles by water; but in starting we took advantage of wind and tide, and the first night we put up at Lamphs ferry, in the straits of Carquines, which was kept by one of the "Brooklyn" brethren by the name of Coombs.³

He was traveling with Brother Isaac Goodwin and recounted all their experiences in wandering up the river to New Hope including their inconveniences and the beauty of the land:

We went to the house, where I received a very kind welcome in the family of Brother Thompkins. Here was a lovely situation, and everything seemed beautiful and pleasant, but when the sun was nearing the western hills, the mosquitoes began to gather in such multitudes that they seemed to threaten a complete extraction of all our blood. We commenced beating, thrashing and smoking, in order to drive them away, but to little purpose. In spite of our best efforts, they kept us awake all night.

On the morrow we commenced preparations for harvest, which was already white; but at noon I

³Manuscript History of The California Mission, 11 June 1847.

went out and took a nap under the shade of an oak. By doing this daily, I obtained all the sleep and rest I had during each 24 hours. The spring floods had drenched out a part of the wheat belonging to the brethren and left innumerable stagnant pools, which afforded a good breeding place for the mosquitoes. Had it not have been for the mosquitoes, I should have enjoyed myself well at this farm.⁴

Pratt also described in some detail the flora and fauna of the land. After remaining about six weeks, at the end of July or beginning of August, Addison Pratt returned to San Francisco,

It is interesting to note that Elder Pratt had spent six weeks at New Hope. He obviously did other things but his main purpose in going there was to help cradle wheat.⁵ There are many different accounts of how much wheat was planted ranging from 80 acres to 300 acres. If these different accounts are placed in chronological order it shows that the brethren were continually planting more wheat, along with their other crops. When harvest time was finally at hand they had about 300 acres of wheat. This is undoubtedly why it took Addison Pratt and others six weeks to complete the job.

Azariah Smith, of the Mormon Battalion, was another person who was helping with the harvest. It is not known

⁴Manuscript History of The California Mission, 11 June 1947.

⁵Journal History of the Church, 3 April 1849, p. 5.

when he came or how long he stayed. The only reference he made was, "When I was at work the year before at the Stanislaus ranch, these mountains (Sierras) were in plain sight and were covered with snow all summer."⁶

After the Mormon Battalion was discharged at Los Angeles, July 15, 1847, a group of them were returning home by a route through central California. They passed near New Hope and five of them recorded the event in their journals. These five men were Henry W. Bigler, Robert S. Bliss, Nathaniel V. Jones, Samuel H. Rogers, and David Tyler.⁷ Bigler recorded in August:

Friday 20th, We learn from the Indians that some Americans have lately settled down the river about nine miles from here. We think they must be families of Saints who have come around the Horn in the Ship Brooklyn last season.

Saturday 21st, This morning we sent Andrew Lytle with two others down to the settlement to see who those families are, while the main camp moves slowly forward.⁸

Andrew Lytle did not record the event. Who the other two men were is not known, and the other journals say no more than does the diary of Bigler.

⁶Journal History of the Church, 26 June 1848.

⁷Pauline Smith, on page 123 of her book, gives the impression that Captain Jefferson Hunt also visited New Hope while he was in California; he was not with the other five.

⁸Journal of Henry W. Bigler, 20 August 1847, p. 79-80. Rogers said four men were sent, but the other diaries say three.

Thomas Rhoads, who came overland to the valley in 1846, had settled near New Hope on the Mokelumne river. Having been baptized a Mormon, he probably visited his brethren frequently. He also went to see Nathaniel Jones, a Battalion member under General Kearney in the San Joaquin Valley, on June 11. Rhoads most likely informed Jones of the Mormon settlement near by.

It is also probable that Abraham Coombs, who lived at Lamphs Ferry in the straits of Carquines took a trip up the river to the farm. Anyone who went to or from the farm by water passed by his house so he was well informed of all their activities.

It is interesting to note that members of the Church did very little proselyting in the area. It was not due to a lack of missionary zeal but was a result of a directive from Young himself. He wrote to the Saints in California in 1847: "We do not desire much public preaching or any noise or confusion concerning us, or our religion, in California at the present time."⁹ The Mormon prophet obviously did not want to chance the expulsion of the Saints from California the way they had been in Missouri and other places.

⁹Journal History of the Church, 7 August 1847, p. 8.

The lack of preaching may be one reason why visitors at New Hope did not record anything about the "strange" religion of the Mormons.

If more of these men had kept records, additional light would be shed upon the history of this small Mormon community.

CHAPTER VIII

ABANDONMENT

There were three basic reasons why the Mormons left New Hope in the fall of 1847. The principle one was that Sam Brannan returned without the main body of the Church.

When Brannan had left to meet with Young he had promised to bring the Church to settle in the San Joaquin Valley. This news caused the little group to work hard. They planted more crops, began new houses, and built another corral. When word came, in autumn of 1847, that Young and the migrating Saints were remaining in the Salt Lake Valley, the little colony became disinterested in their venture. Many of them wanted to be with the rest of the Church. William Glover wrote of this:

Everyone went to work for themselves, to make a fit out to go to the valley, as best we could. The land, the oxen, the crop, houses and tools, and launch all went into Brannan's hands, and the company that did the work never got anything for their labor.¹

So New Hope was abandoned largely because of the decision to settle near Salt Lake.

¹William Glover, "The Mormons in California", MS.

A great evil plagued New Hope each evening and night. After the spring flood, the settlement was continually harassed by an abundance of mosquitoes. Even Brigham Young knew of their incursion. "Those of Brannan's company that had settled on the San Joaquin River had vacated in favor of the mosquitos."² But Brigham did not know of the magnitude of their aggressiveness. Tule Rover gave one of the best accounts of their invasion:

I certainly never lived for a moment in a country so abounding with mosquitoes as that region watered by the San Joaquin and its tributaries, and I trust never again at this season of the year, may I be compelled to pass a night in that vicinity. The blanket is no protection, and I verily believe they would penetrate, with their enormous bills, sheet iron or copper. We were five days tormented by them, and I assure you we suffered some, and heartily rejoiced, when their infernal humming ceased in our ears.³

Almost every settler and traveler through the area complained about the mosquitoes, but added that the land was the choicest garden of the country.⁴

Another big problem bothering the Saints was a lack of unity caused by Sam Brannan and Company. James

²Journal History of the Church, 27 July 1848.

³The California Star, 17 April 1847.

⁴Even the world traveler, Bayard Taylor, devoted a paragraph to the mosquitoes.

Ferguson, a member in San Francisco, summed it up in a letter to Brigham Young in April of 1848:

Among the Saints, discord and discontent prevailed too much. On tracing these feelings to the origin they found themselves almost every instance at the organization of a firm, Samuel Brannan and Company, in which the common stock principle was promulgated. They traced this from its organization to its dissolution and found that in every instance the many bereft and trodden upon as they had always been were the sufferers and the few who were the controllers and accountants of the firm became rich and haughty.⁵

As already indicated, these are the three basic reasons that the dream of a great city at New Hope was dispelled: the Saints were staying in Salt Lake City, the mosquitoes and hardships of pioneer life, and the disharmony caused by William Stout and Sam Brannan and Company. All of these reasons worked together to bring about the abandonment of New Hope.⁶

There are also a flurry of minor reasons which are inseparable from the major ones. Brannan harbored ill feelings towards Young, believing he had been deceived by the Mormon leader. Also, the dissolution of Sam Brannan and Company left the Saints at New Hope somewhat stranded. The colonists may also have missed

⁵Journal History of the Church, 1 April 1848.

⁶The spring flood and being away from civilization could also have easily contributed to their decision to leave.

the conveniences of civilization and their friends and loved ones. Even though the farm had offered a good yield for its first year the decision was made to leave.

Many of the settlers pulled up their stakes in September, while others left in November. Some of them went to Salt Lake while most of them stayed in Sacramento, San Francisco, or San Jose. Alondus Buckland, who was the last one to leave, settled in Stockton. The discovery of gold in the spring of 1848 reunited many of them at the mines of Mormon Island.⁷

It is interesting to note that if the Mormons had stayed on at New Hope for another year, and had the Saints in California, or Salt Lake, been interested in the gold rush, New Hope would still exist today. It would have been a perfect base for Mormon miners. It was located in the center of the Mother Lode, and it offered travel to the mines either by land or water. The Mormons could have skimmed off the "cream of the gold" and then turned to the lucrative business of

⁷During the month of March, 1848, two Mormons, Sidney Willis and Wilford Hudson, discovered gold on an island in the American River about halfway between Coloma and Sutter's Fort. Ricketts, p. 21. Brannan apparently became quite wealthy from collecting the tithing of the many brethren who worked there. It is said that at one time the Mormon miners at Natoma (Mormon Island) numbered about 300 men. Muir, 1:37.

supplying the miners with food from their farms. Had Elder Brannan established his "Shirt Tail Store" at New Hope instead of Sutter's Fort the Mormons would have been able to more fully "mine the miners". Unfortunately, its true potential never materialized.

On September 27, 1848, Brannan began running a series of advertisements about his company and New Hope. They are valuable in helping one to know what supplies were at New Hope and what improvements were undertaken. Listed in order they are:

COPARTNERSHIP NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the firm of S. Brannan and Co. is this day dissolved by mutual consent.

S. Brannan, Pres't.

D. Stark, Clerk
Sept. 27, 1847.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to all persons having demands against S. Brannan & Co. to present them for settlement on or before the 31st day of Dec. 1847 to

W. Glover,
D. Stark,
John R. Robbins.

FOR SALE

THE SUBSCRIBERS offer for sale on reasonable terms, the effects of the late firm of S. Brannan & Co. as follows:

A large quantity of Wheat;

American Cattle; Horses; Mules; a large quantity of good breed pigs;

A valuable town lot, situated on the corner of Kearney and Pacific streets; a lot and farm-house, corner of Clay and Stockton streets.

SCHOOL BOOKS, consisting of:-

Arithmetics; Spelling Books, Grammars; Writing Books; Slates and Pencils; Music Books; Primers; Geographys, (Morse's); Dictionaries; Astronomies; Table Books; Children's Small Geographys; ink, &c. &g. also

HARPER'S FAMILY LIBRARY
A MEDICINE CHEST.

The Launch "Comet", Wagons Chains & Yokes; a Pit Saw; Cross-cut Saw; Scuthes; two Seines; Seine-Floats and Twine, Pitch Forks; Spades; Shovels; Picks; Rivets; Files; Tacks; Butts; Plane-Irons; Whetstones; mowing Rifles; Screws; Latches; Copper Pumps; Cards; scythe Irons; cut and wrought Nails.

Two drums; muskets; swords; rifle powder; shot; percussion caps; two pigs lead.

Paint brushes; linseed oil; turpentine; white lead; lamp-black; varnish; yellow ochre; whiting; sulphur; borax; indigo; gum arabic; oil cans.

Linen thread; wicking; one hat block; matches; sail needles and twine; castor oil; musturd; soap; 8 lbs. salt; empty hogsheads.

W. Glover,
D. Stark,
John R. Robbins.

Sept. 27, 1847.

FOR SALE

THE Houses and all the improvements at the junction of the Stanislou and San Joaquin, for cash. Apply to

J. R. Robbins,
D. Stark,
W. Glover.

Oct. 23, 1847.

FOR SALE

THREE Wooden Ploughs at New Hope settlement on the San Joaquin river, near the ferry, also, in this place, One Large Potash Kettle, Two Ploughs, 13 Plough-points, 2 Mild-boards, 2 Land Slides, 1 Grind Stone, Scythes & Snatches.

Sam Brannan

San Francisco, Oct. 30.

THE Following property will be sold at Public Auction, on Tuesday the 21st of Dec., at 10 o'clock A.M.--The Improvements at the junction of the Joaquin and Stanislou, consisting of 3 Log Houses, 2 corrals, with a good Ferry Boat. One half of the Santa Clara Tanning Establishment, containing the only complete set of Tools in the country. 3 Fishing Weines, 1 Turning Lathe, 3 Yoke of Cattle; 5 Barrels of Salt, 2

Bags of Wrought Nails, 15 lbs. of screws, Percussion Caps, 1 Cross-cut Saw, Lead, Shovels, Spades, Pick-Axes, 1 Pair Iron Dogs, Muskets, Rosin, 1 Wheel-barrow, 3 shoat Pigs, 1 Shanty, 2 Drums, Bar Steel, San Paper, 1 Hat Block, and an assortment of School Books, with Sundry other articles. To be sold at the City Hotel.
 W. M. McDonald, Auctioneer.
 San Francisco, Dec. 11, 1847.

RANCHO FOR SALE,
 VERY Low for cash or short credit, one of the most valuable grazing Farms for Cattle in the Tulare Valley--green grass the year round, situated at the junction of the San Joaquin and Stanislaus, with three Log Houses and a Ferry Boat for crossing the river. Terms of sale apply to

D. Sparks,
 J. R. Robbins,
 W. Glover, or
 S. Brannan.

Dec. 11, 1847.

It is not known what happened to the farm after the Mormons left. It is not even known if they purchased it in the first place. Brannan discontinued the advertisements after December 11, 1847, in which he offered New Hope at a public auction on December 21.⁸

In the fall of 1848, two men named John Doak and Jacob Bonsell began operating a ferry at a location very near New Hope. Bayard Taylor said that their receipts ranged from \$500 to \$1,000 daily.⁹

In the spring of 1850, one of the houses at New

⁸If Brannan gave a deed to a buyer it was probably drawn up by Judge S. C. Palmer who had drawn up 300 deeds for Brannan at three dollars each. It was probably lost.

⁹Bayard Taylor, El Dorado (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1850) p. 75.

Hope was occupied by William York, George Cross, and Charles Imas.¹⁰ In 1851 these men sold twenty-seven square miles of land, including the old Mormon land, to Hiram B. Scott for five thousand dollars.¹¹

It is known, or at least so recorded, that one Henry Grissim took up land on the old site of the Mormon settlement in May, 1851. The subdivision of the area into sections and townships in 1857 and '59 indicates a cultivated field of about 40 acres.¹²

Even though Brannan offered the settlement for sale in September, there was still activity going on in November at New Hope. This is known because of an account of Joseph T. Downey. A ship had been lost on its way to Sacramento and:

There was a chance that the pilot Hugunin might have mistaken the channel and gone up the San Joaquin, but that hope faded away when a launch arrived from the Mormon Ranch and reported that they had not arrived there, and had not been seen on the passage down.¹³

The Comet probably arrived in San Francisco around November 15.¹⁴

¹⁰Kenneth Wayne Baldrige, "A History of the Mormon Settlement of Central California 1846-1847," (Modesto College of The Pacific, 1956) p. 89.

¹¹Book "A" of Deeds, Vol. I, p. 455-456.

¹²Modesto Bee, 2 May 1971.

¹³Joseph T. Downey, Filings From an Old Saw, (San Francisco: J. Howell, 1956) p. 74.

¹⁴The Comet was still sailing in the 1850's. Thomas Ainsworth recorded on July 20, 1851. "I went on

CHAPTER IX

EPILOGUE

Other than an interesting local history the Mormons only contributed two other items to the area. The first of these are a few place names, most of which are by Stockton. There is a Mormon Avenue, a Mormon Channel or Mormon Slough, and a Mormon Levee. By the Stanislaus River there is a Mormon Gulch and a Mormon Creek.

On October 22, 1949, the California Centennials Commission and the Daughters of Utah Pioneers recognized the historical significance of the area and dedicated two monuments. One was for New Hope and the other for the Comst.

NEW HOPE 1846 FIRST WHEAT

Approximately six miles west, twenty Mormon pioneers from Ship Brooklyn founded first known agricultural colony in San Joaquin Valley. Planted first wheat; also crops they irrigated by pole and bucket method. Erected three log houses, operated sawmill and ferry across Stanislaus. Settlement later known as Stanislaus City.

State Registered Landmark No. 436.
Tablet placed by California Centennial Commission.
Base furnished by Alameda County Camp, Daughters
of Utah Pioneers.
Dedicated October 22, 1949.

The monument is located in the small town of
Ripon.

THE COMET 1846
FIRST SAIL LAUNCH

First known sail launch to ascend San Joaquin River from San Francisco landed here in the autumn of 1846. Carried twenty Mormon pioneers who founded New Hope agricultural project on the Stanislaus. Yoke of oxen and span of mules driven from Marsh's Landing (Antioch) by two men who followed guide map drawn by Merritt the trapper. Two years later Doak and Bonsell operated here first ferry on San Joaquin River.

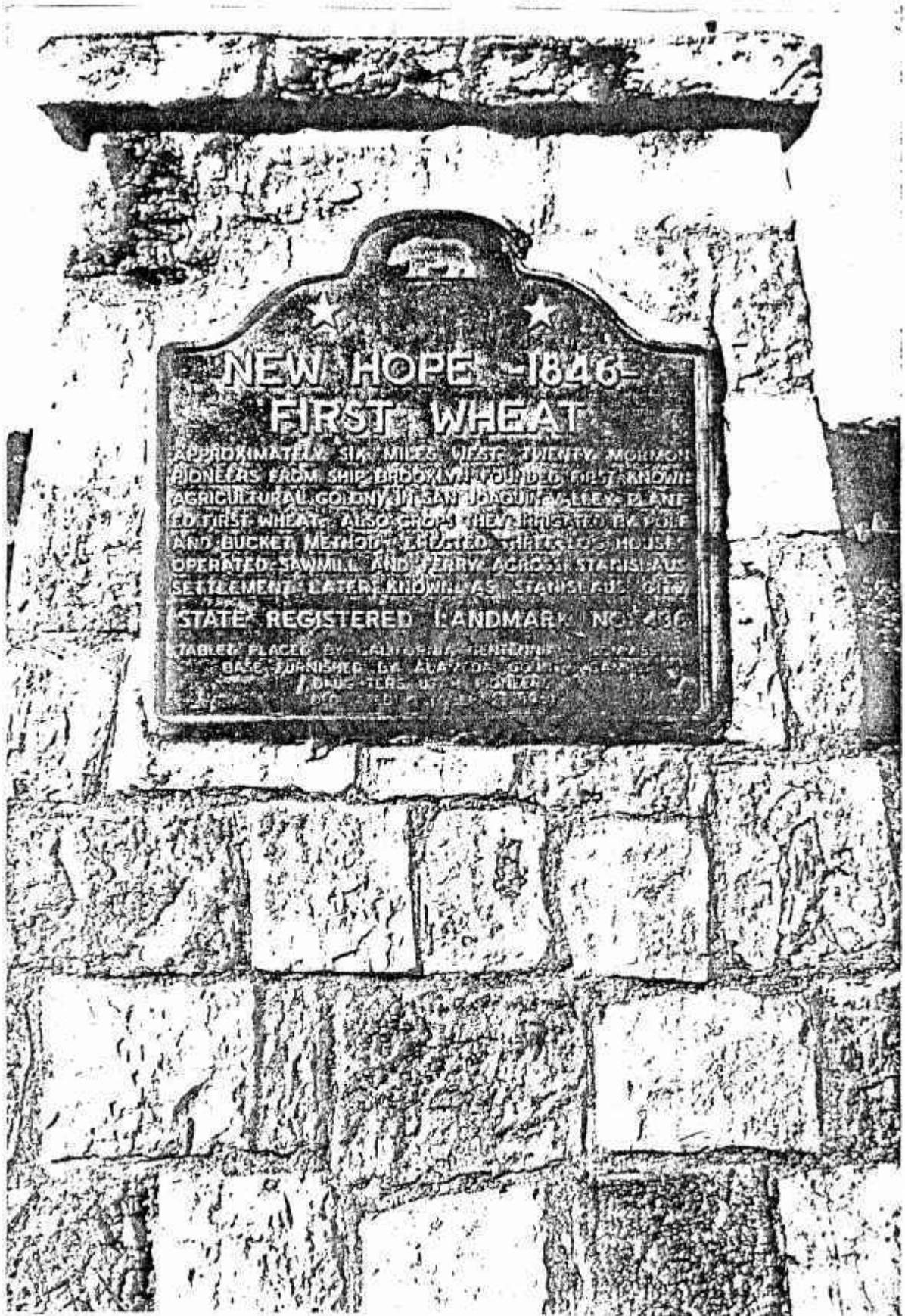
State Registered Landmark No. 437.
Tablet placed by California Centennial Commission.
Base furnished by Alameda County Camp, Daughters
of Utah Pioneers.
Dedicated October 22, 1949.

This monument is located on the south side of State Highway 120, approximately one mile east of the San Joaquin River bridge in Mossdale.

Both of these monuments were designed and constructed by Theodore Ruegg, a Mormon architect. The research for them was done by Anna Patton and the dedicating address was given by W. Aird McDonald, a former president of the California Mormon Mission.

In the Stockton News of October 21, 1949 there is an article giving a short synopsis of the history of the two monuments:

Tomorrow, beginning at 1 p.m. ceremonies will be held commemorating the landing at 'New Hope'. The first will be at what is now the Mossdale bridge. There under the sponsorship of the California Centennials Commission, a bronze plaque will be



★ ★
NEW HOPE - 1846 -
FIRST WHEAT

APPROXIMATELY SIX MILES WEST TWENTY MORMON
 PIONEERS FROM SHIP BROOKLYN FOUNDED FIRST KNOWN
 AGRICULTURAL COLONY IN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY PLANT-
 ED FIRST WHEAT. ALSO CROPS THEN HARVESTED BY POLE
 AND BUCKET METHOD. SELECTED WHITE LOG HOUSE
 OPERATED SAWMILL AND FERRY ACROSS STANISLAUS
 SETTLEMENT LATER KNOWN AS STANISLAUS CITY

STATE REGISTERED LANDMARK NO. 436

TABLET PLACED BY CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 BASE FURNISHED BY ADVANCE COUNTY
 DONE UNDER AUTHORITY OF
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA



THE COMET IS THE FIRST SAIL LAUNCH

THE COMET WAS LAUNCHED AT THE
 SALT JOAQUIN RIVER BRIDGE
 IN 1853 AND WAS THE FIRST
 SAIL LAUNCH TO CROSS THE
 BRIDGE. THE LAUNCH WAS
 BUILT BY THE CALIFORNIA
 RAILROAD COMPANY AND WAS
 THE FIRST SAIL LAUNCH TO
 CROSS THE BRIDGE SINCE
 IT WAS BUILT.

CALIFORNIA REGISTERED LANDMARK NO. 780-7

PLATE 1. LAUNCHED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN 1967. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. W. HARRIS.

FIRST TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

SITE OF COMPLETION OF PACIFIC RAILROAD
 THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SALT JOAQUIN RIVER
 BRIDGE COMPLETED THE LAST LINK OF THE TRANS-
 CONTINENTAL RAILROAD.

BUILDING HAD SIMULTANEOUSLY PROCEEDED FROM
 THE GULF AND SACRAMENTO AND MET AT THE
 SALT JOAQUIN RIVER. THE FIRST TRAIN CROSSED THE
 BRIDGE ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1869.

**CALIFORNIA REGISTERED HISTORICAL
 LANDMARK NO. 780-7**

PLATE 1. LAUNCHED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN 1967. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. W. HARRIS.

dedicated. Later in the day, at 2:30 o'clock the dedicatory group will move to the Ripon Bridge to place another plaque on the monument there. At both observances, talks will be given by a number of dignitaries from both Stockton and the Bay Area. They will include Joseph R. Knowland, chairman of the California Centennials Commission, and L. A. Mills of the San Joaquin Historical Society. The monuments are the first of their kind to be erected in this county.¹

Three days later on September 24, the same paper had another article on New Hope:

Elder Mathew Cowely of Salt Lake, one of the 12 apostles of the Mormon Church, told the group of approximately 80 persons assembled for the occasion:

'The greatest pioneers were those who sought God instead of gold. To try and emulate the qualities which made them great is the best way we can truly memorialize them. . . . ' Remarks appropriate to the occasion were delivered by W. Aird MacDonald of Stockton, L. A. Mills of the San Joaquin Historical Society, Mrs. Annaleone D. Patton of Berkeley, and Mrs. Cleo Ricks of the Alameda County Daughters of the Utah pioneers.

J. R. Knowland, Centennial Commission Chairman was unable to appear due to conflicting engagements.²

During the month of September, 1974, the large bronze plaque commemorating the landing place of the Comet was stolen. It will cost about \$300 to replace it.

¹The Stockton News, (Stockton, California) 21 October 1949.

²Ibid., 24 October 1949.

Thus ends the history of a town which could have been the center of the Mormon Church. What might have been the history and fame of New Hope, had the Mormons come to California, will never be known.

As a result of this study, at least in relation to New Hope, it becomes evident that the Mormon westward movement was not well coordinated or well planned. This caused Sam Brannan to feel that Brigham Young had deceived him and was probably a major factor in Brannan's apostasy. Due to the lack of understanding between Brannan and Young the members at New Hope labored in vain and under false hopes.

APPENDIX

New Hope Settlers

Alondus L. D. Buckland

Cyrus Ira

George Sirrine

John Joyce

Joseph Nichols

Judge R. F. Peckham

Moses A. Meder

Origin Mowry

Quartus Sparks

Henry Rollins, Father-in-law of Thomas Thompkins

Thomas Thompkins

Jane (Rollins) Thompkins

Amanda Thompkins

Jane Elizabeth Thompkins

William Evens

William Stout

New Hope Visitors

Abraham Coombs

Addison Pratt

Agricola

Andrew Lytle and two others of the Mormon Battalion

Azariah Smith

Charles Smith

Dr. Marsh

Isaac Goodwin

John M. Horner

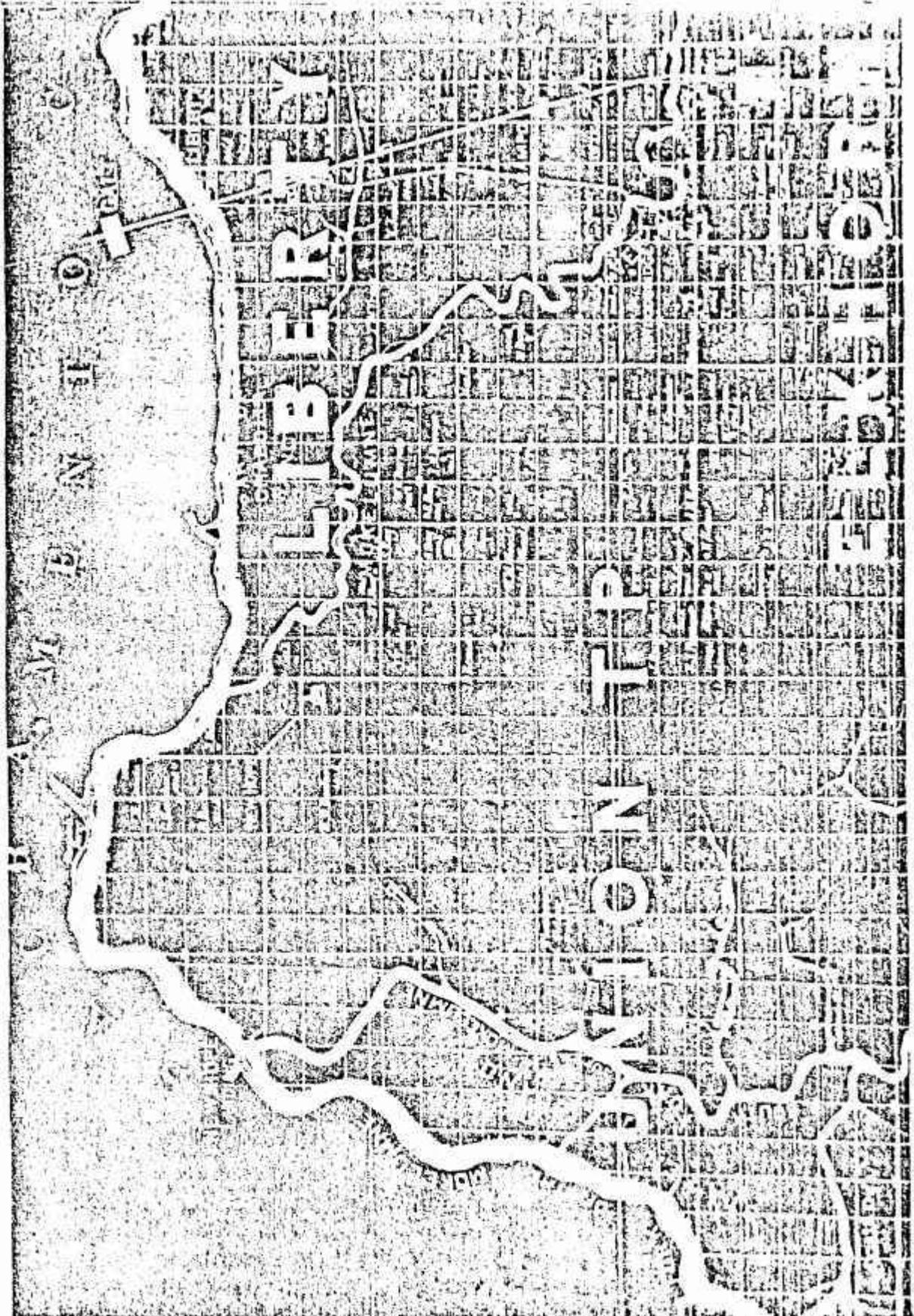
Samuel Brannan and two non-Mormons

Thomas Rhoads

Tule Rover

William Glover

On the following map there is a New Hope Landing and a small settlement name New Hope. They have no relationship to the Mormon New Hope. South of New Hope there is a town called Woodbridge. Some historians have thought that Woodbridge is New Hope which is incorrect. The Mormon settlement, called New Hope or Stanislaus City, is located on the junction of the San Joaquin and Stanislaus Rivers and not on the west fork of the Mokelumne River, as the following map shows.



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Modesto Bee, Author was Jack Brotherton.

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San Joaquin County Historical Museum. Mrs. Medora John-
son, Lodi, California.

San Joaquin County Recorder, George H. Chapman.

NEW HOPE: A MORMON COLONY IN
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

Clint McCready

Department of History

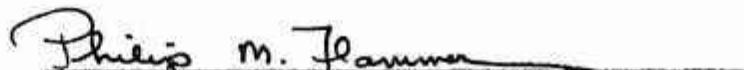
M. A. Degree, April 1976

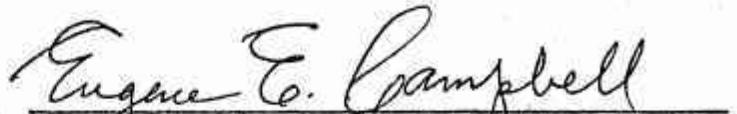
ABSTRACT

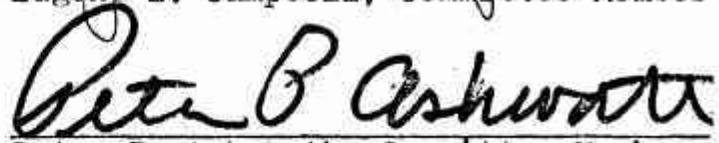
New Hope was a small Mormon agricultural community in Central California. It was founded in 1846, by Samuel Brannan, on the hope that Brigham Young would make it the center stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The approximately twenty farmers at New Hope labored diligently under the illusion that thousands of their brethren would shortly join them. When President Young decided to settle in the Great Basin, the New Hope settlement was terminated that same year: 1847.

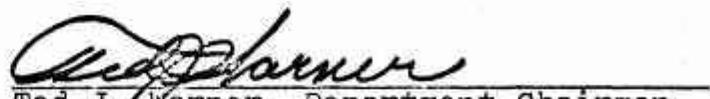
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