

MIRA COSTA COLLEGE

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BATIQUITOS LAGOON AREA

LOCAL HISTORY 43

TOM HAMMOND, INSTRUCTOR

May 10, 1977

presented by

Jay R. Lamb

CARLSBAD CITY LIBRARY

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Introduction

The Batiquitos Lagoon area, between Carlsbad and Leucadia, may seem devoid of history to some, but to others it is alive with a long and interesting history. The more I found out, the more interesting the area became. Part of this interest is due to the fact that Thomas Metcalf, who figures in the area's history, is my great grandfather.

The problem is that most of the knowledge of the area is unrecorded and thus lost. The following is an attempt to record some of the history of the Batiquitos Lagoon area.

A Brief History of the Batiquitos Lagoon Area

In 1903 teams from the U.C.L.A. Anthropology and Sociology Departments excavated an old Indian site on a bluff bordering the north shore of the Batiquitos Lagoon and just west of Interstate Five. The site was first dug up by bulldozers building an earthen dam. Artifacts dated from this excavation put occupation back 7,300 years before the present.

The people who lived there so long ago were "La Jollans". They were most likely a collecting people. Occupation of the site was probably regular but seasonal during the period from 6,000 to 7,300 years before the present. From 6,000 years ago to the present the site's occupation was intermittent and of a very low intensity.

Besides the 1,100 stone artifacts that were found, pottery specimens were also found. The pottery specimens were of a relatively late introduction and probably belonged to the Luiseno culture rather than to the La Jollan.

The Batiquitos area is just south of the approximate dividing line that separated the Luiseno and Diegueno cultures during Spanish times. The Luisenos were to the north and the Dieguenos to the south.

The Batiquitos area doesn't really have much of a recorded history as far as the Indians are concerned. The Indians were there for thousands of years, but now they are gone and so is most of their history.

In the fall of 1542, Juan Rodriquez de Cabrillo sailed past the Batiquitos Lagoon area. In 1579 Drake sailed by and in 1602 Vizcaino sailed by. How close they were when they sailed by would be very hard to tell. But they did sail by and they were making history. And in a way they were the beginning of something that would mostly destroy the Indian history that had been there before.

In July 1769 the Portola-Crespi expedition, on their way north from San Diego to find Monterey, camped in the Green Valley area south of Batiquitos Lagoon. After camping there they probably proceeded past the eastern end of the Lagoon. In other words, the Batiquitos Lagoon area's European history is some of the very oldest in the state!

At the east end of Batiquitos Lagoon is El Camino Real. The Spaniards and those who came later usually passed this general area on their way north or south.

John Lincoln Kelly, in a taped interview from the 1930's or 40's said that, "Batiquitos was named by priests from the Mission."

The actual meaning of Batiquitos is uncertain. Lou Stein's book, San Diego County Place Names, mentions three possibilities: "John Davidson explained it as 'the baptized ones'; Phil Hanna recorded it as 'flat-bottomed boats'; Erwin Gudde explained it as 'small watering hole'".

The land around Batiquitos Lagoon was never made into a Rancho. The two closest ranchos were the Encinitas Rancho to the southeast, owned by Andres Ybarra, and the Rancho Aqua Hedionda, owned by Juan Maria Marron, which had its southern boundary about two or three miles north of Batiquitos Lagoon.

In 1875 Nathan Eaton moved to the south shore of Batiquitos Lagoon and semi-domesticated some hives of bees and gathered salt from the Lagoon. He lived alone and, as the story goes, "spent the next six years in a state of contented semi-inebriation." He also traded salt and honey to nearby Indians.²

In the 1880's things began to happen. In 1882 the San Diego to Colton railroad, which crossed the Lagoon close to the mouth, was completed. And in the mid-1880's Thomas Metcalf, Alfred Metcalf, and Jacob Gruendike began to buy up the Batiquitos Lagoon and the surrounding area.³

Thomas Metcalf was the principal buyer. He was one of the twelve founders of the Escondido Land and Town Company.⁴ Metcalf had moved his family out from Omaha, Nebraska and was living in San Diego.^{3 (5)}

The Lagoon bottom itself was acquired through the Act of Congress 1850 (The Swamp Land Grants). Through this Act the Federal Government gave swamp and overflow lands to the state for the state to sell.⁵

In 1887 Metcalf and Gruendike formed the La Costa Town and Land Company. They owned from and including present day La Costa to the beach and land on both sides of the Lagoon. They owned north up to Poinsettia Lane. The land covered about 3,000 - 4,000 acres.^{3 (6)}

These men had wanted to build a city on the site, but the area lacked a good supply of water.^{3 (7)} Another factor was probably that the 1880's Land Boom had already peaked.

When Thomas Metcalf died he left his land to his four children: Albert, John, Anna, and Marie. Marie is the mother of Perry Lamb of Carlsbad.

The history of the Metcalf lands was one of argument and quarreling between the four heirs. This, at least in part, kept the land from being sold or developed.³

Prior to World War I a particular type of round, blue stone of notable hardness, imported from Belgium, was used in the mines of Arizona and Nevada to grind down the ore. The war ended the shipments, but the same stones were found along Carlsbad beaches and shipped from Farr Station (near the San Diego Gas and Electric Power Plant) to the mines.⁶ Perry Lamb remembers hearing about the Metcalfs getting money from rocks being collected near the entrance to the Batiquitos Lagoon years ago.

In 1944, one-quarter interest of the land went for taxes. Soon afterward Henry Hecker (Anna Metcalf's husband) bought the tax lands for himself. It was around this time that Marie gave her one-quarter interest in the land to John's divorced wife, May K. Metcalf. The land was considered worthless.³

In 1953 a large portion of the land was sold to Donald Ayres. Ayres still owns most of this land and still refers to it as, "the Ranch".

In 1959 Carlsbad Municipal Water District, Improvement District No. 2 water began flowing into the area north of Batiquitos Lagoon. Before this time farming was done by the "dry method". Beans, mostly lima beans, were the principal crop.³

With the water came the flowers. And with the flowers came foreign labor, both legal and illegal, and pesticides and pollutants, and piles and piles of used farming plastic that is dumped off the sides of the bluffs.

On one area of the present Metcalf property, which now contains about 100 acres between Interstate Five and the railroad on the north shore of the Lagoon, in a large gully two shacks can presently be seen. These shacks appear to be occupied by illegal aliens.

The beautiful flower fields on the Metcalf land are a definite drain on finances. The rent money from the flowers was \$11,000 last year, while the taxes were \$35,000. In other words, the owners of the property are losing \$24,000 a year.³

The property is presently in a state of near condemnation, mostly due to the actions of the Coastal Commission. Before the creation of the Coastal Commission, the property seemed to have a very good potential for sale and/or a well-planned development. As early as 1963 there was a report about the potential of Batiquitos Lagoon as a small craft marina.

But now it is very hard to find even a potential buyer. And the present price per acre is less than half of what it would probably be without the Coastal Commission.³

The future of the Batiquitos Lagoon Area is uncertain, but it is doubtful that the Coastal Commission will have a positive effect on the area.

The Hope School District

John Lincoln Kelly remembered that the Hope School District was formed in 1872, when he was five years old. He gave the boundaries of the district as San Elijo Creek to the south, the ocean to the west, Aqua Hedionda Creek to the north, and to the east, "...he knew not where."⁸

Matthew Kelly remembered that a school house was once located on a site that now contains the La Costa Spa. This was in the early days of the Hope District. It is unknown if there were two school buildings at the same time. It is more likely that the school site was simply changed from the La Costa area to the Ponto area. But when this was is hard to tell.

In 1930, when Perry Lamb was eight years old, he remembers seeing the ruins of the old school house on the first ridge east of Ponto Junction. Part of the old school site was cut by Interstate Five.

Jack Lyman remembers the school running until about 1925. Jack's four siblings, Alice (Mrs. Carroll Kelly), Richard, Doris and Bill all went to the school. Carroll Kelly also went to the school just before his family moved to San Diego around 1915-16. Kelly's family used to live adjacent to the present Palomar Airport Road about where the present Frazee Flower Warehouse is.⁹

Lyman remembers that some children from Russian families also went to the school. One family, the Ludenoff's lived near present-day La Costa, another, the Coodenoff's lived just south of the Altamira development, and the last, the Chickenoff's, lived near present-day Car Country. (The spelling of the Russian names is very possibly wrong).

Lyman didn't start going to the Hope school until third grade. He graduated from eighth grade there in 1922. He recalls that a Bordon was his teacher most of the time he was there.

According to Lyman, Carroll Kelly tore down the school in the mid-1940's and transported it to Mesa Grande.⁹ Today no sign of the school can be seen on the Metcalf property.

"Prior to 1921 four elementary school districts were in the present 35.5 square miles of the present Carlsbad School District,....". According to the History of Carlsbad, one of the districts was "..... the Laguna School District on the first ridge east of Ponto Junction and south of Terramar, which reverted back to the owners of the property when the school was abandoned."¹⁰

Jack Lyman doesn't recall the school ever being called the Laguna School. Mildred Dawson, who has worked for Carlsbad Schools for years, also never heard the Hope School referred to as the Laguna School.

The property did revert back to the owners (the Metcalfs), but the deeds show that the school's name was Hope, not Laguna.³

The naming of the school district as the Laguna School District in the History of Carlsbad seems to be a mistake. But facts are hard to come by; it seems that the teacher at the Hope School kept the records at home and that her brother, while cleaning up, burned all the records by mistake.

Whatever the school's name was, the school is gone and its students are old or dead and the memories that remain seem destined to fade away.

Notes from an interview with Jack Lyman on April 30, 1977

Jack Lyman's family lived up from Batiquitos Lagoon on what is now Lagoon Lane. They moved down the Lane to where he presently lives into a big two-story house that his father bought in 1919. This house burned down around 1938-39.

Names of some of the people in the area were: Luhr, Perry, and the Hutching family who lived in the old stone house on the north shore of the Batiquitos Lagoon between Lagoon Lane and El Camino Real. Two or three other families lived around the "stone" house.

A Mexican family lived by the tracks near Ponto.

The only Metcalf who ever came down from Los Angeles to visit was Albert Metcalf. Lyman recalls that, "he was as nutty as a fruitcake".

There used to be a duck hunting club towards the back of the Lagoon. There was also a building there.

The entrance to the Lagoon was about the same as it is today.

Lyman recalls that he learned to swim in the Lagoon. His mother used to tell the story of the time Jack ditched school and his mother spotted him out in the middle of the Lagoon on a raft.

The Lagoon was at times full of water and at times dry. Lyman can remember driving a horse and buggy and even cars across the Lagoon.

The Lyman family moved to the area in 1911. His father dry-farmed lima beans and had some fruit trees. Jack can remember eating lots of beans and rabbit. Life was marginal.

They moved to the two-story house closer to the Lagoon because it had better water. Their old house had had a cistern. The two-story house had a well 135 feet deep that was run by a windmill; it only produced about a gallon a minute.

The two-story house was built around the turn of the century.

Lyman didn't see deer in the area until after 1935. There were lots of coyotes. He remembers a lot more horned toads and more quail. He never saw foxes in the immediate area.

In the 1920's a subdivision was planned on Mrs. Sklar's land around the south end of Altamira. The land was divided into lots and a pipeline from Dr. Murphy's well was laid. But nothing came of it.

Lyman went to San Diego State in 1926 and graduated in 1930. He then went to Berkeley for post-graduate work but returned before completing a degree.

Jack Lyman's father lost the little money he had that was in an Oceanside bank during the Depression.

Lyman's father was a doctor with a Nebraska license, but he never got a California license. His father had been sick and a "food faddist's" diet cured him and after that he wasn't much into practising or believing in "standard medicine".

Lyman can also remember a bridge at the front of the Lagoon.

He thinks that "Ponto" means "point". (Perhaps the name was once "Punta" -- which is Spanish for "point".)

In the 1940's there was a hot rod, drag strip, possibly a destruction derby, located near Ponto. There was also a golf driving range.

Jack Lyman and his wife, Pauline still live in the square gray house that was built near where the old two-story house burned down. Jack ran a chicken farm on this site until about 1960. Their quiet house on Lagoon Lane can be seen by cars zooming north on Interstate Five.

Footnotes and Bibliography

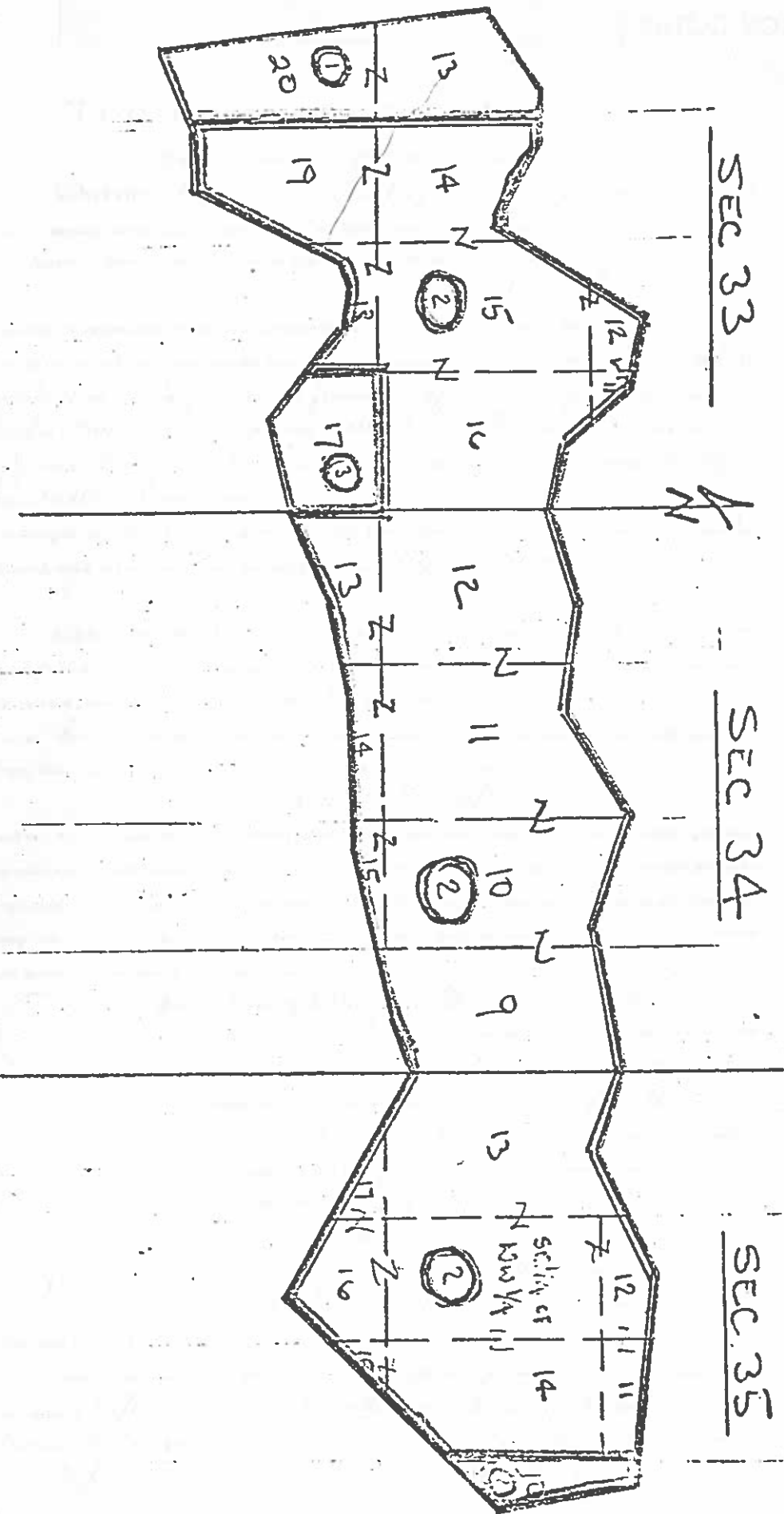
1. Ralph C. Curtis, "Artifacts, Tools of Early Man; Life was Laborious", Carlsbad Journal, February 6, 1964, p. 1, p. 3.
2. Joan Patrick, "Leucadia: Built on a Whim", San Diego's North County Living, February 1977, p. 54 (Village Press, Rancho Santa Fe, California).
3. Perry Albert Lamb, Spring 1977, 5171 Shore Drive, Carlsbad, California 92008.
4. Ryan, Early Days in Escondido, p. 43, Escondido, California, 1970.
5. B. H. Hibbard, Ph.D., A History of the Public Land Policies, (Peter Smith, New York, 1924).
6. Friends of the Library, History of Carlsbad, p. 24, 1961.
7. Noble Harbor Engineering, A Preliminary Engineering Report on the Development Potential of the Metcalf Properties in Batiquitos Lagoon as a Small Craft Marina, (Noble Harbor Engineering, Newport Beach, California, 1963).
8. History of Carlsbad, p. 47.
9. Jack Lyman (John C. Lyman) 7400 Lagoon Lane, Carlsbad, California phone 438-3838.
10. History of Carlsbad, p. 48.

T. 12 S. R. 4 W. S. 13. M.

SEC 33

SEC 34

SEC 35



BATISQUITOS LAKE

FORMERLY CALLED SAN MARCOS LAKE

TR. PLAT DATED 5-3-1888

Certificate No. 2,391

593

The United States of America,

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

Whereas, *Alfred P. Mutch* of *San Diego County California* has deposited in the General Land Office of the United States, a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Los Angeles, California, whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said

Alfred P. Mutch

according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," and the Acts supplemental thereto, for *the North half of the North West quarter and the Sely Numbered five and six of Section thirty three in Township twelve South of Range four West of San Bernardino Meridian in California. Containing one hundred and twenty nine acres and eighty six hundredths of an acre.*

according to the Official Map of the Survey of the said Lands, returned to the General Land Office by the Surveyor-General, which said tract has been purchased by the said *Alfred P. Mutch*

Now, know ye, That the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several Acts of Congress in such case made and provided, have given and granted, and by these presents do give and grant, unto the said *Alfred P. Mutch* and to *his* heirs, the said tract above described: to have and to hold the same, together with all rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature thereunto belonging, unto the said

Alfred P. Mutch

and to *his* heirs and assigns forever: subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law.

In Testimony Whereof, I, *Benjamin Harrison*

President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be hereunto affixed

Given under my hand, at the City of Washington, the *fourth* day of

October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and *ninety*, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and *fiftieth*

By the President: *Benjamin Harrison*by *Wm. McKean*, Secretary.*J. M. Williamson* Recorder of the General Land Office.

RECORDED Vol. 6, PAGE 110

Received for Record

*Nov 12**1890. at 17 min. past 1 o'clock P. M.,*at request of *Alfred P. Mutch* of *San Diego County* under *Ag 25. Murch* Deputy*Recorder Nov. 17, 1890 at 11 o'clock A. M.**C. H. Miller*

County Recorder.

*Ex 1/50**W. H. R. Houghton*

Clerk.

Photographed By P. G. SHELLEY, Deputy Recorder

San Diego County, and described as follows:
 To-wit: Location No 1686 Swamp & Overflowed
 Lands, San Diego County, Township No.
 South Range 2 West. San Bernardino
 Meridian Section No 33 & more particularly
 described as follows.

Lot numbered, section
 of Section Thirty three (33) in Township Twelve
 (12) South Range Four (4) West San Bernardino
 Meridian Containing Thirty two $7 \frac{1}{2}$ (32 $\frac{1}{2}$)
 acres.

Now-Therefore, all the requirements
 of the Act of Congress, as well as the Acts of
 the State Legislature, in relation to Swamp
 & Overflowed Lands, having been fully
 complied with I Washington Bartlett
 Governor of the State of California, by
 virtue of authority in me vested, have granted
 bargained, sold, and conveyed, & by these
 presents do grant, bargain, sell, and convey
 unto Nathaniel A. Eaton all the above described
 lands, with the appurtenances thereto
 belonging, to have and to hold, unto him the
 said Nathaniel A. Eaton his heirs & assigns
 forever.

In Testimony Whereof I Washington
 Bartlett Governor of the State of California
 have caused these letters to be made Patent
 and the Seal of the State of California to be
 hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, at the City of Sacramento
 this the nineteenth day of April in the
 year of our Lord one thousand eight
 hundred and eighty seven.

Washington Bartlett
 Governor of State

Attest William C. Kendrick
 Secretary of State

Counter-signed This Richard
 Register of State Land Office



Received for Record May 23, 1897 at 15 minutes past
11 o'clock A.M. at request of J. A. Estor.

E. G. Thayer

County Recorder

Ex 317

By F. Clarence Deputy

United States of America

State of California

To all to whom these Presents shall come Greeting

Whereas, Under the provisions of an Act of Congress of the United States, approved the twenty eighth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty, entitled "An Act to enable the State of Arkansas, and other States, to reclaim swamp Land within their limits in which Act

the manner of collecting and setting apart Swamp and Overflowed Lands is fully set forth; And Whereas, the Legislature of the State of California has provided for the Sale and Conveyance of said Lands by statutes enacted from time to time.

And Whereas, It appears by the certificate of the Register of the State Land Office No 3601 bearing date 4th of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty seven and would in accordance with the provisions of law that the tracts of Swamp and Overflowed Lands hereinafter described have been

duly and properly surveyed in accordance with law, that full payment has been made to the State for the same

and that Jacob Gruendel and Thomas E. Metcalf are entitled to receive a patent

therefor, said lands being situated in San Diego County and described as follows to wit: Section No 2203 Township

and Overflowed Lands San Diego County Township No 12 North Range No 14 West

Section No 2203 Township No 12 North Range No 14 West

and more particularly described as follows:

Lots thirteen (13) and twenty (20) Section
thirteen (13) in Township Twelve (12)
North Range four (4) West San Bernardino
Meridian containing forty $\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{56}{100}$ (40 $\frac{56}{100}$) acres.

Now Therefore all the requirements
of the Act of Congress, as well as the Acts of
the State Legislature, in relation to Swampland
and Overlooked Lands, having been fully
complied with, Washington D. C. the
Governor of the State of California, by
virtue of authority in me vested, have
granted, bargained sold and conveyed
by these presents to grant bargain sell and
convey unto Jacob Greenfield and Thomas
E. Metcalf all the above described lands
with the appurtenances thereto belonging
to have and to hold unto them, their heirs
Jacob Greenfield and Thomas E. Metcalf
their heirs and assigns forever.

In Testimony Whereof Washington
D. C. the Governor of the State of California
have caused these Letters to be made Patent
and the seal of the State of California to be
hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand at the City of
Sacramento this fourteenth day of
January in the year of our Lord one
thousand eight hundred eighty seven
Washington D. C.

Governor of the

Attest William E. Hendricks

Secretary of State

Countersigned Theo. Kiechert

Register of State Land Office

Received for Record Jan'y 25. 1887 at 14.35 am P.M.
at request of —

E. G. Waight

County Recorder

By J. C. Clarence

Deputy

Filed

4/11/12

1 (12)

San Francisco

United States of America
State of California

To all to whom these presents shall come greetings
Whereas Under the provisions of an Act
of Congress of the United States approved the
twenty eighth day of September in the year of
our Lord one thousand eight hundred and
fifty entitled An Act to enable the State
of Arkansas and other States to reclaim
Swamp Land within their limits in
which Act the manner of selecting and
setting apart Swamp and Overflowed Lands
is fully set forth And Whereas the Legislature
of the State of California has provided for
the Sale and Conveyance of said Lands by
Statute enacted from time to time And
Whereas It appears by the certificate of the
Register of the State Land Office No 1539
bearing date April 12th in the year of our
Lord one thousand eight hundred and
eighty seven and signed in accordance
with the provisions of Law that two
tracts of Swamp and Overflowed Lands
hereinafter described have been duly and
properly surveyed in accordance with Law
that full payment has been made to
the State for the same and that the
Nation is entitled to receive a patent
therefor, said lands being situated in