

# Ventura County Historical Society

## Quarterly

Vol. XVII, No. 2

Winter 1972

### *Notice*

The aboriginal inhabitants anticipated the contemporary political situation. Except for the Allikliks in the eastern Santa Clara Valley at Piru, the Indians of Ventura County were the Chumash, a maritime tribe occupying the Tri-County area. Each of the three counties belonged to a dialect group, ours being the Ventureno. There were chifetains at Shishalop (Ventura) north of the Santa Clara River and at Muwu (Mugu) south of the river. Hispanic California initiated the developments of the nineteenth century. San Buenaventura was the first mission established, but the Spaniards included it in the District of Santa Barbara because of the location of the presidio there.

The American occupation resulted in another star, the State of California. With the formation of the charter counties on February 8, 1850, what is now Ventura County was included with Santa Barbara County as Township No. 1. After 1855 when the California Supreme Court decided that the Court of Sessions could not act in county management, Ventura was entitled to one of the three members of the Board of Supervisors. Fernando Tico was the first resident of the township to serve, and he was followed by Ysidro Abiols, Jose de Arnaz, Juan Camarillo and Juan Rodriguez. In 1867 Thomas R. Bard became the first non-Californian member of the board and remained until 1872.

There had been two unsuccessful attempts to separate Ventura from Santa Barbara County: the first was postponed in the Assembly in 1861; and the second was tabled in the Senate in 1870; it had been introduced by Angel G. Escandon, but was opposed by Bard. William D. Hobson headed the drive behind the County Division bill passed by the legislature on March 22, 1872.

It went into force January 1, 1873 and the governor appointed a five-man Board of Commissioners to put it into effect: the Rev. Sherlock Bristol, President; Bard, Secretary; Escandon; William D. F. Richards; and Dr. Charles W. Thacker. They authorized the Great Register, divided the county into three townships, set up eight precincts and proclaimed an election in February. James Daly, J. A. Conway and C. W. Thacker made up the first Board of Supervisors. The County of Ventura was certified to be officially created on March 10, 1873; and the supervisors met for the first time on April 7, 1873 in San Buenaventura, the designated county seat.