

CHIEF SOLANO

The Legend Examined

by M. C. Low

If a traveller had come west on the old Sacramento highway some four miles past Fairfield, county seat of Solano County, California, on the Sunday afternoon of June 3, 1934, he would have happened upon a most unusual ceremony attended by some 3,000 persons gathered around a great twelve foot high bronze statue set on a knoll overlooking the verdant orchards of Suisun Valley. The statue was that of an Indian chief, nude except for loincloth and three eagle feathers in his hair, parted in the middle in long tresses. He had classic Greek proportions and his hand was "upraised in a gesture of friendliness with the white settlers." At the base was a plaque inscribed as follows:

Francisco Solano

(Sem Yeto)

Chief of the Suisun Indians, friend of the white man.

"To the bravery and in particular to the diplomacy of that great chieftain of the Suisun Indians, civilization is indebted for the conquest of the territory which today composes the counties of Solano, Napa, Sonoma and Lake."

General Mariano G. Vallejo

The statue was the work of William Gordon Huff of Berkeley and was executed and erected at a cost of \$5,000 appropriated by the State of California supplemented by a gift of \$500 from the Massasoit Tribe of Red Men of Fairfield. Present to dedicate this statue were state legislators, the editor of the *Oakland Tribune*, Joseph Knowland, and a gathering of Massasoit sachems and members in Indian costume, which gave a touch of the early pioneer days when the famous Indian chief ruled the Suisun tribe of Indians. There was a "Parade of Tribes and Councils in costume" led by the Wahoo Drum Corps of Concord, an invocation by a Franciscan priest, and a rendition of Cadman's "The Waters of Minnetonka."¹

At the unveiling of the statue the daughter-in-law of the pioneer American settler, Samuel Martin, read a personal account of his meeting Chief Solano in the spring of 1850 when he first arrived in Suisun Valley. Related was how Martin and party camped by the "Indian village," with its "braves and squaws." There the chief was suffering from pneumonia. When he died that year, Martin helped bury him near an old buckeye tree in the tribal burial ground. Mr. Martin "often said that he found the Indian Chief Solano to be a highly intelligent person — a man of about forty years of age and of a most commanding appearance and of a cordial and friendly nature."²

Clearly the account presents a picture of a noble red man, a noble savage — Rousseau's "natural man," unspoiled by corrupting vices of society. Such as Theodora Kroeber's Ishi of the Yahi tribe. In addition there is the specification of a noble chieftain, leader, and defender of his people, virtuous in altruism, self-sacrifice, and bravery. Americans had known these qualities in the great Indian chiefs of the eastern woodlands, the great plains, and the southwest, such as Massasoit of the Wampanoags of seventeenth century New England, Joseph Brant of the Iroquois, and Tecumseh of the

Shawnee of the revolutionary and the early republic periods, Quanah Parker of the Comanche, and Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce in the 1870's; Red Cloud and Sitting Bull of the Sioux, and finally Cochise and Geronimo of the Apaches in the 1880's.

Implicit in these records in addition to personal character is the existence of a freely living native people whose well being and survival as a nation were the purpose and challenge of leadership on the part of each Indian chief.³ Was this ever the case with Chief Solano? An examination of the historical records does not support this traditional belief. Instead, if anything, the role of Solano was that of a native or aboriginal auxiliary in the military force of the conquering European invader, whose contribution was to advance the defeat and destruction of the Indian nation. Solano's record resembles that of the Indian scouts and auxiliaries of Spanish, Mexican, and American expeditionary forces more than that of a true chieftain of his people.⁴

Another view of the American Indians is the traditional Christian view that they were depraved, heathen savages. The English and Americans regarded them as bestial and unredeemable, to be displaced or destroyed. With some exceptions, such as in missionary enterprise among the Delawares and the Cherokees, the American view was expressed in relentless expropriation, displacement, and destruction in the sweep of American westward movement. The Spanish American view was that they were depraved, but could be redeemed by enslavement and forced conversion. The Spanish missionary program in effect from the 1500's to 1833 brought this policy to California and swept Chief Solano — then Sem Yeto — into its maelstrom. Did Chief Solano represent any qualities of the bestial savage in his treatment of other Indians? The record shows that he did. Did he assimilate the Spanish Mexican contempt for his own culture? This is unclear, but very possibly so.

The "conventional wisdom" of the popular tradition as transmitted in secondary California historical writings⁵ has perpetuated the first — and I believe false — view — that of the Noble Red Man and a Brave Chieftain of a freely existing tribe of Indians commemorated so glowingly on that June day in the year 1934. That was exactly a full century from the very same month in the year 1834, when Solano first joined forces with — was it enlisted in? — the military program of the newly assigned military commander of the North Bay area, Captain Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. It is from the fanciful, exaggerated and perhaps self-serving accounts of "General" Vallejo that this view of Chief Solano derives. It is very probable that Vallejo first anointed him with the title "Chief" and the hyperbole, "Great Chief."⁶ It was Vallejo who proposed to the California legislature that name, Solano, be given in his honor to the present county of Solano when it was established on February 28, 1950.

The romantic picture of Chief Solano as a leader of an aboriginal tribe or tribes who made an alliance with Vallejo to maintain peace and further the advance of civilization is a distorted one. Spanish documents and historical writings of Vallejo and his relative and contemporary Juan B. Alvarado record the total destruction of the main Suisun Indian village in 1817 by a Spanish punitive expedition, with a massacre of the population. According to Alvarado, Sem Yeto was captured in this raid and taken off to Mission San Jose.⁷ He would have been a youth of sixteen years if the year 1801 given by Platon Vallejo (Mariano Vallejo's son) for Solano's birth is correct.

The next historical record of Sem Yeto is his appearance in the baptismal record of Mission San Francisco Solano at Sonoma in 1824, the second year since the founding of this last of the Spanish missions in 1823. There are two Indians listed as receiving the identical name Francisco Solano, one Vallimele, the other Quelloy on successive days. Vallimele is cited as being Sem Yeto and Quelloy, his brother.⁸

The presence of Sem Yeto as a new convert was representative of the experience of the southern Patwin Indians (Suisuns and their neighboring tribelets) between the years 1807 and 1834 during which they were forcibly removed for baptism and confinement at the three nearest missions — Mission Dolores (in present San Francisco), Mission San Jose (in present Fremont) and Mission Solano (in present Sonoma). A total of 4,000 southern Patwins are listed in the baptismal registers out of the pre-mission population estimated at 5,000 individuals. Only those living north of Putah Creek were able to continue to live in freedom.⁹ When Father Altimira visited the Suisun Valley in 1823 in his search for the best site for founding the last mission he found the area deserted of population, with only thirty Indians left in the Vaca Valley area and some fifty at Putah Creek.¹⁰

The first report on the whereabouts and activity of Francisco Solano since his baptism in 1824 as a mission Indian (“Neophyte” is the church term used for these converts —

literally a “new plant”) is found in the deposition in the Suisun Rancho land grant claim case by Cayetano Juarez, an ex-soldier and present grantee, who stated that “he had known him since 1827 when Solano was living at Sonoma, and [that] he had seen him at Suisun in 1832.”¹¹ It should be noted that a branch mission farm or “rancho” called Santa Eulalia had been established at Suisun before the end of 1824, with a house for the padre’s visit, a corral for horses, and with a neophyte in charge. M.G. Vallejo states in his deposition in the same file that “He first saw Solano in 1829 at Mission Dolores [in present San Francisco] where Solano was employed tending cattle.” Solano went over to [the] Sonoma [mission] in 1830 and resided there and in the Suisun Valley thereafter. He supervised the mission Indians in agricultural operations until secularization [of the mission system] in 1835, after which time he went to the Suisun Rancho to live. In 1837 I gave Solano a provisional grant of Suisun Rancho, in which year he built three or four adobe houses, one for dwelling and the others for barns and storehouses . . . Solano [also] had an adobe house in Sonoma.”¹²

George Yount, an American living in Sonoma at the time, adds the further details that Solano had been in the employ of the mission as an overseer of the Indian laborers, a number of whom he took with him when he went to the



The old buckeye tree on Suisun Valley Road near Rockville in lower Suisun Valley, near which Chief Solano died and was buried in 1850. The tree is no longer standing. Photo taken by Rodney Rulofson in 1960's.

Suisun Rancho to live in 1836. There he built two adobe houses and cultivated the land. Salvador Vallejo, Mariano's brother, surveyed Solano's rancho for him in 1842 and sketched a crude map, called a "diseno" in Spanish, in order to meet Mexican statutory requirements for legal ownership. His deposition in this file fills in more descriptive details in the picture of Solano's life as a Mexican "ranchero" on the Suisun Rancho. "There were two or three adobe houses at the time when I gave [juridical] possession to Solano [January 1842]. There were two at the spring and a large one a little further off, which appeared to be a store house. . . There fifteen to twenty other houses made with poles stuck in the ground, plastered with mud and thatched with tule and brushes. . . Solano's house was at the spring near the road leading from Sonoma through Suscol."¹³

The very site described can be seen in the photograph of the Suisun Valley accompanying this article. It is just behind the large light-colored stone house on the left side of the valley. It is called 'Stonedene' and sits across Rockville Road from Solano Community College. Solano's one hundred acres of farmed land is now occupied by the College campus.

A final citation from this file of depositions, that of Jose de la Rosa, secretary to Vallejo, reveals the completely acculturated nature of Solano's life in the 1830's and 1840's: "I knew Solano well. . . He was a captain in the regular army of Mexico. . . He partook of the sacraments, was married by a priest, was a legal voter. . . I observed him vote."¹⁴

In May of 1842 Solano sold his interest in the Suisun Rancho to Mariano Vallejo and stayed permanently at Sonoma until the Bear Flag events of June of 1846, after which Solano disappeared from white society until 1850 when Samuel Martin and his party of American pioneers came upon him at Suisun Rancho succumbing to a final illness. The Rancho operation had been continued by Vallejo using ex-mission Indian laborers under an Indian overseer, Jesus Molino, whom Martin mentions. The remanent Indian population has been estimated at one hundred souls.

Martin and his fellow settlers could not have known the true story of Solano and the Indian experience. He heard, no doubt, the tales of his sway and power originating from the poetic pens of Mariano and his son, Platon,¹⁵ and transmitted them innocently to later generations, who assimilated the Solano story to that of the great chiefs of American history.

But what credence should be given to the claim of Solano's military power and prowess still presented by serious students? Consider the statement in a master's thesis of 1976 describing Solano as "the Chief of the Suisun Indians in the 1820's, was a powerful warrior by the Indian name of Sum-Yet-Ho (Mighty Arm) who ruled over approximately forty thousand Indians in an area encompassing the present-day cities of Sonoma, Napa, Vallejo, Benicia, Cordelia, Fairfield and Rio Vista. . ." In the same passage the writer states that he opposed Vallejo's colonization program until defeated at Suscol [in 1835], whereupon he agreed to ally himself with Vallejo.¹⁶ The author then cites Vallejo's account of his



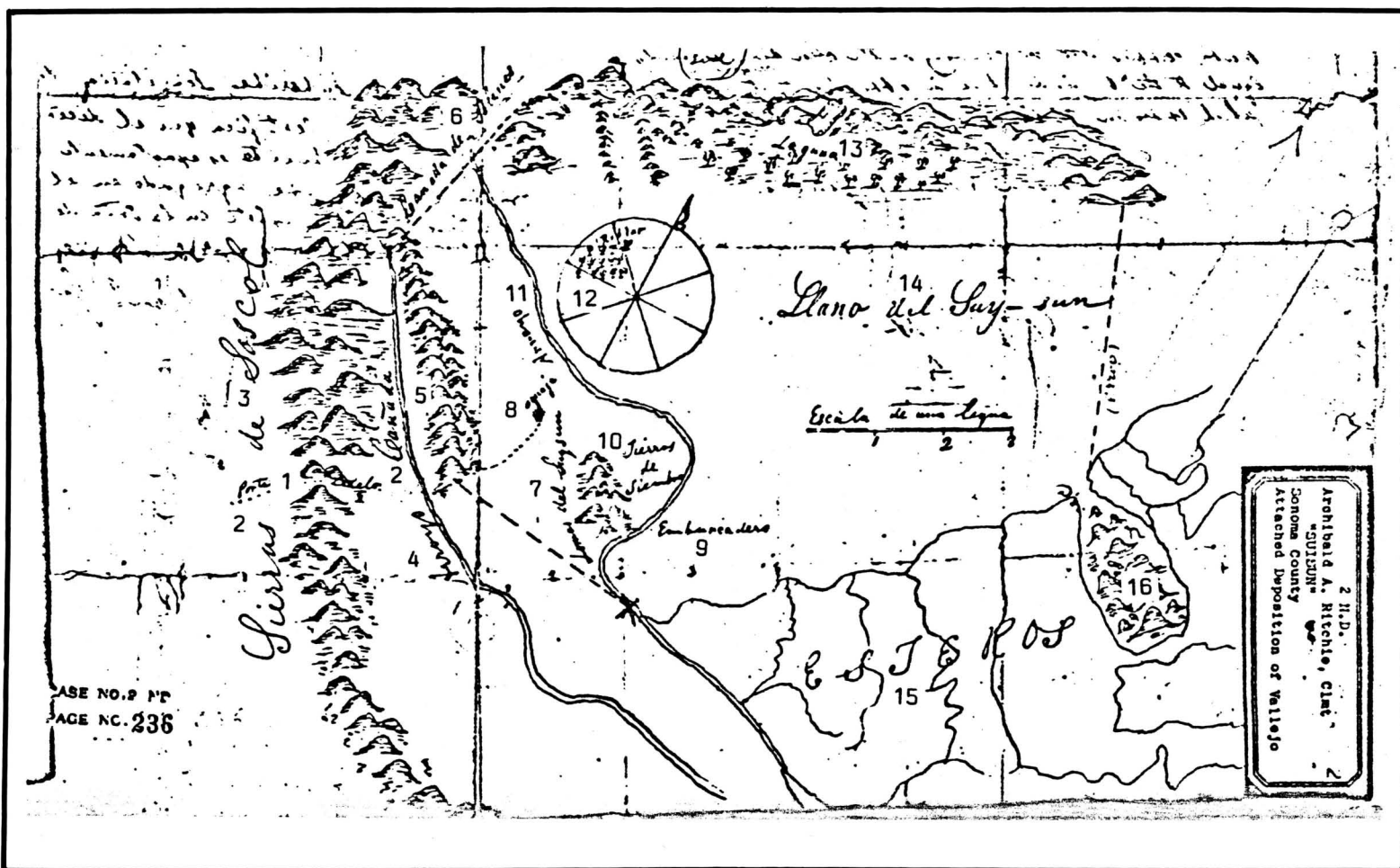
View of lower Suisun Valley looking north over the site of Chief Solano's hereditary village site and later the Santa Eulalia mission farm which Chief Solano acquired as the Suisun Rancho Grant in 1837. The large stone house against the hill on the left was built by Samuel Martin and stands in front of the adobe house that Chief Solano built in 1837. The field in the center is the location of Chief Solano's cultivated area and is now occupied by Solano Community College. Photo taken by Rodney Rulofson in 1960's.

landing on the banks of the Sonoma estuary in 1834 en route to founding the new town at Sonoma, when he was met by "Chief" Solano with 3,000 friendly, i.e., christianized, Indian warriors, after which they were joined by 11,000 wild Indians convened for a powwow and treaties of peace.¹⁷

Besides the contradictory implications of the last two statements, there are in the literature critical reviews of Vallejo's claims by reputable historians. Hubert H. Bancroft regards the latter account as grossly exaggerated because it contradicts the fact of a ten year rule of the Indians under the mission. It makes no mention of that history.¹⁸ George Tays, writing in the *California Historical Society Quarterly*, cautions that "It must be remembered that Vallejo wrote his recollections of early events on which this portion of the story of his life and the history of Sonoma

are based some forty years after their occurrence. To this fact may be attributed many minor errors and some exaggerations."¹⁹

Exaggerations aside, Solano did play an important role in Vallejo's military and economic activity as commander of the northern frontier of Mexican settlement. It was the role essentially of a junior commanding officer of Vallejo's Indian scouts and auxiliaries in punitive campaigns from 1834 to 1843 against unsubdued, hostile and other marauding "wild" Indians to the north and east of the Sonoma settlement. Vallejo commissioned him a captain in the Mexican army in 1836 and "repaid Solano by showing him honors in every possible way, so as to strengthen the latter's power among his Indians. One of his methods was to present Solano with a guard of honor of forty-four Suisun and



The above map of Suisun Rancho is a hand-drawn copy of the original diseno made by Salvador Vallejo some time between 1837 and 1842 for Francisco Solano's grant application. The original is no more detailed or accurate, as it was done on horseback using a lariate as a measure. The dotted line traces the road from Sonoma through present Rockville Corners to the Suisun Valley. The following place names and terms appear on the original at the numbered spots on the map.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Puerta Zuela = pass (literally "little door") | 9. Embarcadero = landing (present Cordelia - Green Valley Creek) |
| 2. Carretera = road | 10. Tierras de Siembre = Corn fields (literally "sown land") |
| 3. Sierras del Suscol = mountains of Suscol | 11. Aroyo de Tolenes = stream of Tolenes (present Suisun Creek) |
| 4. Aroyo = stream (present Green Valley Creek) | 12. Roblar = oaks (likely present Willota Oaks) |
| 5. Canada = ravine | 13. Laguna = small lake (present Lagoon Valley pond) |
| 6. Canada de Tolenes = ravine of Tolenes | 14. Llano del Suy Sun = land (or plain) of the Suisun Indians |
| 7. Tomas de Suy Sun = hills of Suisun | 15. Esteros = salt marshes |
| 8. Aquaje = watering place (Solano's house location at present Rockville Corners) | 16. Portrero = pasture land |

Napajo Indians. . . all bedecked in full uniforms. . . Chief Solano was given a fine horse with silver mounted trappings, a silver watch and fancy riding boots. The presentation was made at a full-dress parade, after which Solano made a speech to his men asking them to capture Zampay [a rival leader of the Yolotoy Patwins] in payment for Vallejo's kindness. In the battles of the following year this guard did fine service, losing only two of its members."²⁰ Vallejo composed the following poem for the occasion:

*Viva El Capitan Solano
Let the angels and seraphs insure in heaven
While endlessly blessing
Compliments in your commemoration
And since your birthday is such a triumph
The heavenly angels
say with human exuberance
Long live Captain Solano
For centuries and forever!*

. . .
*Your friends who are present in this
garrison congratulate you on this,
the day of your Saint.²¹*

The above free translation is by Pedro Hiort-Lorenzen.

A vivid example of Solano's contribution to Vallejo's military campaigns and his help in forcibly conscripting Indian labor for the Mexican ranchos is conveyed by the following account of an early American settler, Charles Brown (1814-1883) who arrived in San Francisco in 1829 and was at Sonoma in 1835. It also provides an answer to the question of whether Solano could be viewed equally as a "depraved bestial and unredeemable savage", rather than the conventional portrait of the "noble Indian chieftain." Brown relates his eyewitness account as follows: "We started from Sonoma about the fall of 1835 under Lt. Vallejo and his brother Salvador Vallejo with about 60 armed Californians and Mexicans, 22 foreigners, among them myself, and some 200 Indian auxiliaries. . . [We] went some 200 miles away from Sonoma toward Oregon. . . We were out nearly three weeks. . . Those Indians had been committing depredations in the vicinity and stealing stock of Sonoma and the expedition started to chastise them. . . [We] got to the rancheria [Indian village] about sunset and attacked the Indians. . . killed a great many [200-300] and took a large number of prisoners [100]. The worst thing I ever saw in my life was done then by Solano, the head Indian of Vallejo. There was a woman of the rancheria who had a child slung on her back and was far advanced in pregnancy. Solano first lanced the child on the back and then lanced the woman, ripping the belly open and pulling the phoetas [sic] out. The villainy of the act so maddened me that I was at the point of shooting Solano when Lt. Vallejo stopped me, saying that Solano was his best friend. As it was I was fortunate in not having killed Solano, for he, at a later hour saved my life when I was badly wounded. . . The fight lasted about one hour and a half. The rancheria was taken and sacked of everything of any value that the Indians had. . . I presume there must have been between 200-300 Indians slaughtered in that rancheria. They were killed in fair fight for they fought desperately. I did not see one killed after surrendering. . . I believe there were about 64 or 65 bucks taken prisoner, besides a number of women and children—the total number brought to Sonoma about 100. . . the prisoners were divided among the

different ranches of the mission and put to work at the different trades. The young women were put in the monjerio [women's quarters] and the children were taken care of — Padre Quijas was then in charge of the mission—just about that time the secularization had begun.

"I never took part again in any expedition to fight Indians, except to pursue raiders who had stolen and run off stock, which happened very often till as late as 1848. On such occasions a few Indians were killed."²² Chief Solano, on the other hand, took part in a dozen more similar campaigns!

A further implication of Solano's barbaric nature and his role in enslavement of Indian labor is revealed in the statement by the last survivor of his several wives, named Isidora:²³ "I prevented him from killing them (the captives of Vallejo's Indian campaigns) as was customary by tying them to trees and shooting them with arrows. I said to him 'turn them loose with Vallejo who will make them work the land.'"²⁴

And work them, Vallejo did! "It was by [Solano's] assistance that [Vallejo] had command of all the (Indian) laborers he needed for the vast improvements he introduced in Sonoma and Petaluma. The General was a large grower of wheat at his hacienda, Petaluma. He employed several hundred men to plow, sow and harrow the vast fields he had under cultivation. These laborers were trained in the art of plowing and sowing at the missions with the padres as instructors. The General also employed uncivilized Indians, known as 'gentiles,' as assistant plowmen and harvesters."²⁵ In addition there were several hundreds of ranch hands employed in his cattle, hide and tallow operations on the Suscol and Petaluma ranchos. "There were fifty-six [Indian] servants working all the time in the house — Servant for each of fourteen children. Each Indian was taught to do one thing and do it well. Five or six Indians washed clothes every day. Several did nothing but grind corn. . . Other servants did nothing but make tortillas. . . 'We give the Indians all the food they need, too,' says Dona Francisca. [Vallejo's wife] 'We give them no pay. If they are sick, we care for them. We treat them as our friends.'"²⁶

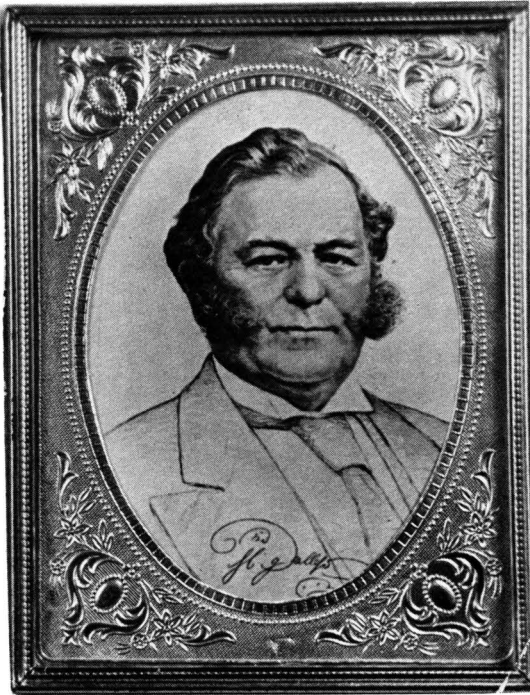
Further evidence of Solano's contempt for even the friendly or "domesticated" Indian population, as contrasted with the hostile or "wild" Indians against which the punitive raids were carried out, is found in his participation in the Indian slave trade during the summer of 1838 when numbers of Indian men and children were being forcibly kidnapped from several tribes in the Santa Rosa area and sold south of the San Francisco Bay. Arrested by Vallejo on October 6, 1838, as being one of the traders, he was tried in military court where he admitted his guilt and was imprisoned until he agreed to disclose the names of his Mexican confederates and help restore the children to their homes. Convinced by Vallejo that he had done a great injury to Vallejo's reputation, and perhaps harm to his own people, he made the following remarkable offer to Vallejo: "I am the owner of many grain fields. My cattle number more than two thousand. I count Sotiyomi [Wappo] children by the dozen, and if the Commandant wishes to take them from me as punishment, I will tell my people it is as it should be."²⁷

A final disproof of the legendary status of Solano as an altruistic protector of his people is the record of his acquisition and disposal of the 17,752 square mile portion of the "land of the Suisuns," called the Suisun Rancho. Under the regulations issued by Governor Jose Figuero in 1834 for the secularization of the missions (Vallejo was appointed "Civil

Commissioner" to carry it out at Mission Solano) one-half of the land, equipment and livestock of the mission was to be distributed to the Indian ex-neophytes. Instead of fulfilling this goal, Vallejo and Solano arranged to award the Suisun Grant to Solano, alone, "for his own personal benefit and that of his family" on January 18, 1837, and not to the Suisun tribe! It was officially confirmed on January 21, 1942.

On May 10 of the same year (1842), Solano conveyed the lands to Vallejo for \$1,000, paid in coin and supplies. The remnant of the Suisun tribe which had been returned to the Rancho to farm it under the padres and then under Solano, consisting of at least one hundred or more souls, continued to work under the farm manager employed by Vallejo, an Indian named Jesus Molino. On August 26, 1850, Val-

lejo sold the Suisun Rancho to the American Archibald A. Ritchie for \$50,000. The Suisun remnant, dispossessed of their home territory for the second time, disappeared from history without a trace. Tradition has it that they migrated to the northern wilds. It is more likely that they disappeared as workers on one of the Mexican ranchos in Napa Valley which were in need of Indian labor at that time.²⁸



General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo



Chief Solano portrait on the banner of the Association of Solano Pioneers founded in Suisun City in 1882. The face was created from sketches of the Chief done by those who had known him according to George Gellispie, recording secretary of the Association. The original banner has been lost.

Letter Home

In the Fall of 1954, a Vallejo couple who are long-time members of the Solano County Historical Society noticed a *Vallejo Times-Herald* classified ad reading, "For sale, houseful of antiques. . .". Thinking it might prove interesting, they followed the address to a late nineteenth century cottage close to the Vallejo waterfront. Walking through the front door was like stepping back in time sixty or more years. The house had belonged to an elderly, reclusive spinster and apparently little had been changed since the house had first been occupied—from the horsehair-covered parlor furniture to the Edison phonograph that played cylinder records.

They soon discovered that there was a catch to this treasure trove. You could not buy individual items but had to submit a sealed bid for the contents of the whole house. After a hasty consultation, they submitted a bid, and before nightfall received a call from the attorney representing the estate that it was all theirs for \$355.00.

Their next problem was getting everything out of the house, but that is another story. In the process of cleaning out, they came upon an old cigar box tucked away in the bottom of a walnut chest of drawers. In the cigar box they found the original deed to the property signed by General John J. Frisbie, a brass powder horn still full of black powder, and an old letter written in pencil on rough tablet paper. The letter, which follows, stirs the imagination. How did it get to this location? How long was the journey? Who was Robert Atchison? What was the ship doing at Pirates Cove? Did he have a safe voyage and return home? What was life like on board the schooner *Otter*? Here it is—

Sch Otter Sauciletto Mar 2nd 89

Dear Mother

We left the city in a hurry and I didn't expect I would have time to write to you but we came over to Sauciletto to get the men Sobered up and get things fixed for a Sea trip. We will go out tomorrow and go direct north. We have a fine crew. Our cook is a fine fiddler so the time will pass Pleasantly. Well I hope you will all be well when I come home again. I met the Gibbons in the city and talked to them a few minutes. Frank did not get to go with us. When we got down the crew was all Shipped and the vessel waiting for me to come. Well when you write to me Direct letter to Pirate Cove Alaska. Write about every 2 months. I will write every chance I get but I am afraid it wont be often but don't worry as I will be all Right. Take good care of yourself and don't worry to much. Well tomorrow will see us off so good by and God bless you all till I return. Good by from your loving Son.

P.S. Direct letter — Robt Atchison

Bob

Sch Otter, Pirate Cove Alaska.

Care H. Liebes & Co.

111-113 Montgomery St.

San Francisco.

Chief Solano — pp. 5 - 10

1. *The Solano Republican*, Fairfield, California, May 31 and June 4, 1934, p. 1.
2. *Ibid.*, December 2, 1937, p.1.
3. Albert Britt, *Great Indian Chiefs: A Study of Indian Leaders in the Two Hundred Year Struggle to Stop the White Advance* (Freeport, N.Y.: Books For Libraries Press, 1969. First Published 1938)
4. Thomas Dunlay, *Wolves for the Blue Soldiers; Indian Scouts and Auxiliaries with the United States Army, 1860-90.* (Lincoln Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1982).
5. In order of publication date the following are typical treatments in earlier secondary sources: "History of Solano County", *Historical Atlas Map of Solano County* (San Francisco, California: Thompson and West, 1878) p. 9; J.P. Munro-Fraser, *History of Solano County* (San Francisco, California: Wood Alley and Co., 1879) p.60; Tom Gregory, *History of Solano and Napa Counties* (Los Angeles, California: Historic Record Co., 1912) pp. 17, 37. Later popularized versions include Eileen Minahan, "The Story of Chief Solano of the Suisun Indians," Fairfield, California: Superintendent of Schools, 1959) pp. 5-11; "Solano County History and Government" (Fairfield, California: Board of Supervisors, (1970), pp. 3, 4.
6. The term "Yeto" in the alleged Indian name of Chief Solano raises a question of whether he was ever a hereditary or elected chief of any Indian assemblage. According to Alfred Kroeber, the renowned leader of California Indian anthropological research, there is a distinction between a war leader (yeto) and a chief (sektu): "The war leader was not an official, but a brave man, who could shoot true and dodge well. . . He was called yeto; the chief, sektu. . . the chiefs did not fight and were not attacked." Alfred L. Kroeber "The Patwin and Their Neighbors," University of California Publications in Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol 29, No. 4, (February 27, 1932, p. 298. "Sem- means hand in Patwin language.
7. *Provincial Record*, Vol XII, p. 207, Archives of California, MS., Copies in Bancroft Library. Juan B. Alvarado, "Historia de California," MS., 1876, Vol. I, pp. 151—155, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Cited by Maria L. Lothrop, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Defender of the Northern Frontier of California," Ph. D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1927. Vallejo's account is in his "Historia de California, MS., tr. I 94-97, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1875, Cited by Alice Cleveland, "The North Bay Shore During the Spanish and Mexican Regimes," M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1932. In a footnote Cleveland cites H.H. Bancroft, *History of California*, II, (San Francisco, California: A.L. Bancroft & Co. 1884-1890) p. 329 that both Alvarado and Vallejo, writing many years after the events, confused the true date of this raid, 1810, with that of another expedition by the leader, Gabriel Moraga made in 1817. If so Sem Yeto would have been captured at nine years of age.
8. Mission San Francisco Solano, "Libros de Bautismos," MS., 3 Vol., pp. 56, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. Cited by Marcus Peterson, "The Career of Solano, Chief of the Suisuns," M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1957. H.H. Bancroft cites "Numa" and "Telog" as his Indian names. The two brothers were differentiated as Solano I and Solano II, which adds to the difficulty of interpreting the record!
9. R.H. Limbaugh and W.A. Payne, *Vacaville: The Heritage of a California Community* (Vacaville, California: Vacaville City Council, 1978) pp. 5-8.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 13. Limbaugh and Payne conclude "The story of Spanish penetration and action in Solano County . . . was the record of swift and destructive treatment of the native people. . . leaving the land empty of human occupation."
11. Depositions in Alexander A. Ritchie Claim File, Hallock, Peachy and Billings Papers, C-B421, Box 5, 1852, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
12. *Ibid.* Solano's Sonoma house was built in 1836. Solano likely spent most of his time between between 1835 and 1843 in Sonoma as a member of Vallejo's staff supervising Indian military auxiliaries and conscripting Indian laborers for construction work in Vallejo's establishment of the new "pueblo" in place of the Solano Mission and for building and working at Vallejo's extensive Petaluma Rancho. See below.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. Platon Vallejo, "Memoirs of the Vallejos," 1914, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.
16. Sister Mary Gene McNally, "Mariano Guadalupe's Relations with the Indians of California; Northern

Frontier 1825-1842." M.S. thesis, Dominican College, San Rafael, California, 1976, pp. 74, 75. She cites Platon Vallejo's memoirs as her source!

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 78, 79. she cites M.G. Vallejo, *op. cit.*, p 12 as source of this report.
18. Hubert H. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p 294, footnote, cited by Cleveland, *op. cit.*, p. 148. Bancroft, *op. cit.*, p 360 describes Vallejo's report of his 1834 campaign against the Sotiyomi as "if not purely imaginary (at least) greatly exaggerated. Cited by Peterson, *op. cit.* p. 27 footnote.
19. George Tays, "Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and Sonoma: A Biography and a History," *California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. 16, p. 244.
20. George Tays, *op. cit.*, p. 250.
21. Mariano G. Vallejo, "Documentos para la Historia de California," (1815-1841) (Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley) Vol. 14, No. 95, p. 305.
22. Charles E. Brown, "Statement of Recollections of Early Events in California," 1878, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, MS. (C-D53), pp. 12-15.
23. Munro-Fraser, *History of Solano County* (San Francisco, California: Wood, Alley & Co., 1879) on p 185 reports Solano as having had eleven wives. Platon Vallejo, "Notes," MS., n.d., File of photocopies in Chief Solano folder of Rodney Rulofson in the Vacaville Heritage Council library, Vacaville, California, gives the number as nine, of which "she was his favorite."
24. Isidora ("Princess Solano"), "My Years with Chief Solano." Translation by Nellie V. Sanchez of dictated statement in "Sketches of California Pioneers," No. 12, MS., 1874. Bancroft *Towering Topics*, Vol. 22, No. 2, February, 1930, p. 39. Isidora relates that she had been abducted when a girl by Solano from a distant Patwin tribe, the Chuructos, then living on Cache Creek in present Yolo County. Her Indian name was "Chowi" (Red Bird) and she was given the name Isidora Filomena when baptized at the Sonoma mission. Despite Vallejo's grandiloquent title of "princess" for Solano's last spouse, she and her three daughters worked as live-in maidservants in the Commandante's home. See Platon Vallejo, *ibid.*; and Sister Mary Gene McNally, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
25. William Heath Davis, *Seventy-Five Years in California*, Berkeley, California, Howell-North Books, 1967, p. 103.
26. Helen Bauer, *California Rancho Days*, State Dept. of Education, Sacramento, 1957.
27. Vallejo, *History of California*, (tr.) p. 273. Cited by George Tays, *op. cit.* Vol. 16, p. 246.
28. For documentation of this land grant history with a strong argument for collusion between Solano and Vallejo see Supreme Court of the United States, December Term, 1854, No. 44, the United States Appellant, v. Archibald A. Ritchie, Brief for the United States, Caleb Cushing, Attorney General. The brief is reproduced in Peterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-80 and in Helen Matson Read, *Lo, The Poor Indian*, A Saga of the Suisun Indians of California—a Documentary Novel, pp. 477-479.

Six Minute Ferry — pp. 15 - 20

1. Articles of Incorporation — Six Minute Ferry, April 2, 1919.
2. "Newspaper to Fight One Battle," *Technical World*, June 1913, p. 561, 562.
3. Articles of Incorporation, Solano Aquatic Club, October 9, 1909.
4. "Newspaper to Fight One Battle," *op. cit.*, p 561, 562.
5. Articles of Incorporation, Solano Aquatic Club, October 5, 1909.
6. Harlan, Geroge H., *San Francisco Ferryboats*, Howell-North Books, 1967, Berkeley, p. 101.
7. "Newspaper to Fight One Battle," *op. cit.*, p. 561, 562.
8. Harlan, *op. cit.*, p. 101.
9. Articles of Incorporation, Association of Mare Island Employees, March 26, 1914.
10. Harlan, Geroge H. & Fisher, Clement, *Of Walking Beams and Paddle Wheels*, Bay Books Ltd., San Francisco, 1951, p. 123, 124.
11. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, February 18, 1919.
12. Articles of Incorporation, Six Minute Ferry, April 2, 1919.
13. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, March 26, 1919.
14. *Ibid.*, April 8, 1919.
15. *Ibid.*, May 16, 1919.
16. *Ibid.*, May 23, 1919.
17. *Ibid.*, July 10, 1919.
18. *Ibid.*, September 27, 1919.
19. *Ibid.*, October 2, 1919.
20. *Ibid.*, October 18, 1919.
21. *Ibid.*, February 25, 1920.
22. *Ibid.*, Articles of Incorporation — Six Minute Ferry Company, October 18, 1920.
23. *Vallejo Times*, October 19, 1920.
24. Hatch Brothers Papers.
25. *Vallejo Times*, October 30, 1920.
26. Hatch Brothers Papers.
27. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, January 3, 1921.
28. Hatch Brothers Papers.
29. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, January 15, 1921.
30. *Ibid.*, August 15, 1921.
31. *Ibid.*, October 15, 1921.
32. *Ibid.*, August 29, 1921.
33. Hatch Brothers Papers.
34. Harlan & Fisher, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
35. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, October 18, 1921.
36. *Ibid.*, October 27, 1921.
37. *Ibid.*, November 29, 1921.
38. *Ibid.*, December 7, 1921.
39. *Ibid.*, December 12, 1921.
40. *Ibid.*, December 28, 1921.
41. Hatch Brothers Papers.
42. *Vallejo Evening Chronicle*, January 1922.
43. *Ibid.*, April 9, 1922.
44. *Ibid.*, April 27, 1922.
45. *Ibid.*, May 9, 1922.
46. *Ibid.*, September 25, 1922.
47. *Ibid.*, November 15, 1922.
48. *Ibid.*, April 24, 1923.
49. Harland & Fisher, *op. cit.*, p. 124, 125.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

Solano County Historical Society P. O. Box 922, Vallejo, CA 94590

U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 71
Vallejo
California

Non Profit
Organization