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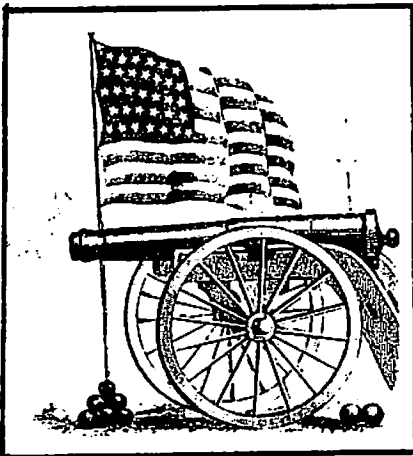
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EARLY FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

By ARDA M. HAENSZEL

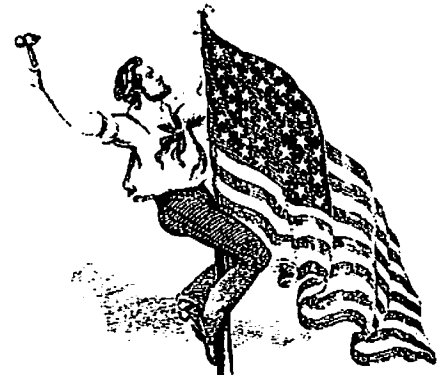


It seems a little hard to believe that the earliest recorded celebration of the American patriotic holiday in the San Bernardino area actually took place during the Mexican regime, in 1842, at the time the San Bernardino Rancho was granted to the Lugos. They had received the land in June, but in August they were still slowly winding up the red tape in their purchase of the mission buildings.

Daniel Sexton had arrived in Old San Bernardino in December 1841, and went to work in the mountains above Cherry Valley cutting timber for Isaac Williams of the Chino Rancho and others. Cahuilla Indians furnished the labor for the operation at a wage of 25¢ per day. Sexton made friends with the Indians and gained much influence with them, eventually marrying the niece of Chief Solano. In 1842 they

asked him if the Americans did not celebrate feast days. In response, on July 4th, Sexton erected a flag pole and raised an American flag over the camp, and celebrated along with the Indians in true patriotic fashion.

The first 4th of July in San Bernardino proper, in 1852 took place on the 5th, since the 4th fell on a Sunday. Mormon Elder Charles C. Rich was away on a trip to Salt Lake, so the colony decided to mark the day by getting in his crop of wheat for him. Accordingly Uncle Grief Embers' (see page 34 for a biography of Embers) 6-foot Bishop's horn sounded early that morning, and, after a short patriotic oration, everyone set about the cooperative harvest. By evening Rich's entire crop was in.



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