



JOHN BROWN, SR.

(Continued from Page 54)

Left - Monument on the highway south of Cajon Junction in the Pass, commemorating the Santa Fe and Salt Lake Trail of 1849, as well as the brave pioneers of California of that era. Right - Cajon Pass Toll House of John Brown's Toll Road as it appeared in the 1860's.

This group was led by John Brown and a few others.

There were many problems which led to the formation of this opposition party, but the main one concerned the boundary of the San Bernardino Rancho. When Lyman and Rich bought the property from the Lugos, they thought they were buying nearly 80,000 acres, whereas they were actually only entitled to choose 35,000 acres of the 80,000. This was quite a blow to the two Mormon leaders and they took their time in selecting the boundaries of their tract to insure that they at least got the best acreage available. Most of the Mormons had complete trust in Lyman and Rich, and

were willing to be patient. The non-Mormons, on the other hand, wanted to homestead land rather than pay the Mormons for it. Hostilities over this dispute became serious, and by the time the boundary was settled upon, the Independent Party was firmly entrenched and other

issues arose to take the place of the land question.

In 1854 Brown moved to Yucaipa where he engaged in raising stock for three years. When the Mormons left the area three years later, he moved back into town and bought several parcels of property. In 1861 he built a toll road through Cajon Pass and the following year established a ferry on the Colorado River. Shortly after the Civil War he homesteaded a ranch on the Mojave River which he called the Rancho Verde.

During the Civil War the area wavered between the support of the Union and Confederacy. Brown was not afraid to show his wholehearted support for the Union. In fact, he was such a staunch Union man, he often placed himself in physical danger.

Brown was a spiritualist and spent considerable time in the study of the occult. He wrote a book, "Medium of the Rockies," in which he recounted many of his spiritualistic experiences.

John Brown and his wife, Louisa, had ten children. In 1888, he helped organize the San Bernardino Society of California Pioneers. He was serving as that organization's president when he died on April 20, 1899.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brown's eldest son, John Brown, Jr., who was born on October 3, 1847, served as a school teacher, then an attorney, in San Bernardino for many years. He became the first secretary of the San Bernardino Society of California Pioneers when they were organized in 1888 and served in that position until shortly before his death on August 4, 1932.

