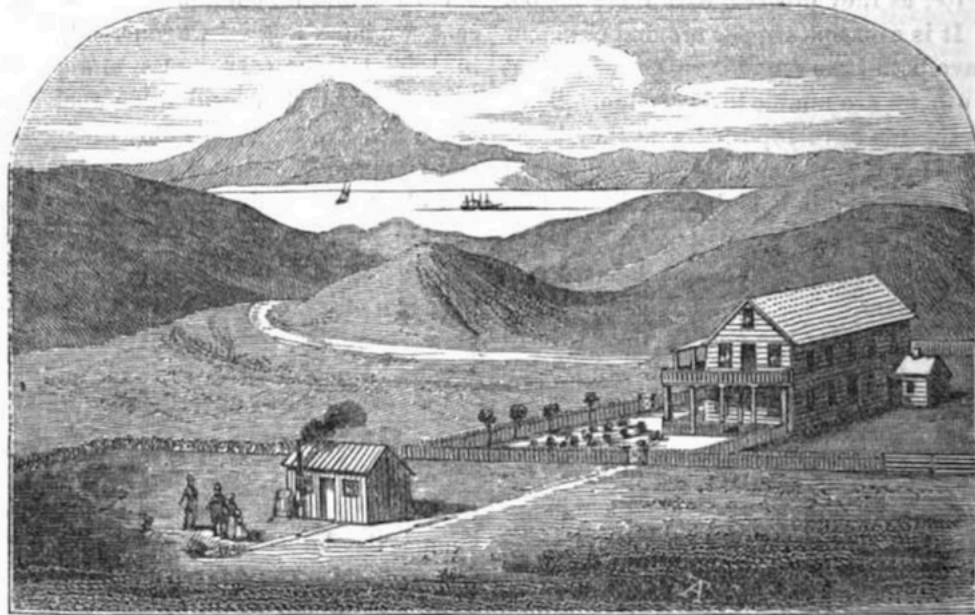


THE SOLANO MINERAL SPRINGS.

BY J. A. RANKIN.

Source: Hutchings' Illustrated California Magazine, Vol. 4, San Francisco 1860



THE SULPHUR SPRING HOUSE, WITH A PORTION OF SUISUN BAY, AND MONTE DIABLO.

[*Sketched from nature, by J. A. Rankin.*]

*The Sulphur Spring house, with a portion of Suisun Bay, and Monte Diablo.
(Sketched from Nature, by J. A. Rankin.)*

Among the various wonders that Nature has so lavishly bestowed upon California, but few are more deserving of notice than her Mineral Springs. As though intended that nearly every physical ill should be provided with an antidote, healing waters are made to gush forth from the bowels of the earth, and bubble up on the tops and sides of mountain chains. In these, the counties of Solano and Napa seem to be the most favored.

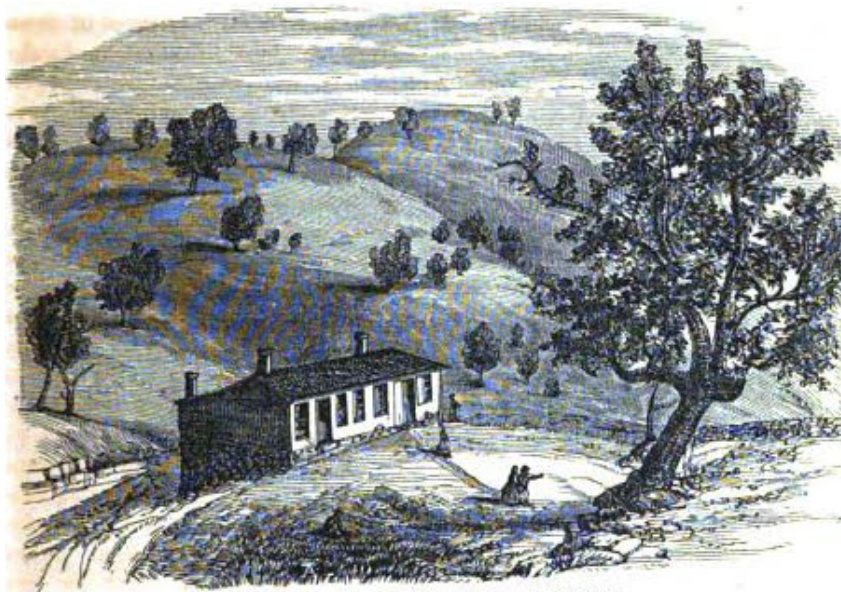
The Solano Springs—to the description of which I shall confine my attention at the present time—are situated about five miles north of Suisun City, at an elevation of about eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea, and in the midst of the most beautiful and most romantic of scenery. For more than half the distance from Suisun the road runs across the level valley, that, in the spring-time, is carpeted with green turf, variegated with wild flowers of every hue. Groves of dark-green live-oaks, with an occasional farm house peeping from among the oak-openings, and here and there cattle and sheep quietly reposing, or eagerly feeding, displaying a scene of beauty, that I have seldom seen surpassed: and, as I journeyed through it, in the peaceful serenity of the evening, I could almost imagine myself again in the beautiful Chilian vales of Umui [sic, Olmué] and Dormida.

Ascending the steep, but smoothly sloped and gently rounded hills, dotted with trees, a panorama of vast extent and great beauty is rolled out before you. To the south-east, a broad plain extends as far as the eye can reach; to the south, Monte Diablo is the crowning point of a long chain of hills; to the east, and northeast, the shimmering tops of the snow-covered Sierra Nevadas, shine through the deepening haze, with a richer glow, than the glittering gold that is hidden deep beneath their icy crest.

Arriving at the “Empire Spring,” and looking down the cañon, is the “White Sulphur Spring.” Before going further, perhaps I ought to mention that there are several mineral springs in this chain of hills, the principal of which seem to be the Empire, White Sulphur, Seltzer and Congress. The former is located near the head of a ravine, on the south side of Soda Spring Cañon. This spring furnishes a considerable volume of water, that issues in a jet, with a gurgling noise at intervals of from one to two seconds. The numerous bubbles that rise to the surface would indicate the pressure of a larger amount of carbonic acid gas in this, than in any of the other springs; but a careful analysis has failed to confirm it.

The White Sulphur Spring, as I have said, is near the foot of the cañon, some 200 feet above the bed of the small stream that runs thro' the latter. The flow of water from this spring is small, probably not more than from three to four gallons, daily, but it is highly impregnated with sulphur, the smell of which is perceptible for some distance. From this spring can be seen the famous Suisun marble quarry.

The Congress Spring is but a short distance from the Empire, and very much resembles the latter, except that the escapement of gas is less.



VIEW OF THE SOLANO MINERAL SPRINGS



A SCENE IN THE FOOT HILLS OF SUISUN VALLEY.

The Seltzer Spring is on the west side of the divide, overlooking the upper portion of Suisun Valley. Its pellucid and sparkling waters are equal in taste to the best soda water ever drank, eclipsing, in flavor at least, the more celebrated Congress and Empire. Each of the Springs, with the exception of the White Sulphur, issue from the fissures of a light, porous, calcareous rock, of singular formation. These mineral waters have been known to, and even the resort of, native Californians, for more than twenty years, but they have received but little attention until recently; when the following careful analysis of two of the springs, by Dr. Hewston, of San Francisco, discovered the valuable medicinal properties they contained.

	Congress.	Empire.
Specific Gravity	1.0056	1.0132
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Iodide of Potassium	0.24	1.64
Chloride of Potassium	0.71	1.66
Chloride of Sodium	26.90	90.83
Carbonate of Soda	6.67	14.38
Biborate of Soda	2.57	6.44
Carbonate of Lime	6.04	4.46
Carbonate of Magnesia	1.36	4.57
Carbonate of Iron	0.08	0.09
Alumina	0.12	trace
Selica	0.20	0.40
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Dry Solid Matter in 1 pint	45.00	124.47
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Free Carb. Acid Gas, cub. in	33.735	26.297

Their value will be the better appreciated by the perusal of the following note from Drs. I. Rowell and B. A. Sheldon, and with which I shall close this description:

“We have carefully examined the results of Dr. Hewston's analysis of the waters of the Congress and Empire Springs and believe them possessed of remedial virtues superior to any other of the vaunted waters of California, and equal to any in the world. Their Tonic, Alterative, Antacid and Aperient qualities, render them invaluable, when judiciously administered, in the treatment of various chronic affections.”

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