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GOLDEN NOTES

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THE CALIFORNIA STAR
EXPRESS



The newspaper that told
the world that gold was discovered in California.

A replica of this special edition of The California Star is enclosed.

THE CALIFORNIA STAR *EXPRESS*



by

NORMA B. RICKETTS

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Norma B. Ricketts has specialized in the history of Mormons in California during the period 1844 - 1860. She has traveled throughout the state extensively compiling information on Mormon pioneers in California. With newspaper and magazine articles to her credit, she has three books published:

Mormon Footprints in California

Mormons and the Discovery of Gold

Historic Consumnes and the Sloughouse Pioneer Cemetery

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- Historian's Office, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- California Room, California State Library, Sacramento, California.

<p>To J. L. R. who found Nathan Hawk's grave</p>
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ILLUSTRATIONS

A Printing Office Title Page
California Historical Society Library

First California Star Office Page 2
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Nathan Hawk Page 13
Bryan Kwong

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THE CALIFORNIA STAR *EXPRESS*

We publish today, not in the tawdry uncouth garb of the 'extra' Dame Scandal had premised . . . but our usual array of regular weekly columns and, accompanying those, a clever-sized supplement.

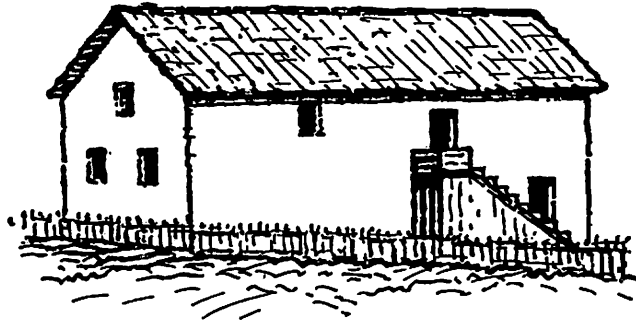
This description was given by the editor of the special edition of *The California Star*, published in San Francisco April 1, 1848. Carefully planned to lure Easterners to the Pacific shores, the paper extolled many agricultural advantages as well as the beauty and the climate of the state. It accomplished its purpose, but in a far different manner than originally was intended.

Early in January 1848, the merchants of San Francisco had met to determine what could be done to help their lagging economy.¹ They decided the virtues of the state must be called to the attention of adventuresome residents of the Eastern Coast. The idea was a natural for publisher Samuel Brannan. He agreed to print two special editions – the first 2,000 copies on April 1st and a second 2,000 on June 1st – and to deliver them by overland couriers to Missouri.

A convert to Mormonism, Brannan was in charge of 238 Latter-day Saints, who had sailed around Cape Horn in the ship *Brooklyn*, landing in Yerba Buena July 29, 1846.² The ship had sailed from New York six months earlier with its hull filled with a wide assortment of items to colonize a new land. Included among the necessities was a hand press made by Hoe & Co., a supply of paper and all the necessary

type to begin a newspaper.³ Before leaving New York, Brannan had decided upon the name for the future paper and had the heading set there in December, 1845. The name he selected was *The California Star*.

The Star, which began publication on January 9, 1847, was San Francisco's first newspaper. E. P. Jones was the first editor. It regularly had four pages, 10½" x 16½", with three columns to a page, and included whatever news was available from letters and word of mouth of those arriving aboard ships, and advertisements. The massive printing press had been inched laboriously up the outside stairway to the second story of Nathan Spear's frame grist mill, located near what is now Clay Street.⁴ While the type was set in the loft, a mule ground out the meal on the ground floor below.⁵



SPEAR'S GRIST MILL
First location of the Brannan Press in Yerba Buena

Brannan, highly enthusiastic about the whole idea of a special edition, began planning with his editor Edward C. Kemble. They were assisted by John Eager as compositor and printer.⁶ Eager was a Mormon boy from the ship *Brooklyn* and Kemble was a young man who had worked for Brannan in the printing business in New York City. Kemble had chosen to sail with Brannan although he was not a Mormon. Kemble was only 18 years old when his name first appeared as editor of *The Star* on October 2, 1847.

There were six pages, 18" x 22", in the special edition with four columns on each page.⁷ Dr. Victor J. Fourgeaud, a recent arrival from South Carolina, was engaged to do a special article. Dr. Fourgeaud's feature, titled "Prospects of California", was the result of first-hand investigation. He had journeyed through the Sacramento Valley on his trip covering Northern California. He toured the valleys, visiting Santa Clara, San Jose, Sonoma and Napa. From the first, he foresaw a glorious future for California.

Sam Brannan was looking for just such a man as Dr. Fourgeaud, a Californian, an enthusiast who could interpret with pen and ink what he saw and felt. Brannan pointed out the businessmen in some eastern communities, especially those in Missouri, were making light of California. They did not like the migration that was beginning. To counteract this western fever, eastern newspapers bristled with discouraging reports about California – the ground was sterile and unproductive, rivers were unnavigable, there was not enough water for irrigation, the climate was unhealthy, and worst of all, the whole country was in the grasp of chills and fever.⁸

Brannan asked Fourgeaud to describe California in glowing terms, and for Dr. Fourgeaud that was not hard. Dipping his pen in an ink as potent as California wine the doctor began:

Our now flourishing little town (San Francisco) is destined ere long to become the manufacturing metropolis and the commercial emporium of Western America . . . It would be utterly impossible at present to make a correct estimate of the most healthful territories on the continent. Setting its mineral wealth aside, it may be one of the richest agricultural countries in the world.

And so, on and on, for six columns, paragraph after paragraph steeped in enthusiasm, conceived in glowing terms. Modern-day readers will find the passing years have only added details to the picture of California painted by Fourgeaud. Brannan was delighted with the article and devoted the entire front page to it. One paragraph, prophetic in reference to levees and rice, states:

A cursory glance over the region known as 'Upper California' is sufficient to prove that no other country possesses a more varied soil, or one capable of producing in greater abundance all vegetable substances. Where will you find richer lands than those which border the Sacramento and San Joaquin? Those can be drained at a comparatively small expense and all the products belonging to a temperate climate may be furnished by this region alone. Before many years, levees will be constructed on the banks of these rivers, and the vast tract known as the 'Tulares' will be cultivated and rice will constitute our principal article of export.

Continuing, the article states:

Wheat, corn, rye, barley, oats, potatoes, beans, garden vegetables, in a word, all the products of the happiest portions of the globe, can be raised in California, with as little difficulty as anywhere, and no where will they pay the agriculturist better for his labor. Ride over the fertile vallies [sic] of the Upper Pueblo (now Santa Clara Valley), Napa, Suisun, and Sonoma, and you will at once perceive the advantages of these localities. Ere long when these beautiful [sic] vallies [sic] become thickly settled, they will represent, with their climate of eternal spring, those rare spots which when seen are never left without regret, depicted by poets as earthly paradises.

One sentence, in retrospect, adds a touch of humor:

With so many advantages, is it surprising that all industrious farmers who arrive poor in California, soon become, not only independent but wealthy?

California, even then, was pictured as a health mecca: "The surgeons of San Francisco have remarked that wounds heal here with astonishing rapidity, owing, it is supposed, in a great measure, to the extreme purity of the atmosphere." One cannot help but wonder, when in the same paper the census of San Francisco is listed as 812 persons, just how many surgeons were dwelling there at the time!

The Star Express covered such a wide range of subjects that each eastern reader probably found something of special interest to him. A close study of the advertisements reveals much about the people and conditions of the day. In the special edition there were five columns of ads, with their appearance explained thusly:

OUT O'SORTS — Our advertisements have been placed in larger letters for this week only. The failure of our "font" of smaller letters to serve (both) the Supplement and regular sheet was the cause.

Enthused with the way the special edition was shaping up, Brannan saw the possibility of additional revenue since there were no established mail routes at that time. For several weeks prior to April 1st, he advertised that letters and papers would be carried overland by a group of hired riders:

The California Star Express (60 days to Independence, Mo.) will leave this place on the 1st of April and New Helvetia⁹ on the 15th. Postage on letters 50 cents.¹⁰

This ad was repeated February 19th and 26th. In the March 1st announcement, the last sentence was changed to read: "Postage on letters 50 cents, on papers 12½ cents".

Later interviews with riders indicated they carried several bags of letters.¹¹ As far as can be determined, this is the first mail to go overland from West to East, under contract, predating the Pony Express idea of later years.

While the special edition was being prepared in San Francisco, gold was discovered in Coloma January 24, 1848. By this time *The Star* extra was nearly completed and, since the front page was taken up with Dr. Furgeaud's article, the gold story was buried on a back page. Under the description of the Sacramento Valley, the editor merely stated: ". . . it has a mine of gold and a probable estimate of its magnitude cannot be derived from any information we have received." Towards the end of his article, Dr. Furgeaud wrote:

We saw a few days ago, a beautiful specimen of gold from the mine newly discovered on the American Fork. From all accounts the mine is immensely rich – and already, we learn, the gold from it is collected at random and without any trouble, has become an article of trade at the upper settlements.

When the special edition was finished, Brannan hired ten men to carry the 2,000 copies to the Mississippi Valley. Six were discharged members of the Mormon Battalion, which had been organized in the summer of 1846 during the War with Mexico. Members of the Mormon Battalion, who were recruited July 21, 1846, in Council Bluffs, Iowa, marched over 2,000 miles to San Diego, arriving there January 20, 1847. By the time of their arrival on the Pacific Coast, the war was over and the soldiers finished out their service as a peace-time garrison.¹² Upon discharge (July 16, 1847) some went to Salt Lake valley, via Sutter's Fort, but

about a hundred remained in California at the request of Brigham Young to obtain additional supplies before continuing to join the Saints the next year.

Late in 1847 three of these ex-soldiers, Nathan Hawk, his father (William), his cousin (Silas Harris), and several other discharged Battalion members went to San Francisco, where they became acquainted with Sam Brannan. Nathan stated:

Brannan was very anxious to have some of his papers circulated in the East and, after making a bargain with me to carry them across the plains on my way back to Missouri, he proceeded to get out a boom edition.¹³

Soon after gold was discovered but still kept a secret, Brannan visited the fort and learned a teamster had paid for whisky with some small nuggets in his store across the road from the main entrance to the fort. Nathan continued:

He took the gold over to the Fort and marched in to where Sutter was sitting at his desk and said: "I hear they are finding gold up where you are building a mill."

Cautiously, Sutter replied: "I know they are finding something that looks like gold, and we sent some to Monterey to have a test made."

Actually, Sutter was biding time. He and James Marshall had tested the flakes to their satisfaction and they had concluded it was gold. Sutter and Marshall acted immediately to secure the land at Coloma from the Indians, offering them \$200 a year in goods for the joint occupancy of the land. Sutter then sent Charles Bennett to Monterey to see Col. R. B. Mason, military governor and commander of the United States forces, to confirm the lands around the saw-mill in the names of Sutter and Marshall.¹²

Bennett had not returned when Brannan faced Sutter. Sutter wanted to be sure of the land rights before the gold find was made public, thus, his cautious reply to Brannan. Nathan Hawk stated:

He [Brannan] returned immediately to San Francisco. There he worked off [completed] his boom edition of the *Star* . . . The papers [2,000 copies] weighed 80 pounds. They were not much larger than a foolscap, but just bristled with glowing descriptions of the country.

Brannan wanted the papers given to all immigrants met and he had packages addressed to every section of the Union. One, larger than the others, I remember was directed to the reading room of the National Library in the City of Washington.¹³

Of the six Mormon express riders, the names of five are known: William Hawk, Nathan Hawk, Silas Harris, Richard Slater and Sanford Jones.¹⁴ The names of the sixth Mormon and the other four men are not known. One account states Harris was in charge of the men,¹¹ although present research seems to indicate it was Nathan Hawk.

The Mormons were delighted with the chance to earn money and to have some traveling supplies furnished while returning to their families, whom they had left in Missouri and Iowa when they enlisted in the Battalion. In addition to the papers and the mail carried, each of the Mormon riders took extra supplies, pack mules, and horses. Both the Mormons in Utah and those still in Missouri were destitute. Knowing this, the ex-soldiers had worked to accumulate provisions for their families.¹²

Brannan and the men left San Francisco on schedule, April 1st, for Sutter's Fort. An entry in Sutter's journal states:

FRIDAY April 7th 1848

Work going as usual, a strong southerly breeze. The *Dice mi Nana* arrived with Mr. Brannan, Mr. Hawk the express Mail carrier and a few others.¹⁵

In the week that followed Brannan organized the riders into an overland mule-train. The Mormon riders, while waiting, visited with their friends at Mormon Island and while there were successful in finding gold. The men left Sacramento April 15th. Brannan, in his enthusiasm, rode with them as far as the foothills beyond Sacramento, giving them a proper send off. These ten men were known as the riders of *The California Star Express*.

They traveled the northern route to Salt Lake by the Truckee River. There was some trouble with Indians in the Sierra Nevada. The Indians managed to take 75 of their horses, but all were recovered. The deep, soft snow offered another challenge. Also, the Truckee River was very high and swift, with a rocky, dangerous bottom, but the men crossed it numerous times safely although the freezing waters caused much discomfort.¹¹

The express riders replenished supplies and visited with friends in Salt Lake City before continuing on. Nathan told of meeting Brigham Young:

We stopped and talked with Brigham Young for quite a time. He was very anxious to find the conditions in the country we had traversed. I showed him the gold and asked him if he would go on to California. He replied: "No! I hope they will never strike gold in the country where we located, for I do not want my people to go digging for their God."

. . . I forgot to tell you that the gold I took with me across the plains . . . was dug out by myself and three or four others of my comrades at Mormon Island.¹³

High water presented problems to the riders all the way to the Platte River in Nebraska. When near the east end of Grand Island, Nebraska, the Pawnee Indians stole 18 horses. While trying to recover the horses, several shots were exchanged and one Indian reportedly was killed. William Hawk, one of the pursuing party, was saved miraculously as an Indian's gun failed to discharge when aimed only a few feet away. One Indian tried to shoot William with an arrow, but he parried off the arrow and the Indian struck him a heavy blow across the forehead with his bow. William, stunned for a moment, bled profusely and carried the mark for a long time. No other members of the company were harmed and the animals were all recovered.

The men completed their journey successfully by late July. Their contract was to carry the papers to Missouri and that they did. The papers apparently were distributed as planned. Nathan stated:

My party arrived safely in Missouri where my family resided. My companions [the other riders] went to different sections . . . The papers of Brannan that I put in the mails and sent on [to] their destinations soon spread the news and were the cause of heavy immigration West in 1849.¹³

One copy of the overland special edition found its way to the offices of the *New York Herald*, where a reporter went through *The Star*, picking out a paragraph here and there until he had a two-column story. The story, published in the *Herald* on Saturday, August 19, 1848, included the following:

The gold mine discovered in December last, on the south branch of the American Fork, in a

range of low hills forming the base of the Sierra Nevada, distant thirty miles from New Helvetia, is only three feet below the surface, in a strata of soft sand rock. From explorations south twelve miles, and north five miles, the continuance of this strata is reported, and the mineral said to be equally abundant, and from twelve to eighteen feet in thickness; so that, without allowing any golden hopes to puzzle my prophetic vision of the future, I would predict for California a Peruvian harvest of the precious metals, as soon as a sufficiency of miners, &c, can be obtained.

Of the five riders whose names are known, Nathan Hawk is the only one reported to have returned to California. Upon arrival in Missouri, he was reunited not only with his wife, but his mother as well. A large body of Mormons was gathered there awaiting the trek to the Salt Lake Valley. Enthusiastic about California, he was able to persuade his wife's family and others to emigrate all the way to California. Serving as a guide, Nathan began his second western trip in April, 1849.¹⁷

Samuel Conrad, Nathan's father-in-law, outfitted three wagons for his family of six daughters and four sons.¹⁸ Four oxen were used to pull each wagon.¹⁹ In late April, as the wagon train moved slowly forward, beginning a trek which ended five months later on the banks of the American River, six-year-old Margaret Conrad, stood on the seat of one of the lead wagons and shouted: "California, here we come." Margaret Conrad, later Mrs. Arthur Landsburg, recalled:

While our journey was fraught with the usual perils and hardships, we had no encounters with the roaming bands of Indians. We saw many of them, but they did not molest us, probably because we were such a large train.

At the same time we took good care to draw the caravan into a great circle for the night. Often we stopped long before dark to let the horses and oxen graze, for at nightfall they had to be corraled within the circle of wagons.

The closest call that any of us children had on the trip was when little Louise fell off the wagon seat while the big lumbering wagon was in motion. One of the enormous iron-shod wheels passed over her ear, tearing off a portion of it. Otherwise, she was uninjured.²⁰

Three cows accompanied the Conrad family and Margaret's mother placed cream each night in a small barrel suspended on the back of the wagon. Each morning, after a few hours' travel, the cream was churned into butter.

One tragic accident occurred enroute. Nathan's mother, Margaret Harris Hawk, was killed when the animals stampeded, overturning the wagon in which she was riding. Nathan's father, William, stayed in Utah and did not come on to California.¹¹

While crossing the Humboldt Sink, then considered a part of California, Nathan's first child was born in an emigrant wagon. Nathan and his wife, Elizabeth Conrad Hawk, named their son William Humboldt Hawk after the valley of his birth and he claimed to be the oldest native son of California, though born in what is now Nevada.

Mrs. Landsburg stated they were fortunate to have Nathan Hawk as a guide since he'd been over the route before. Only once did he miscalculate and they went two days without water. When they did arrive at a waterhole at the end of the second day, they lost several head of cattle because they drank too much water. The wagon train arrived in the Sacramento Valley in late September, 1849, and camped "on the banks of the American River just east of the collection of rickety buildings and tents called Sacramento."²⁰



NATHAN HAWK

Samuel Conrad was a carpenter and, assisted by his sons, cut and prepared timber for a house located at the south east corner of the Eighth and J Street alley. That winter the Conrads built a two-story clapboard building at the southeast corner of Eighth and J Streets. This was the Eagle Hotel, known far and wide as headquarters for miners, gamblers, and teamsters until it was destroyed in 1852 by fire. After the fire Conrad moved to Yolo County where he was a prominent farmer until his death October 24, 1871.

Mrs. Landsburg recalled it was not an unusual sight to see half a dozen ten-mule teams drawn up before the door of the hotel, all packed with supplies for the mining regions. She remembered when gold dust and nuggets were the only currency acceptable in Sacramento and recalled seeing as many as eight one-quart pickle jars filled with gold on her father's desk at one time. Boarders at the hotel were called to dinner by a small hand bell, which she saved from the fire. Mrs. Landsburg was a continuous resident in Sacramento from 1849 and resided at 1421 12th Street until her death, January 31, 1893.

Nathan lived in Roseville, California, for many years prior to his death and made several trips to Sacramento for the annual Fourth of July celebration. On one such occasion when he was 84 years old, he recalled the journey west and his gold mining adventures:

In our train there were 80 wagons and we made a long procession as we trailed over the prairies. We saw lots of Indians, but they were all peaceable. We arrived in Sacramento in September [1849] . . . We lived for a time in our wagons at a point which is now the City Plaza at 10th and J Streets.¹³

The excitement of knowing gold was in the nearby hills caught up with Nathan and others in his wagon train and they mined at Mormon Island near Folsom. Nathan continued with an interesting description of how they assessed their day's work:

Well, it was mining in a primitive way. We had no pans, no lumber to make rockers, and so we used Indian baskets to pan with. The Indians made a water-tight willow basket that answered the place of a pan. When we would get panned down to the black sand, we would dump the gold on a flour sack which was spread out on the grass.

In order to weigh our gold, we made a balance with two chips, a stock and a string. We imitated the scales held by Justice. We placed the gold on one chip and Mexican or Spanish gold on the other until they balanced. In that way we could pretty closely estimate the value of our day's work, which averaged about \$20 to the man.

William Humboldt Hawk grew up in the mines with his father and became a very successful miner. William H. wore gold nuggets, each of which had a special history, on his shirt front.

On trips to Sacramento, Nathan always visited Sutter's Fort to look at a musket on display there, which was like the one he carried in the Mormon Battalion. He proudly wore a bronze medal for his service in the Mexican War. The medal was made from the metal of an old bronze cannon captured in Mexico by General Zachary Taylor and was presented to Nathan during the administration of General Ulysses S. Grant.¹⁷ Nathan spent his declining years in Yountville, California, where he died November 17, 1910. He was buried in Coloma, California. An historical marker was placed on his grave January 19, 1967, by the Sacramento County, Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

There is one more aspect of the story. Brannan had agreed to print a second edition on June 1st, but events

prevented it. *The Californian*, also printed at this time in San Francisco, had published on March 15, 1848, the first printing anywhere telling of the discovery of gold:

GOLD MINE FOUND — In the newly made raceway of the Saw Mill recently erected by Captain Sutter on the American Fork, gold has been found in considerable quantity. One person brought thirty dollars' worth to New Helvetia, gathered there in a short time. California, no doubt, is rich in mineral wealth, great chances here for scientific capitalists. Gold has been found in almost every part of the country.

Prior to the discovery of gold on January 24, 1848, Brannan had established a store known as C. C. Smith & Company just outside Sutter's Fort. Brannan was the "and Company". A teamster returning from delivering supplies to Coloma had brought a drink of whisky with gold dust and revealed the source of his gold. This tip was all Brannan needed. Sutter had sworn Marshall and the other men at the mill to secrecy for a few weeks.

Shortly after the Coloma discovery two other Battalion men, Sidney Willis and Wilford Hudson, found a second rich gold strike, which was called Mormon Island. News of this second strike also reached Sam Brannan. Brannan was quick to see what was going to happen and hurriedly established a second store at Mormon Island and a third in Coloma, Brannan needed time to get these stores well stocked.

After the insignificant paragraph appeared in the *Californian*, scooping *The Star* on the gold discovery, Editor Kemble decided to go to the gold country to learn firsthand the extent of the discovery. During mid-March, 1848, Kemble visited the gold mines and, upon his return to San Francisco, showed great restraint in reporting what he had found:

Great country, fine climate; visit this great valley, we would advise all who have not yet done so. See it now. Full flowing streams, mighty timber, large crops, luxuriant clover, fragrant flowers, gold and silver.³

It is easy to see why Kemble, perhaps with firm suggestion from his publisher, wrote the results of his trip to the gold fields with such a lack of enthusiasm. As a good newspaperman, he had reported the gold find, but certainly not in glowing terms. Brannan just wasn't ready for the onslaught to begin.

Finally, Brannan had his stores well stocked with supplies and in late May – about six weeks after *The Star Express* left – Brannan rushed in San Francisco's Plaza and shouted: "Gold, gold, gold from the American River!"³ With his broad-brimmed black hat, the shining bottle of gold flakes waved high, and his booming voice, Samuel left little doubt in the minds of those who heard him that gold indeed had been found in quantity.

People at first had been indifferent or skeptical about the gold discovery, then curious, then mildly interested, but with Brannan's dramatic announcement, they became madly excited. As rumors of the extent and magnitude of the discoveries increased, the hysteria reached great heights, and virtually the entire population of Northern California stampeded to the mines. The first miners were men already in California.

The second printing of an additional 2,000 copies of *The California Star* was scheduled to go East on June 1st. The first announcement was made in the April 22nd issue:

Another Express will leave our office on the 20th of June for Independence. The postage on letters and papers will be the usual price letters 50 cents, papers 12½ cents.

Another paragraph in the same issue is of interest:

We have been informed, from unquestionable authority, that another still more extensive and valuable gold mine has been discovered towards the head of the American Fork in the Sacramento Valley. We have seen several specimens taken from it, to the amount of eight or ten ounces of pure, virgin gold.

The California Star, April 29, 1848:

We have made positive arrangements for another Express to leave this place for Independence on the 20th of June, without fail. Postage on letters 50 cents, papers 12½ cents.

Under the above date, the editor wrote a separate paragraph:

THE MAIL — THE EASTERN MAIL

The undersigned having made arrangements to transmit a private express mail across the mountains, gives notice that separate bags will be made up for Fort Hall, Salt Lake settlement, Fort Bridger, Fort Laramie, Santa Fe, and all parts of the United States. The mail will be closed on the 10th of May. Postage will be the same as on similar expresses.

The second 2,000 copies of *The Star* never were printed. Gold fever had hit San Francisco by then. *The Star* ceased publication June 14, 1848. In the final edition Editor Kemble wrote:

In fewer words than are usually employed in the announcement of similar events, we appear before the remnant of a reading community, on this occasion, with the material or immaterial information, that we have "stopped the paper" . . . We have done — let our word of parting be, *Hasta Luego!*

The *New York Herald* article in August brought about the second influx of gold seekers. Still another bit of publicity helped the Gold Rush along. On August 17, 1848, just two days before the *Herald* article appeared, Governor Richard Barnes Mason completed his epochal report and dispatched it with the famous oyster can of dust by Lieutenant Loeser to President James K. Polk. His report and President Polk's message to Congress in December, 1848, completed the initial publicity begun by Sam Brannan and his *California Star Express*.

The special edition of *The California Star* is significant for three reasons:

1. It was the means of bringing the news of the gold discovery to the outside world.
2. It was a forerunner of California promotional literature.
3. Its riders carried the first mail overland, under contract, from West to East.

Although the results were different from what the San Francisco businessmen had in mind when they commissioned Brannan to print the special edition of *The Star*, California did receive her influx of immigrants. No more propaganda was needed. **The Gold Rush Was On!**

THE CALIFORNIA STAR EXPRESS RIDERS

SILAS HARRIS

Born: 14 October 1824 near Bone, Indiana.
Parents: Moses and Fanny Smith Harris
Married: Sariah Aldridge, 2 September 1848, Independence Rock.
Private, Mormon Battalion, Company B, 1846 - 47.
Rider, *California Star Express*, 1848.
Upon discharge from Battalion, went to Yerba Buena, staying there until April 1848, when he left for Missouri. With his parents, he left Council Bluffs in early summer, 1848, arriving in Salt Lake City in mid-October, 1848. In 1851 Silas took his family in a group of about 500 and settled San Bernardino. He stayed there until 1857 when Mormons were called back to Salt Lake City by Brigham Young. The next 15 years were spent pioneering Washington, Harrisburg, and Leeds in the Dixie area of Utah. He held many offices in the LDS Church before he died 12 March 1897 in Leeds, Utah.¹¹

NATHAN HAWK

Born: 1823, Indiana.
Parents: William and Margaret Harris Hawk¹¹
Married: Elizabeth Conrad
Private, Mormon Battalion, Company B, 1846 - 47.
Rider, *California Star Express*, 1848.
Died: 17 November 1910, Yountville, California.
Buried: Coloma, El Dorado Co., California.

WILLIAM HAWK

Born: 3 November 1799, Virginia.
Married: Margaret Harris, aunt of Silas Harris.¹¹
Died: 20 September 1883, Salt Lake City, Utah.
Private, Mormon Battalion, Company B, 1846 - 47.
Rider, *California Star Express*, 1848.

SANFORD JACOBS

Private, Mormon Battalion, Company D, 1846 - 47.
Rider, *California Star Express*, 1848.

RICHARD SLATER

Born: 2 February 1812, Lancastershire, England.
Married: Ann Corbridge, 1834, England
Private, Mormon Battalion, Company E, 1846 - 47.
Rider, *California Star Express*, 1848.
Reunited with his wife and children in Council Bluffs. The Slaters moved to Iowa where he farmed several years. They went to Utah in 1852 in the Thomas Howell Company, taking with them seeds of different varieties and young fruit trees. The family settled in Weber County, Utah. Died 26 November 1893 in Slaterville, Utah.¹¹

NOTE: If names of other *Star Express* riders are known, please contact Norma B. Ricketts, 3220 Eastwood Road, Sacramento, California 95821. Phone: (916) 487-6478.

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2. Yerba Buena was changed to San Francisco March, 1847.
3. Watson, Douglas S., "The Great Express Extra of the California Star of April 1, 1848". *The California Historical Society Quarterly*, Vol. VII, No. 2, June, 1932.
4. Kemble, Edward Cleveland, *A Kemble Reader*, edited by Fred B. Rogers. *The California Historical Society*, San Francisco, 1963.
5. The Star later was published in two other locations. By January, 1847, the press was moved to an adobe building erected by the printers and others from the Brooklyn at the rear of Sam Brannan's house, located behind the old Customs House on the Plaza. By February 3, 1848, The Star had been moved up Washington Street.
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