

Captain
Granville Perry
Swift

California Pioneer
and
Sonoma Bear

by

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stock raising from his upbringing; it was his family's business back east. Certainly, he was successful both at stockraising and gold mining. Indeed, after Swift had wrested his fortune from the Feather river and gone back to raising cattle, he was dealing in hundreds, even thousands, of heads of cattle, sheep, and horses. In 1849, he bought a large tract of land lying in what is now Glenn and Colusa Counties on which he built his now landmarked Swift Adobe near Orland and the landmarked Stone Corral west of Maxwell. (27) By 1852, Colusa County tax receipts indicate Swift's holding 2000 head of cattle, 500 sheep, 400 horses, and 200 bushels of wheat (20). Much help would be needed with this level of ranching. For vacqueros, as mentioned, he continued his long alliance with the Grindstone Indians, with the chief's wife, Ann Brown, as his housekeeper until he moved south to Sonoma.

Receipts in possession of Swift descendants show large purchases and sales, especially for the time. One dated May 21, 1853, has Swift selling, at Willows, over three thousand (3,314) head of cattle; another dated November 1853 at Oat Hollow shows an outlay of \$12,835 for 151 head of cows and steers, as he worked to improve his stock's strain. Bidwell writes on page 23 in the *History of Colusa and Glenn Counties* that on returning to stock raising in 1849, Captain Swift purchased the brand of J.



L. Williams and "for the next five years, still using Indians as vacqueros, his vast herds grazed the plains for miles. Once a year they rodeoed at three places, at the adobe on the Murdock ranch west of Willows, at the old Adobe on Stony Creek north of Orland, and at the Stone Corral west of Maxwell" -- all Swift's properties.

Historic Landmarks

The most prominent reminders of Captain Swift in the Colusa and Glenn counties area now are the mentioned two State Historic Landmarks: the Stone Corral and the Swift Adobe, both near Orland.



Two Views of the Stone Corral



It wasn't much, but it was the first!

The Stone Corral Landmark #238

The Stone Corral was built by Swift with the help of his Grindstone Indians and of his cousin, Franklin Sears. The Napa Register of April 8, 1978, states the corral was for "wild horses in which he traded." (26) If Swift were to raise stock and capture wild horses in great numbers, he needed a holding area and what better material than the rocks so abundant in the area. By 1893, it was referred to in an article in the *Maxwell Phoenix* as as the "oldest pioneer relic remaining in Colusa County." (24) The article states that Swift settled at the mouth of Stony Creek in the late 1840's and, as he gathered vast herds of cattle and horses as well as engaged in using some of his land for some grain raising in a venture with a man named Sterling, he built the Stone Corral ten miles west of present day Maxwell. It was apparently a noted point of interest even when he built it, even as his renowned horse-back riding was. He was, for instance, adept at an activity popular in his time. He could lean off and pick up a coin from the ground while his horse galloped by at full speed.

The Stone Corral was registered with (and accepted by) California by Ida Swift's sons, Earle Morgan Swift and Granville Perry Swift III in 1936.

The Swift Adobe Landmark #345

Located under a huge spreading oak about one mile north of Orland was the Swift Adobe. It was constructed of adobe (clay