

TURNING OF THE SAN DIEGO RIVER INTO FALSE BAY DOCUMENT COLLECTION

1. Petition of Citizens for Diverting the Waters of San Diego River, into False Bay (undated, but late 1849?):

“To the Hon Mayor and Common Council of San Diego,
Gentlemen, The undersigned petitioners would beg to call your immediate attention to the necessity of turning the present course of the River, so that it may empty {empty} its waters into Fals {False} Bay, and thus save our harbour from further injury; and that you forth with make the necessary appropriations to commence and complete the work as soon as possible — Respectfully your ser {?}

Traducción

{followed my spanish version of above}

Name Nombres

José Maria Estudillo, José A. Aguirre, Francisco Maria Alvarado, Manuel {Juan?} Warnes {?}, Juan Bandini (followed by some letters), Ramon Apodaca, F. de P. Rodriguez, Manuel Rocha, Juan Maria Marrón, José de Jesus {?} Florisco {?} Senor, Jose Antonio Serrano, Jose A. Estudillo, William E. Rush, R. Rust, James W. Robinson, Kim Holliver {?}, H. Allen {?}, Robert Crooks, B. M. Colwell, H. L. Waites, R. H. Keane or Keene, Edward Day, Agoston Haraszthy, William L. Hyde, John Chafoman {?}, L. Rose, T J. Warner, Anthony Blackburn, W. A. Emory {?}, John Conyer, José Matias Moreno, José R. Moreno, Loreto Amador, José L. Lopez, A. Jay Smith, G. P. Tibbetts, Joseph Reiser or Ranier, and John Hayes.”

Document No. 20674. Three pages, including cover.

2. September 26, 1850 Report of the Committee Relative to the turning the present Course of the River.

Our Committee respectfully reports as follows, having examined the ground, found a place where the River might be turned, by a pile Dam below the palmetto tree about 200 yards;

The length of the Dam is to be one Thousand and ten feet long. The Bed of the River also will require a ditch of the same length of the dam same 20 to 25 foot wide; Having done this the River will flow in her old bed into the Fals Bay a distance about 4 miles by the meandering {?}; The same bed has to be shoveled out in several places of the dirt and sand washed in by the rains:

your Committee believes that the whole work Completed can be done for the Sum of from \$3,000. to \$4,000.

Your Committee having made various inquiries of the old Citizens of San Diego are informed that in the year 1834 vessels of 5 & 6 hundred tons anchored where now lays the small sihouse? belonging to Israel; and from the immense leachy of sand carried every season into the Bay. it is absolutely of the very highest importance that the River be turned forth with and without delay. and no time should be lost. Lest the Rainy Season should set in.

yours Respectfully

San Diego Sept 26th 1850

A. L. / S. Wright
Charles Hasarzthy
William Leamey

“Report

of the Committee for examining the bed of the San Diego River.”

One page, front and back. Included in a compilation of documents under cover "Document No. 20514" "Contract & Bond for changing course of San Diego River."

3. 1850 Report on Turning the River San Diego into False Bay:

"To the Honor. Mayor, and Common Council of the City of San Diego.

Report

Your Committee respectfully reports as follows:

Having exams the ground , we found the old channel of the river turning off by the Palmetto tree about 200 yards, following said channel till its termination in the saltwater dich about 2 miles which dich winds its way in the false Bay. The turning of the river seems to your Committee practicable in two ways, one by making a dam cross the river bed, said dam to be constructed of clay and stones sunk {?} into the ground from three to four feet. The lenght necessary for the dam is about One Thousand feet; the hight above ground from four to five feet, it would be required besides to dig a channel for the river the lenght of said dam, in order to lead the former in its old bed; further it would be necessary to shovel out on some places the ground and sand besides {?} in said channel by the rains?. The second mode of turning said river is by driving into the ground Piles cross the channel by which the floating grass, ground etc. would block up the course of the river and turn the same into its old channel. The latter plan is in the oppinion of your Committee not so easily accomplished than the former, as the country here is destituted of timbers, and the little that is to be got 50 and 60 miles distant. Consider it would require Pile drivers, which are not at hand.

Respectfully

San Diego the 26th of Sepber
1850.

A. S. Wright
Charles Haraszthy
William Leamey"

"Report on turning the River San Diego into False Bay" on back of Report. Two pages, including cover for group of documents. Document No. 20514, as a group.

4. September 27, 1950 Petition Related to turning of the River San Diego:

"To the Hon Mayor and Common Council of San Diego.
Gentlemen

your undersigned petitioners would beg to call your immediate attention to the turning the River from its present course so that it may discharge its waters into Fals Bay, and that you make appropriations from the public funds in order that the work may be commenced as soon as possible and thus dam and part from further injury by the immense levels? of sand that are annually brought down the River and lodged in our harbour.

San Diego Sept 27, 1850.

yours Respectfully

Names -----
D. Barber
Liucis Mason ?
John R. Bleeker
William Longe
Squire Fletcher, Esq
John Cook.
Thos. S. Beech

Names
Hiriam Backus
Ira Davis
Wm, P, Overton
Henry Eaton

William M. Chase
John Hensley
Holder Almy

One page, front and back. Included in a compilation of documents under cover "Document No. 20514" "Contract & Bond for changing course of San Diego River."

5. October 19, 1850 Proposal of Anthony Blackburn for Turning River San Diego:
"To the Hon. Mayor & Common council of San Diego.

Gentlemen,
in accordance with your Advertisement for proposals to turn
the River.

I propose as follows viz.

I will build the Dam requested one thousand (signed A Wright underneath) feet across the River. Six feet high and fifteen feet wide A the B ess. ?? To be of clay. and also open the bed of the old River and cause the present River to run and have a base course in Fals bay: Complying with the stipulated rules and requirements of your honorable body, giving Bail in the Sum of Five Thousand Dollars with just or any Sunties as shall be thought just and required by the Council, By The Mayor & Cmmon Council agreeing to pay me for the above described work the Sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000) said money to be paid me as follows viz. 1/4 th in Land; 1/4 when the Dam is 4 feet high; 1/4 th when the Dam is Complete and the Ballance when the whole Contract is Completed. San Diego Oct 19th A. D. 1850
Anthony, Blackburn

One blue page folded and red wax Sealed Proposals For Turning the River. Reverse addressed to Committee of the Mayor and Common Council of San Diego appointed - Relative to turning the River. Cover for compiled, group of documents is Document No. 20514.

6. October 28, 1850 document in what looks like Charles Haraszthy's handwriting:

The Committee appointed to recive {receive} the Proposals has been convened by the Chairman of the Committee Dr.Wright, the 28th day of October 1850 after noon 5 o'clock, only one Beu {Bid?} has been tendered to the Chairman of said Committee, by opening it has been found, that Antony Blackburn {Blackburn?} offerd {offered} to do the joob {job} of turning the river for \$4000. Sunties. Surine, Cade {Case?}, Mr. Leamy, and therefore the Contract is to be given to Mr. Blackburn."

Partial paper note glued to lined paper.

7. November 24, 1875 letter from the Office of the Chief of Engineers, Washington, D. C., Brig. Gen'l. and Chief of Engineers, A. A. Humphreys, to Hon. W. W. Belknap, Secretary of War.:

"The letter of Mr. M. Keating, Secretary of the Board of Trustees of the City of San Diego, California, requesting to be informed of the cause of the delay in turning the San Diego River into False Bay, referred to this office on the 18th inst., is respectfully returned.

There has been no unnecessary delay in preparing plans for the improvement of San Diego Harbor under the appropriation of March 3, 1875. As soon as practicable after the necessary surveys could be completed. Col. Stewart, the officer in charge of the works, submitted projects for turning the San Diego River into False Bay. These projects, owing to the

important character of the work, were, with your sanction referred to the Board of Engineers for the Pacific Coast for consideration and report. The report of the Board was rendered in due time, and has received your approval. Col. Stewart was accordingly instructed to carry out the plan proposed by the Board at as early a day as practicable.

Several preliminaries, among them, procuring the right of way for the proposed new course of the river must be executed before the work can be commenced, and will, of necessity, cause further delay, so that it will scarcely be possible that the work can be undertaken until after the close of the rainy season, or before the coming spring.

It is suggested that the Board of Trustees might facilitate the operation of the Government by securing for it the right of way on the line of the proposed channel, and conferring in regard thereto with Engineer officer in charge, Secret. Col. C. S. Stewart, whose permanent station is San Francisco.

Very respectfully,
Your Obt. Serv^t.
A. A. Humphreys,
Brig. Gen'l. and
Chief of Engineers

2509RSH'Z5 [?]
(one enclosure)"

Two pages, front and back, including filing title on reverse with War Dept. stamp, "984 1 1875". Washington, Nov. 24, 1875, communication From The Chief of Engineers; " with report letter of M. Keating, Secy. Board of Trustees of San Diego , Cal., rel. to cause of delay in turning the San Diego River into False Bay, tc. (1 enclo.) CC". Document No. 2250.

8. December 5, 1850 "Bond of Anthony Blackburn to the City of San Diego, Concerning the turning of the river San Diego

Know all men by these presents, that one, Anthony Blackburn as principal and George Serrine and William Leamy as Surties are held and firmly bound into the City of San Diego, California, in the just and full Sum of Five Thousand Dollars for the payment of which will and truly to be made we bind ourselves, our heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents, signed with our names and sealed with our seals this Fifth day of December A.D. One thousand Eight hundred and Fifty.

Now the conditions fo the above obligations an such that whereas the said Anthony Blackburn has received the contract for turning the river San Diego, in case the said river is turned by the City of San Diego, at its own expense, Now in case the said Anthony Blackburn will and faithfully does perform the said work according to the contract entered into between him on the one hand and the Mayor & Common Council on the other, then the above obligation shall be null and void otherwise to remain in full force and effect.

Witness W. E. Rush

Anthony Blackburn
George W. Serrine
William Leamey"

One page with title on reverse. Contained in compilation of documents on the subject, Document No. 20514, "Contract & Bond for changing course of San Diego River."

9. January 9, 1881, communication from Anthony Blackburn:

“To the Hon. Mayor & Common Council of San Diego
Gentlemen,
whereas Mr. Wm Leamy has signified a wish to have his name canceled from the Bond
which I gave for Turning the River; I therefore Solicit that you erase the name of the said Mr.
Leamy and substitute in its stead the name of Johnathan Cade as Surety {?}
Yours respectfully,
San Diego Jan 9th AD 1881 {signed} Anthony Blackburn”

One partial page glad to lined paper.. Cover of group of documents, Document No. 20514,
“Contract & Bond for changing course of San Diego River.”