

Cauldron

In the early days of the rancho (1841-1848), cattle were raised primarily for the trade value of their dried hides and fat. Fat was trimmed from the carcass and placed in this cauldron and boiled. Impurities were skimmed from the top of the boiling mixture until the rendered fat was pure. The resulting purified fat (tallow) was baled and traded for manufactured goods with merchant ships that anchored off the coast. Tallow was used to make soap and candles and to lubricate machines. Later, during the days of the Gold Rush, cattle were raised mainly for their meat. They were driven north to the gold fields and sold to the hungry miners.