

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM
1333 Butte House Road
P. O. Box 1555
Yuba City, CA. 95991

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

JANUARY 19, 1960 - 7 P.M.

GRACE METHODIST CHURCH
(Walter Avenue 4 miles south of Yuba City)

Vol. 2 No. 4

Yuba City, California -

January 19, 1960



MARY MURPHY COVILLAUD

Benefactor and woman for whom Marysville was named

PROGRAM

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY 19, 1960 - 7 P.M.

GRACE METHODIST CHURCH
(Walton Avenue 4 miles south of Yuba City)

ROAST BEEF DINNER - \$2.00

7 P.M.

SPEAKER: Mr. Ronald Kurtz
Instructor of Anthropology
Chico State College

TOPIC: Spanish American Influence on
the Southwestern Indian

Bring an interesting historical document or antique, which has some significance regarding the history of Sutter county, to the above meeting. We are planning a display of interesting materials. Be prepared to tell us about your item which you are exhibiting.

HISTORICAL FILM FOR SUTTER COUNTY
BEING CONSIDERED
Nanne Brown

Mr. Gordon Waldear was in Yuba City in mid-December to discuss the services offered by Bonanza Associates. Members of the Sutter County Historical Society who heard him became interested in the possibility of making an historical film for Sutter county.

Mr. Waldear is a member of Bonanza Associates. This organization is made up of six men who pool their talents to produce film and sound track to capture the spirit and heritage of an area.

Through the technique of restoring old photographs for filming, developing authentic music, and accurate narration, Bonanza Associates produces sound films on special order for organizations interested in the preservation of the essence of an era or an event in any locality.

Mr. Waldear has agreed to show one of his films at the April 19th meeting of the Historical Society.

PONY EXPRESS RIDE SET
by Waddell Smith, President
National Pony Express Centennial Association

A re-enactment starts each way July 19, 1960

Next July 19 is the date fixed for the start of the 100th Anniversary re-enactment of the Pony Express. Horsemen will leave simultaneously from St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California, as they did a century ago.

Mr. James H. Phillips of Sacramento President of the California Horsemen's Association, is California's representative on the national committee for operations and is in full charge of the schedule, rides, and selection and qualification of horses and riders.

As it was a hundred years ago, the re-enactment will not be a race but will be run on a nine-day schedule and the arrival of the pony at every point on the route of 1966 miles will be known, so that appropriate celebrations can be planned. The east bound rider should pass the west bound rider at or near South Pass, Wyoming, which is a famous spot on the overland trail and is the continental divide.

The Governors of the eight states that the Pony ran through - California, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri - have all pledged their cooperation, as has the Post Office Department and the National Park Service.

The summer date for re-enactment was chosen for the reason that the children are all out of school and the tourists are on the road. The feeling was that the summer running would better present the epic to the public.

The Postmaster General has authorized a stamp in commemoration of the Centennial of the Pony Express and it is to have it's first day of issue at Sacramento. The twenty pounds of mail to be carried by the ponies will bear the new stamp. The Post Office Department has an inviolable rule that commemorative stamps can only have one city as the site for first day of issue. The National Pony Express Centennial Association, of which Waddell Smith of San Rafael is President, made strong representations for issue at both St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento but was refused.

At a recent meeting of the board of directors of the National Pony Express Centennial Association, Mr. Kenneth Hammaker of Sacramento, the postmaster, was elected to the board as a Director at Large and it is expected that he will play an active part in the centennial.

The Post Office Department has adopted the theme of "One Hundred Years of Postal Progress" in connection with issuance of the special Pony Express Stamp. They expect to equip and run a roving caravan all over the United States for the centennial year, coming onto the Pony Express trail at the time of the re-enactment and follow the ponies.

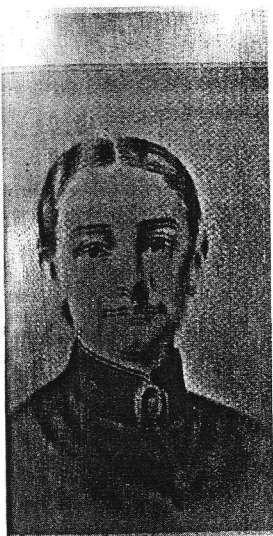
The State Department of Beaches and Parks has approved a series of bronze plaques to be placed on the trail. The first one will be dedicated on April 1, 1960, when it is installed at the corner of Merchant and Montgomery Streets in San Francisco. Although Sacramento was the terminus, the firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell, who founded, owned and operated the Pony Express, had their western business headquarters in San Francisco.

The second plaque will be dedicated the following day when it is installed at the site of the western terminus of the Pony Express in Sacramento. The Society of California Pioneers have sponsored these two plaques. The others will be installed along the route to the Nevada State Line. State Senator Swift Berry of Placerville sponsored the legislation which authorized the state to provide the plaques. Dr. Aubrey Neasham had kept a watchful eye on the verbiage that is to go on the plaques, being sure of its historical accuracy.

PIONEER WOMEN



Sacajawea, Indian Maiden
who assisted the pioneers
across the great divide
to California



Narcissa Whitman, Pioneer Missionary

Pony Express Ride Set - continued

Governor Brown has extended full cooperation to the developing plans for this great centennial, as attested by the context of the letter, quoted herewith. President Waddell Smith, also, has letters from five of the governors of the Pony Express states, fully endorsing the adoption of a summer date for the rerunning of the Pony Express.

EIGHTH ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM

Kenneth McLeod, Program Chairman for the Eighth Annual Symposium of Historical Societies of Northern California and Southern Oregon, and the Klamath County Historical Society, deserve a big bouquet of orchids for the very successful and interesting meeting which was held at Klamath Falls on October 2-4.

The opening session on Friday afternoon was more than the usual registration and greetings of delegates. Members of the Klamath Historical Society had brought in a large collection of historical pictures and relics that were appropriately displayed around the auditorium of the Willard Hotel, headquarters for the Symposium. This display introduced the theme of the meeting, which was "Man in the Klamath Highland Region."

Excellent illustrated slide lectures and well-documented papers were presented on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Some of the pleasant events were the Indian dances by the Lefty Wildeagle group, a tour of the local museums, and a tour of the Lava Beds National Monument with a box lunch near Captain Jacks Stronghold. As the Symposium was a part of the Oregon Centennial, there was good representation and participation from Oregon groups.

The Conference was well represented with President Stanger; Executive-Secretary, Coke Wood; and Vice Presidents, Mrs. Lee James, Dr. Clarence McIntosh, and Glenn Price. Twenty local historical societies had representatives present and over seventy-five attended the Saturday night banquet.

The Sacramento County Historical Society's invitation to the Symposium to meet there in 1960 was accepted but no time and specific place has yet been determined for the meeting.

Here are some interesting items from the reports of the delegates:

Ex-President Richard Harville reported that the Humboldt Society membership had reached an all-time high of over four hundred. The Society was still hopeful of getting the old county jail as a museum although the Supervisors had made no commitments. President Howard Lovely reported the Trinity County Historical Society has over a hundred members and more than four thousand visitors had passed through their museum jail since May. President Roy Ballou announced that Shasta County Historical Society had over three hundred members and they hoped to obtain the old library for a museum.

PIONEER WOMEN
by
Bernice Gibson

Prologue

Just before the century's turn a book appeared in Portland, Oregon called Souvenir of Western Women. The book states its purpose in the following words:

The purpose of this book is to record women's part in working out the plan of our Western civilization; no other civilization, perhaps, bearing so conspicuously the imprint of her hand and brain. In coming to this country through all the perils, privations, and hardships of the longest journey ever made by a migratory people in search of homes, she marched side by side with man. Upon arriving here she could acquire equally with him a part of the public domain.

The women who played a role in that momentous development cannot be forgotten. They gave themselves as women - with all their strength and weakness, their ingenuity and frailty - to the land of which their men had dreamed.

The first two women to cross the Rockies for the far west came because of their religious zeal. Narcissa Prentiss and Eliza Hart, two gently reared young women, were permitted by their parents to undertake their great adventure because of the great religious spirit of the American 1830s. Revivalism was current and popular. Others came in groups, as brides, to meet new husbands in the far west and help develop homes on the new frontier.

Another group of women of great courage were the nuns who came to the western shores to bring enlightenment to the children of the forest, Sister Loyola wrote home to her people in Belgium how the Sisters faced wolves and mountain lions in broad daylight. Snakes lurked everywhere, even in the vegetable garden among the melons and cucumbers they had planted so prayerfully against the enfolding wilderness.

A young Indian squaw of whom very little is written helped to open up the west for her white sisters. This young Indian squaw named Sacajawea helped to guide the Lewis and Clark Expedition across America and back in 1804-06. Belatedly, Sacajawea has come into her own as a figure of heroic dimension. Books have been written about her. She has been named by James Truslow Adams, an elector of the Hall of Fame, one of the six most important American women. Yet, to this day, relatively few people know her story. The less well-known facts of Sacajawea's later years add to her stature as a significant American personality. They do not compare in importance, however, to her first great and unconscious service to the United States. In a time when a sense of the value and beauty of the lands of the Pacific Northwest is fresh in the American consciousness, it must be remembered that it was an Indian woman, a "squar" (the vernacular of the fur trappers) who made possible our claim to this rich section of the continent. Many other women of the red race stood shoulder to shoulder with their men in the conquering of the forests of the west.

Through her novel on the Lewis and Clark Expedition, "The Conquest," Mrs. Dye is credited with resurrecting the legend of Sacajawea and in starting the research which proved this legend to be historical fact.

WERE WOMEN WANTED IN THE WEST?

In 1846 when Narcissa Whitman sat in her wilderness house and wrote to her sister in far-away up-state New York, she urged her to make the long journey westward to the new country that lay beyond the Great American Desert and the Rocky Mountains. She wrote, "Bring as many girls as you can, but let every young man bring a wife, for he will want one after he gets here, if he never did before." There was much irony in these remarks because only a few years before Narcissa asked the mission board if women would be allowed to travel with the immigrants to the west.

Caroline Leighton, a gentle New England lady declared, "Among the miners of the upper country, who had not seen a white woman for a year, I received such honors that I am afraid I should have had a very mistaken impression of my importance if I had lived among them. At every stopping place they made little fires in their fry-pans, and set around me, to keep off the mosquitoes, while I took my meal. As the columns of smoke rose about me, I felt like a heathen goddess, to whom incense was being offered."

The Reverend Mr. Perkins, who frankly admitted that he could live happily in a wigwam all his life and found the Indian manner of living both sensible and appealing, penned a sentence which summed up the role that women of gentle breeding unconsciously played in frontier life; "Certainly it is that we needed such minds to keep us in love with civilized life, to remind us occasionally of home."

Far western girls were hardly out of their teens before they were snatched up by young men who wanted not only land but heirs, pies like mother used to make, and companions in their solitude.

Another class of women who always follow the opening of any new country were the adventuresses. In their own way these women contributed much to the development of the country. Perhaps not according to our social code, but a code of their own, which could be worded; carefree, fearless, intrepid with hearts of gold. If one were to ask some old timer of the mining fields about these women he would probably begin thusly:

They were "good" women - make no mistake about that. They were as good a woman as you could find anywhere and lots of 'em married well and made the best wives in the country. They did unto others as they would others do unto them. The Irish Queen would wade through snow up to her crotch in mid-winter to take soup to some poor devil to whom she didn't owe a damn thing. Just a heart of gold and nothing else."

Some of our famous characters of pioneer days were Lotta Crabtree, Mamie Pleasant, and the famous Lola Montez, who spent a great deal of her time between Marysville and Grass Valley. The general attitude in mining country toward "sporting women" was straightforward and honest.

Among the needed women of the west we must not forget those who administered to the sick in body. The story of how Bethenia Owens came to the place where she had not only the courage but the knowledge to perform an autopsy, and subsequently to become the Far West's first graduate woman physician, is a long tale of spunk and rebellion. Courage was nothing new in Bethenia's family line. The Owen family came through to Or on in the famous emigration of 1843. Applegate was one of Oregon's wise men and captain of the train and Bethenia's father was captain of the buffalo hunters. Bethenia's early life and antecedents did not lack for color. In speaking of her father, people often said, "Thomas Owens is not afraid of man or devil." The same might well have been said of his daughter, Bethenia. After struggling against social opposition, financial opposition as well as family, she finally became a physician and her career as a healer of the sick in the rugged northwest is a story within itself. Night after night a lantern would flash across her window in the farmhouse and she would rise in the darkness, dress hastily, and go out to listen to the hushed and tense story of some frightened farmer. She would put on her high boots and her heavy coat and set out with him on her errand of mercy.

Pioneer Women - continued

Although she went to California to write her memoirs, she did not sit down in the sun to wait for death. Bethenia lived to be well past eighty, and the last twenty years of her life were the most significant of all. By the force of her knowledge, her energy, and her determination, she managed to bring to pass in the state of Oregon, bills to sterilize the insane and to require medical examinations for all people seeking a marriage license.

We must not forget to give honor to the woman who came west with her man and stood shoulder to shoulder with him in the development of our great agricultural background. Clad in her calico dress and sunbonnet on her head she did her part in the clearing of the forest, working the soil and sowing the seed which she had so carefully packed in the corner of the prairie schooner before leaving her home in the East. She was never daunted. If Indians or weather destroyed one crop, her courage and the corces of necessity carried her on to plant another crop.

PIONEER WOMEN

One of the most interesting pen-pictures of early days is that of Ida Pfeiffer, who gave us a very interesting account of an early days trip from San Francisco to Marysville in 1853. Like so many of our pioneer women, Mrs. Pfeiffer kept a very careful account of her travels.

Ida Laura Reyer was born in Vienna, October 14, 1797, reaching her 56th birthday while traveling in California. She was born to a well-to-do merchant and was one of seven children. During her childhood, affairs in Austria were very bad under the French control. When she was twenty-two years old, Ida married Dr. Pfeiffer, an outstanding lawyer of Lemburg and a native of Switzerland. He was twenty years her senior. The Pfeiffers suffered financial reverses and many hard years of drudgery followed. Later in life Mrs. Pfeiffer traveled quite extensively, making her expenses principally by writing accounts of her travels and selling them for a good price.

While in California, Mrs. Pfeiffer made three trips to the interior of California. The one we are most interested in is the one she made to Sacramento, Marysville and the gold mines of the Yuba River. I am going to read her story of this trip to you just as she has written it because it would lose much of its humor if I tried to put it into words.

Upon leaving San Francisco, she tells us:

In the afternoon of the third of October, I embarked on board the beautiful steamer, Senator, for Sacramento, 100 miles away. The American steamers are the finest imaginable, and certainly deserve the title often given them of water-palaces. They look indeed more like houses than ships. The river steamers, especially are several stories high with large doors, windows, and galleries and the convenience and splendor of the internal fittings and furniture fully correspond with the impression made by the outside view. When you meet one of them at night on the water, they look like enchanted castles, for all their windows are illuminated, and their chimineys vomit fire like volcanoes. At five o'clock the next morning I hastened to seize a place in a stage coach to go to Grass Valley; but the coach I wanted had set off at four o'clock, so I had to change my plan and go on board a steamer bound for Marysville. which was fifty miles further.

At eleven o'clock we were off again, and after running a few miles, turned into the Feather River, on which Marysville lies. The shore line continued so much the same that I soon turned from it and went into the saloon to continue my observations of the company. The first thing that struck me was the strange contrast in dress. The ladies were all in grand state, and might have gone into full-dressed parties

Pioneer Women - continued

without changing their traveling costume; but the case was widely different with the men. Some few were well dressed, but the majority wore jackets, often torn ones, dirty boots pulled up over their trousers, and had hands so extraordinarily coarse and burned - even the best dressed gentlemen among them - that they looked as if they belonged to the commonest plowman.

The men one and all, showed the utmost attention and politeness to our sex. Old or young, rich or poor, well or ill-dressed, every woman was treated with respect and kindness; and in this the Americans are far in advance of my countrymen, and indeed of Europeans in general, who usually keep their civilities for youth, beauty and fine clothes.

The company remained a very little while at the table and spoke scarcely a word. They really did not give themselves time to eat their food properly, but bolted it, burning hot and not half chewed, although nobody had any thing to do when the meal was over. They seem to have gotten into the habit of regarding everything as business, and therefore, to be performed with the utmost possible dispatch. Nobody drank anything but water; but I am told the Americans prefer taking small drams of spirituous liquors at various times of the day.

The passage to Marysville was very long, for the river at this time of year had very little water, and we were every moment getting upon sandbanks. Some hills now came into sight, and here and there we had glimpses of a mountain chain.

I had to stop six miles before Marysville at a farm belonging to General Sutter and at ten o'clock at night I was put out on the shore, to find my way as best I could. Fortunately it was not far, but when I reached the hedge enclosing the garden, half a dozen dogs rushed out upon me. I kept myself quiet, however, feeling pretty sure they would do nothing more than bark.

Everybody in the house had been asleep but they were awakened by the noise of dogs, and received me, unseasonable guest as I was in the kindest manner.

The following statement is so truly characteristic of General Sutter: "General Sutter is a Swiss by birth, and not only discovered the gold mines, but distinguished himself as a soldier in the Mexican war. Since then he has lived on his large landed estates." Postscript: Every landed estate in America, or whatever dimensions, is called a farm.

I stayed two days at Rock Farm (Hock Farm) where great quantities of corn and vegetables are raised, though the ground, in the dry season, looks like mere dust and sand, and one would fancy the greatest care was requisite to make anything grow; but I was told that, on the contrary, it is neither manured nor irrigated, and yet the corn it produces is fine and abundant.

About twenty miles from "Rock" Farm rises a majestic chain of mountains, the highest point of which, is said to be 14,000 feet and is called Chasta (Shasta).

Before you come to this chain, you see a range of rocks rising perpendicularly out of the plain, like a gigantic wall, and forming three principal peaks called the three Buttes.

Mrs. Pfeiffer goes on to tell us of her experiences with the Indians around Marysville and of the places of public recreation. She states that the gambling places and other places of recreation were copies in miniature of those in San Francisco. She says that she really believes that in the short time the whites have been in California there has been more vice and crime in it than in the hundreds of years before, when the country was occupied by the natives.

According to the history of Prof. J.M. Guinn in his biographical record of the Sacramento Valley, the men were the only ones who ever did anything in the development of our great valley. I reviewed his book from cover to cover and the chief functions of the women, according to him, were to cook and bear children. However he did extol three of our pioneer women in his history. They even rated pictures (for a price).

Mrs. Sarah Williams

Sarah W. Cary was born in Ohio. In her youth, she came with her sister Jane to the west coast. The young ladies made the journey by way of the Isthmus of Panama and upon their arrival located in Colusa. Two years later she married W.H. Williams and in the same month they went to what is now the town of Williams to make their home. Needless to say, they were the founders of the little town out in the middle of Colusa County. Their first home was burned, but soon after they built a second home of brick which was hauled by teams from Marysville. Their home served as a hotel for travelers through that area until the second brick building was erected. In her biography she tells of times of high water when there would be a five mile stretch of water between Williams and Colusa and they would go by boat to get supplies. Mrs. Williams spent her entire adult life on her farm near the town of Williams. One only has to reflect but little to realize the hardships and trials she must have endured to rear a large family so isolated from civilization and none of our modern conveniences or modern communication.

Carrie L. Cross

In her later years Carrie L. Cross was one of Woodland's most highly respected and useful citizens. She was born in Ohio but early in her life her parents moved to Milwaukee. She met Captain Cross in Milwaukee where she had been engaged in educational work after her graduation from college. Capt. Cross was master of steamers on the Great Lakes. He lost his life five years after their marriage in a severe storm on Lake Erie when his ship was destroyed in the storm. Two years after her husband's death, Mrs. Cross brought her two small daughters by way of the Isthmus of Panama to the west coast and located on Grand Island, Colusa County, where her brother was already located. Educational work was her first love so in a short time she moved to Woodland which was one of the very active cities of the day. She was principal of the primary department of Hesperian College for eight years. She was also very active in literary and musical circles, and as an accomplished musician, took part in musicals and concerts. In her later life she lived a rather retired life but kept a small boarding house. The city of Woodland was given the right of way for Cross Street by Mrs. Cross, and the street was named in her honor.

Esther Torrance

Esther Ragsdale came across the plains with her parents when she was fifteen years old. They came via the Carson River and Humboldt route which is known to be one of the most rugged routes the immigrants traveled over. (For a vivid description of the route I recommend you read Irene Paden's "Prairie Schooner Detours.")

In 1877, Mrs. Torrance went to Woodland and purchased the Capital Hotel, a three story structure on the corner of First and Main Streets and ran the hotel successfully for many years. Her endurance is exemplified when one reads of her trip to Alaska during the gold rush to that region. She went by steamer to Skagway, to join her husband. In shipping mules to Seattle, one of the animals kicked her and broke her leg. She made the rest of the journey on crutches. With the exception of an occasional ride on an old Spanish horse she made the trip over the trail to Dawson on her crutches with the assistance of her husband. Another proof of her venturesome and dauntless spirit was her experience in driving a pack train through Idaho to South Boise and later she drove a train through Old Mexico, sleeping many nights in the saddle while Indians prowled about.

Pioneer Women - continued

Emma Christene Watkins Langenour

Prof Guinn does not give Mrs. Langenour a separate write-up but he does make mention of many of her pioneer qualities. Emma Watkins was born in Ohio in 1842, came to the far west with her parents at an early age. Mrs. Langenour is given credit for carrying out various projects which, in all probability, would have been carried out by Mr. Langenour had his life been longer.

The cause of temperance had a staunch ally in Mrs. Langenour. Many times she not only gave of herself and time but bore the financial burden when necessary to further some project that would assist in stamping out the evil. She served as president of the W.C.T.U. and was business manager of the Home Alliance, a newspaper published in the interests of the W.C.T.U. She helped to erect Mary's Chapel near the town of Yolo and was also one of the organizers of the Mary's Cemetery Association.

Rosamond Apperson Lamb

We have just recently lost one of our most revered and beloved pioneer women of our own county of Sutter. Rosamond Apperson Lamb was born at East Butte where she was reared and educated. She was a teacher in our county for seven years before she married Mr. Frank Lamb. She and Mr. Lamb made their home on the Sacramento River on the portion called Southeast Bend. The old home still stands and Mrs. Lamb's sons still operate the farm; however, they have added extensive holdings. I know the hardships must have been many in the early days along the Sacramento. However, life must have been very interesting. The river was the chief line of communication and one of the great events in the lives of the "river rats" was when the trading boats came up the river with a stock of goods extending from calico to harness oil.

Mrs. Lamb spent most of her later life in Sacramento where she moved when her children were teenagers in order that they might have the educational advantages of the metropolitan area.

Mary Murphy Covillaud

One of the great pioneer women of Marysville was our own Mary Covillaud. I am not going to say very much at this time about her because I am sure we all know she is the person for whom our fair city is named. She rendered a great service to the miners and other lonely people of the settlement when they were ill. It is said she would clean clothes and with her meager medicine kit, answered the call of the sick any time of the night or day. Because of her many services the city was named in her honor.

Mary Elizabeth Thorpe Smith

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Thorpe Smith, another pioneer woman with descendants still living in our area came to Sutter county in early days.

Mary Elizabeth Donaldson was born in the little village of Parkman, Geauga County, Ohio, November 20, 1832. She was a descendant of Irish parents, Thomas and Phoebe Donaldson who had crossed the ocean from Ireland.

The second of nine children, the oldest of whom died, she experienced the hardships of pioneering days of Ohio, when people had to clear a spot in the woods for a place to build a log hut, to be used as their home, out of the trees they had cut down for the clearing.

After helping her parents in every way possible in the great game of living, she was, at the age of twenty-five years, married to Arthur Thorpe, a near neighbor's

Pioneer Women - continued

son. Mr. Thorpe had previous to the marriage made a trip to California returning for his bride.

One month after marriage, they started on their three month's journey to California, going to New York, there taking a vessel and coming by way of the Isthmus. They crossed the Isthmus via the Nicaragua River, and came by vessel up the West Coast of California to San Francisco. This vessel called the "Golden Gate" sank off the shores of Lower California on its return trip south.

Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe went from San Francisco to Grass Valley, then to San Juan, remaining at each place only a short time; then came to Sutter county.

Their home was only a cabin on the hillside near the road which now leads from the east end of Long Bridge to West Butte.

Mary Hutchinson Gray

I would not be a true granddaughter of my own beloved pioneer grandmothers if I did not mention them in this review.

My maternal grandmother was Mary Hutchinson Gray, an Irish peasant woman who came to this country in 1864. She and my Grandfather landed in New York City in the midst of the Civil War with two very small children. He was immediately drafted for the Army and they were held up in New York for three weeks so he could prove to the satisfaction of the government that he was not a citizen. After eight years residence in Illinois, they completed their trek across the country to California. My great-uncle Sam Hutchinson gave them a cabin back in one of his fields in which to live. The good earth was the floor of the cabin. My grandmother made a home with these meager surroundings for her husband and five children. As a child I used to sit at her knee and listen to the many stories of those days in the Tudor section of Sutter county.

Lavina McPherson Best

My paternal grandmother was Lavina McPherson Best. She came across the plains with my Grandfather and four small children in 1863. I have often heard them tell how they landed in Yuba City shortly before Christmas with only a dollar in his pocket and provisions running low. They were able to secure a cabin over in the river bottom land just below Yuba City and he chopped wood that first winter to make a few dollars. In the spring he was able to rent forty acres of land and started a long career of farming, the thing he came to California to do. He kept enlarging his holdings year by year until he retired with extensive holdings. Many times I have heard my grandmother tell how the wolves would howl around the cabin at night that first winter in Yuba City.

* * *

We have come a long way these last one-hundred years. The fearlessness and courage of these pioneer women must always be our guiding light to the future and the preservation of a democracy which they struggled so hard to bring forth from the wilderness.

I would like to close with a short poem by one of our own pioneer California women poets, Ina Coolbrith, an early San Franciscan, who was a contemporary of Ambrose Bierce and Mark Twain.

"Or North or South or East or West,
God seeing, says not which is best,
Each land, each race, where e'er it is,
Alike He loves, alike is His."

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