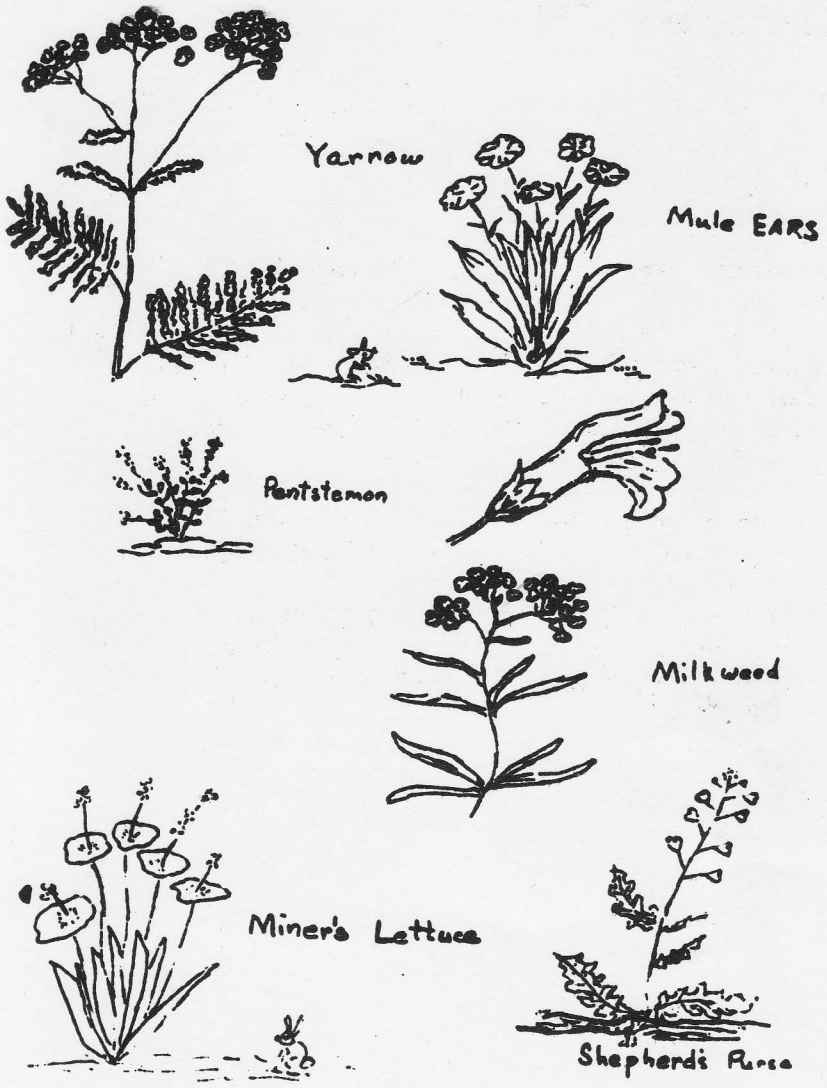
SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

Vol. XXIII, No. 2 Yuba City, California April 1984



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The NEWS BULLETIN is published quarterly by the Society at Yuba City, California 95991. The annual membership dues includes receiving the NEWS BULLETIN. JANUARY 1984 dues are payable now. Your remittance should be sent to Sutter County Historical Society, P.O.Box 1004, Yuba City, California 95992. To insure delivery of your NEWS BULLETIN, please notify the Treasurer of any change of address. Dues are $7.50 per person, $10.00 per family, $5.00 if over 70 years.

An index and file of all the past issues of the NEWS BULLETIN may be found in the Sutter County Library, the Marysville City-County Library, and at the Community Memorial Museum. Extra Copies of the Bulletin may be purchased at the Museum for $2.00.

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

WHEN: TUESDAY, APRIL 17th, 1984 — 6:30 P.M.

WHERE: FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH SOCIAL HALL
627 "J" Street, YUBA CITY, CA.

WHAT: BEEF ROULADE AND NOODLE DINNER, catered by Mary Cohelis

COST: $10.00 per person

PREPAID RESERVATIONS REQUIRED — mail or bring to:
Community Memorial Museum 674-0461
1333 Butte House Road — P.O. Box 1555
Yuba City, CA. 95992

SPEAKER: WALT ANDERSON, of Colusa.
SUBJECT: "Herds and Birds in Kenya". Talk and slide show - East Africa.

NOTE: In deference to the wishes of our hosts, there will be No Smoking.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

1984 opened with a very well-attended January meeting. Members and guests were caught up in the spell of another era as our speaker, Warner Harrison, recreated for us the days of steamboats on the Feather River. It was an evening of "hands-on" history, and I noted that the ladies showed special interest in the crockery and glassware salvaged from a sunken boat. I, too, had never held in my hand a genuine bottle purveyed by that famous old San Francisco supplier of fine whiskey, HOTALING, and found it a lot more fascinating than any printed page could be.

Wanda Rankin and Randy Schnabel both completed eight years as members of the COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM COMMISSION as representatives of our Society. Along with several other retiring commissioners, they were honored with appropriate plaques presented by the Sutter County Supervisors at their regular meeting held on February 7th, 1984. We welcome their successors, Winifred Greene and Virginia Harter, to their new positions.

The relentless rise in prices shows up sooner or later. Note the cost of our annual banquet, and note also the new, slimmer format of our quarterly BULLETIN. Printing costs now necessitate that we drop our July, 1984 Issue. Our Board of Directors feels the need for funds has become urgent, and asks all members and friends to save useful and decorative items for donation to a RUMMAGE SALE which we'll try to schedule about mid-June. More on this later.

APRIL 15th: Any chance of my breaking even is obviously long gone,
For income arrives with tax taken off,
But bills come with tax added on!

Dewey Gruening

Dewey Gruening

COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM NOTES

Mary Allman, Director/Curator

Growth and change have always been quite evident at the Community Memorial Museum. During 1984, it may even be more apparent.

On Tuesday, February 7, 1984, the Sutter County Board of Supervisors honored six members of the Community Memorial Museum Commission, who, after eight years of dedicated service, were retiring as members of the Commission. These six people were part of the original Commission, established in December of 1975. Frances Gentry, of District 1, Pierre Carr and Robert Mackensen, both of District 4, Randolph Schnabel and Wanda Rankin, representatives of the Sutter County Historical Society, and Caroline Ringler, Auxiliary Chairman, are those six to whom the Museum owes much gratitude. These six will be missed on the Commission, but, I am sure, they will all remain active participants in the Museum.

At the January meeting of the Community Memorial Museum Commission, we were very pleased to welcome six new members to the Commission. Audrey Breeding, of District 1, Marlene Ettl and Lauren Anderson, both of District 4, Gini Harter and Winnie Greene, representatives of the Sutter County Historical Society, and Dorothy Ross, Auxiliary Representative, have accepted positions as members of the Museum Commission.

The first several months of the new year have been devoted to grants writing and re-evaluation. The Museum Commission has formed several committees to examine and re-evaluate the Museum's short and long range goals, as well as the on-going, everyday routine of the Museum. A committee has been formed to study plans for re-designing our exhibits and exhibition space. Lauren Anderson, chairman of this new committee, has produced sketches and renderings of some ideas about how some exhibits might be updated. A grant proposal was submitted to the National Endowment for the Humanities, in hopes that they will fund the re-design process.

Special exhibits and events are still a part of the Museum's routine. Last December's Trees and Traditions was a great success, as always, and we look forward to the Annual May Wine and Posies. Please mark Friday, May 4, from 7pm to 9pm, as the date and new time for this event.

February was a month for valentines, and during February, the Museum featured a special exhibit entitled "A Key to Your Heart," featuring the Museum's fine collection of antique valentines, shown with an assortment of unusual keys and locks. "Spring 'N' Things," a collection of hand painted china and pressed flowers from the collection of Mary Poole, was featured in March. In April, we will look forward to the " Ukrainian Easter Experience," featuring a collection of hand-painted Ukrainian Easter eggs, as well as dolls, books, and postcards from the Ukraine, all from the collection of Nancy Henderson. Nancy will demonstrate the art of Ukrainian egg decorating at the Museum, Saturday, April 7, from 1pm to 4pm. "Outfitting the Spring Bride" will be featured in May, just in time for the May Wine and Posies.

LIST OF DONORS TO THE COMMUNITY MEMORIAL MUSEUM
TRUST FUND AND BUILDING FUND

November 1, 1983 through February 29, 1984

Mrs. Ann Dietrich and Joe and Judy Anne	in memory of Robert Audet
Robert and Jan Schmidl	in memory of Ramon C. Williams, Jr.
Dorothy Dodge	in memory of Grace Winnett
Ann and Ruth Nason	in memory of Grace Winnett
Eva Johnson, Addie Meier and Esther Fortna	in honor of Mamie A. Meier on her 98th birthday
Mr. and Mrs. James Gentry	in memory of Mildred Phillips
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Welter	in memory of Edmund Earl Metzger
Patricia Del Pero	in memory of Ina Saunders
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Piner	in honor of Mr. and Mrs. James Gentry on their 50th wedding anniversary, and in honor of Frances, Gentry, Pierre Carr, Randolph Schnabel, Robert Mackensen, Wanda Rankin and Caroline Ringler, for their eight years of service to the Community Memorial Museum Commission
Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Bryant	in memory of Mildred Phillips
Helen Brierly and Anna Ulmer	in memory of William Hankins
Lee J. and Edna DeWitt	in memory of Gladys Davis
Allen Sutfin Family	in memory of Vera Noblin
Mrs. R. P. Redhair	in memory of Gladys Davis
Bill and Gennia Zeller	in memory of Grace Winnett
John and Connie Cary	in memory of Chauncey S. Brockman
John and Connie Cary	in memory of Virgie C. Cozine
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ettl	in memory of George and Eva Marden
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Ettl	in honor of Harold and Anna Rohleder
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Scriven, Sr.	in memory of Gladys Davis
Joseph King Roberts	in memory of Ed Metzger
Harry and Nancy Lawrie	in memory of Ena Van Horn
Mr. and Mrs. James Putman	in memory of Danny Putman
Bev. and Bette Epperson	in memory of T. A. "Tony" La Maida
Mary O'Neal	in memory of Robert Pritchard
Bev. and Bette Epperson	in memory of Chester Weaver
Irminna Palmer	in memory of Frances Burket
Mrs. Carol Tarke Koelker and Family	in memory of T. A. "Tony" La Maida
Margaret Norma and Frank Welter	in memory of Daniel Lawrence Putman

Caroline Ringler	in memory of Robert B. Goree
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Gillett	in memory of Mildred Phillips
Mr. and Mrs. Frank Moore	in memory of Mildred Phillips
Caroline Ringler	in memory of Tony La Maida
Caroline Ringler	in memory of Nora Wilbur
Jessie Powell	in memory of Frank H. Graves, Jr.
Jack and Helen Heenan	in memory of Frank H. Graves, Jr.
Donald R. Thomas	in memory of True E. Thomas

Weeds of the Sutter Buttes

The Sutter Buttes rise in dramatic isolation from the floor of the Sacramento Valley, an upland island in a sea of lowland. Long separated from similar habitats in the Sierra Nevada and Coast Ranges, this unique volcanic range has developed its own peculiar mix of plants and animals (Anderson 1983a, 1983b).

The Indians of this area (Maidu, wintun, Nisenan) held these hills sacred. Estawm Yan or Histum Yani, as the range was known to the natives, probably changed little during the long period of their occupancy or visitation.

The Spanish arrived in California in 1769. By 1850, a mere eighty years later, the aboriginal population plummeted from an estimated 350,000 to 75,000 (Frenkel 1970). By 1880, the first thirty years of American settlement coincided with a decline of the native population to about 20,000, with the survivors concentrated on reservations.

The Indians were not the only natives to feel the impact of the coming of the white race. Native animals and plants were affected both directly and indirectly by hunting, livestock grazing, agriculture, and introduction of exotic species.

During the spanish period of California's history (1769-1824), expansion of cattle-grazing initiated the first changes to the local flora. Sixteen species of exotic plants became established in the state, including such familiar weeds as hare barley, Italian ryegrass, redstem storksbill, sow thistle, dandelion, and spiny clotbur.

From 1825-1848 during Mexican occupancy, California's list of introduced alien plants grew by 63 more species (Frenkel 1970). During this period we picked up such dandies as giant reed, ripgut grass, red brome, crabgrass, water grass, pigweed, chickweed, shepherd's purse, wild radish, hedge mustard, horehound, tree tobacco, common bedstraw, yellow star thistle, bull thistle, milk thistle, dandelion, and spiny clotbur.

The early years of American settlement (1849-1860) continued the trend of introduction of exotics, sometimes intentionally, sometimes accidentally. During those eleven years, California picked up Bermuda grass, orchard grass, fiddle dock, purslane, tree-of-heaven, poison hemlock, hedge-parsley, two species of mulleins, English plantain, chicory, horseweed, wild sunflower, cat's ear, butterweed, and others, a total of 55 new species.

The ability of native plants to withstand the onslaught of aggressive aliens was hampered by heavy grazing and drought. From 1850-1863 the grasslands of California experienced the heaviest cattle grazing in the history of the landscape, partly because the Gold Rush stimulated high demand for beef. Severe drought in the 1860's damaged both the

beef industry and the native plants alike. Cattle grazing pressure declined and other uses of the landscape increased. With extensive planting of grain, seeding of pasture grasses, and conversion of fertile soils to orchard and row crops, many exotics expanded at the expense of natives. Irrigation created ideal conditions for moisture-loving weeds. From 1870-1890, sheep-grazing, especially in the mountains, further facilitated the spread of weeds. By 1860, more than 130 species of alien plants were established in California; by the mid-1970's, the list was up to 674 (Raven and Axelrod 1978). Who knows what pretty plant now in someone's garden or what obscure seed in some imported product will be the dandelion or star thistle of the future in this state?

The first serious botanical collecting in the Buttes was by Willis Jepson before the turn of the century (Jepson 1891). He found the weed, horehound, to be rank around the old settlements along the Feather River. On April 20, 1891, when he ascended South Butte, he encountered a representative sampling of weeds, which included shepherd's purse, common catchfly, sow thistle, and cat's ear, but his eyes were searching primarily for native plants. One of his discoveries was Mahonia dictyota, commonly called California barberry or Jepson's mahonia, a plant unknown to science up to that time.

In recent years, observations and collections by Lowell Ahart, Rebecca and Walt Anderson, John Thomas Howell, Margit and Pete Sands, John Hunter Thomas, and others have led to a list of 532 species of plants in the Sutter Buttes (Anderson 1983b). More will inevitably be added, though the rate of addition has slowed to a crawl. Further additions will most likely come from painstaking keying of difficult or obscure genera, the type of patient sleuthing for which Lowell Ahart has gained a measure of local fame.

On the Sutter Buttes list are 377 native and 155 introduced plant species (29 percent). that compares to a statewide total of 5720 species, of which 674 (12 percent) are weeds (Raven and Axelrod 1978). Comparing species lists alone, however, can be misleading. Desert and mountain floras have been altered far less than floras occupying prime agricultural land, as in Sutter County. In addition, some weeds are abundant and widespread where they occur (e.g., wild oats, foxtail barleys, etc.), while others are rare, confined mainly to disturbed sites under very specific conditions. In fact, the uplands of the Sutter Buttes have a much greater proportion of natives than do the lowlands of Sutter County, where perhaps 90 percent of the vegetation one sees is exotic.

Where have our weeds originated? Of the 674 species of aliens now naturalized in California, 492 (73 percent) came from temperate to arid Eurasia and North Africa (Frenkel 1970). A mere 4 percent are derived from South American species, 4 percent from Central and Southern Africa, 3 percent from tropical Asia, 3 percent from Australasia, 8 percent from elsewhere in the U.S. It is perhaps fitting that the plant pests that plague the descendants of the Old World immigrations are themselves of Old World origin.

In turn, some of our native species have become weeds elsewhere in the world, particularly California poppy, fiddleneck, miner's lettuce, lupine, and monkeyflower. What this proves is that weeds are no more

than plants out of place, particularly those that thrive under conditions in which their normal population controls are absent (are we any different?).

Even in California, some natives have characteristics that make them "weedy" in response to disturbance, generally man-caused. Some examples are red maids, miner's lettuce, several lupines, tansy phacelia, turkey mullein, fiddleneck, blow wives, twiggy wreath plant, spikeweeds, turpentine weed, gumplant, milkweeds, etc. (Stebbins 1965).

Some families of Sutter Buttes plants are more likely to contain weeds than others. None of the dozen species of ferns in the Buttes is a weed. Few trees are weedy. The Tree of Heaven, surely as misnamed as a tree can be, is a notable exception, spreading vegetatively to form thicket-clones in a few locations where early settlers planted it. Wild figs now mark springs and seeps, where their moisture requirements are satisfied, but the species never will spread across the drier hills the way wild oats has. A few escaped almonds, sweet cherries, and tree tobaccos may self-perpetuate, but are unlikely to spread broadly.

All three local representatives of the amaranth or pigweed family are weeds. Most of our carrot family members are natives, but weedy hedge-parsleys and poison hemlock give the family a bad name. The sunflower family has 72 species in the Buttes, 23 of them exotic (32 percent). Some of them are thistles (but note that our native thistles are not weedy), cockleburs, dandelions, pineapple weed, and the like.

The borage family has but one introduced weed (European pusley), but the native fiddlenecks and popcorn flowers can act as if they were weeds in many situations. Seven of our seventeen mustards are exotics, as are eight of our fifteen pinks. Our native clovers have been supplemented as range forage by a good number of introduced species. Similarly, the half dozen introduced storksbills and geraniums have become an important component of the diet of cattle and sheep (introduced themselves of course).

The grasslands have suffered more than the woodlands in having native species replaced by weeds. In Butte County north of the Sutter Buttes, at least 60 percent of the valley grassland is composed of weedy herbs and grasses (Taylor 1977). In the buttes, 49 (69 percent) of 71 grass species are introduced. Often the native perennials have been outcompeted by exotic annuals. This is in contrast to the situation for other Buttes monocots; the rushes and sedges of moist sites are virtually unaffected by exotics of the same families.

So far the flora of the Sutter Buttes, despite the presence of exotics, is remarkably intact. Healthy, relatively vigorous species of perennial bunchgrasses still persist. Yet prolonged overgrazing, fires, drought, and human-caused disturbances of many kinds can profoundly affect plant species composition. Once weeds take over, attempting to reduce or eliminate them can create unbearable exonomic and even ecologic burdens.

Sutter County has long engaged in battles against such weeds as Johnson grass, Russian thistle, puncture vine, whitetop, Bermuda grass, and so on. Nearly all these weeds are relative newcomers, yet we can

hardly hold them back. Clearly, it will behoove Sutter County residents to consider the potential impacts of their actions, to work with the local environment instead of against it, in order that chain reactions of invasions and extinctions do not continue to threaten the livability of the land.

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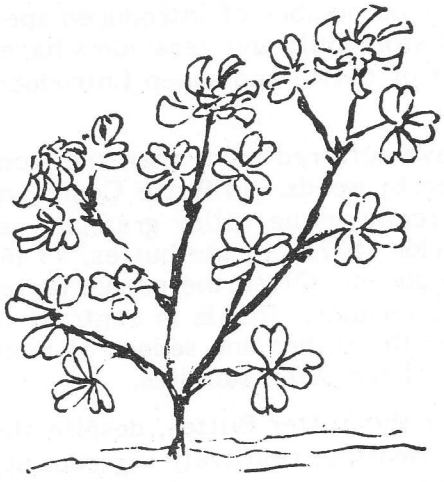
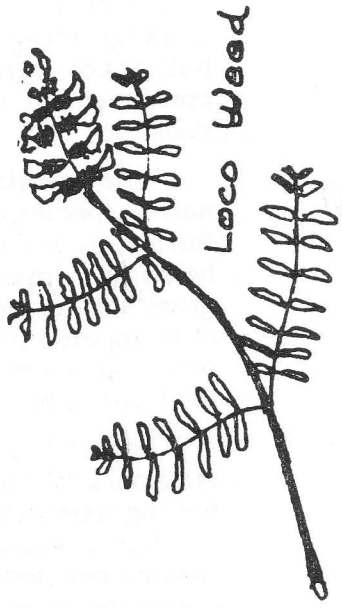
Turkey Mullein



Wild Clover



These drawings and the ones on the cover are from Louise Hendrix book " Sutter Buttes " - Land of Histum yani ". They were drawn by her husband Edwin. This book is available at the museum.

THE GREENING OF YERBA BUENA

(California's First Arbor Day)

by

Alice S. Wentzell

Nicknamed Nat, Cincinnatus Hiner Miller grew up to be a Pony Express rider, gold prospector, lawyer, world feted poet and storyteller. But more than that, he grew up to be a compulsive planter of trees. In Oakland and San Francisco some of his trees still live after him.

After fifteen years of travel in Europe and the east, Nat, known to the world as Joaquin Miller, Poet of the Sierras, came home to California in 1885 to the two cities and the hills he loved best. He knew he couldn't expect a reception such as he had received abroad, for the west coast's ladies, more Victorian than the Queen, would be scandalized by his absurd clothes which had delighted British royalty. No longer could he nibble at the shell pink earlobes of debutantes or, pretending to search for something dropped beneath a table, suddenly nip the ankle of a Duchess with his sharp white terrierlike teeth concealed behind a ticklish full yellow beard. Now he must curb his horseplay or the California ladies would consider him a boor. Maybe they would let him strew rose petals in their paths as he had for Lily Langtry.

But it was worth the sacrifice to be back. Here was Harr Wagner, friend and editor, to talk to and Ina Coolbrith, his kin in poetry. Best of all, he could stand high on the land he had bought in the Oakland hills, where he had already begun to plant his personal forest, and pretend. One day he could be the Spanish explorer, Portola, viewing for the first time the naked sandspit where friars and soldiers of his king would build the Mission Delores and the Presidio. On the following day or week or month he could be Fremont, his hero, naming the Golden Gate, and pursuing his country's manifest destiny.

Standing on the foredeck of the 10:00am. Oakland to San Francisco ferry on August 11, 1886, breathing the salt air and felling the sun on his shoulders, Miller may have pretended he was Lt. Juan Manuel de Ayala sailing the Spanish ship "San Carlos" through the Gate and into the bay in August 1775. Other explorers had missed the entrance and some had seen the bay from the land but Avala was the first European to sail upon its waters. He mapped its shoals, sounded its depths, charted and named its islands. Six weeks after he arrived, he sailed away to announce to his superiors that he had found the greatest anchorage in the world.

Miller's ferry drew closer to Yerba Buena Island. Ayala had charted it and given it the name "Isla de los Alcatraces" for the pelican-like seabirds which soared above and nested on its peak. It then became a bastard island of many names. English navigator Frederick Beechey, who surveyed the bay in 1826, transposed Ayala's name for it to another rocklike island closer to the San Francisco shore. The Californios called it Yerba Buena for its twining minty herbs. Sailors called it Wood Island when they cut down its trees to fire the ever-burning cookstoves on their sailing ships. Then a certain D.A. Fuller isolated his goats on the island to keep them out of his kitchen garden.

They became so prolific and wild that steamers passing the island would frequently stop while the passengers indulged in goat hunting expeditions. Soon it became known as Goat Island. Today it has still another name. Tourists and the U.S. Navy call it Treasure Island.

As his ferry came abreast of the island of many names, Miller saw it as a stranger would. It was naked. Did he think of the words he had written years ago in Ayr, Scotland when he saw a hill without a tree? "Barren and bald and ugly," he had noted in his diary, "like an old man waiting to die."

It was then that the idea came to him. "We must plant trees upon the island," he thought. "Thousands of trees. It will be a great crusade. We'll plant them in the shape of a Crusader's great Greek cross." He paced the deck planning and muttering, "I'll plant them myself if no one will help me. I'll plant thousands of trees alone if I must."

When the ferry's plank was down in San Francisco, he was first off. He ran through the old wooden terminal, his high topped boots tattooing a crescendo, his Prince Albert coat open with coattails flapping behind. His broad brimmed tasseled black hat clutched in his hand, hair awry, and sweating, he burst into the office of THE GOLDEN ERA at 420 Montgomery Street and threw himself into a chair before Harr Wagner, his editor. "We're going to plant trees on Yerba Buena Island-thousands of trees- in the form of a giant Greek cross. Come with me; we'll ask Irish to help us."

Accustomed to Miller's impromptu, impetuous schemes and sniffing a story, Wagner consented. Together they set out for the offices of THE DAILY ALTA at Bush near Kearny to call on the editor, Colonel John P. Irish, once unsuccessful Democratic canditate for Governor of Iowa, now famous in San Francisco for fiery speeches and never wearing a tie. Irish greeted them and heard Miller out. He too saw the event could be newsworthy. "It's a grand idea," he said. "We'll ask Adolph Sutro to join us. I'll telephone and ask for an appointment."

Four hours later, the man with a dream and three others who would make it come true, shook hands and agreed that what they had in mind was just what treeless San Francisco needed, a great treeplanting ceremony. They began to concoct the details for California's first Arbor Day.

Sutro, called "that clever Prussian" by those for whom his Comstock tunnel had made fortunes and "that crafty Jew" by doubters who failed to invest in his company's shares, like Miller, was also a tree planter. Millionaire, owner of one-tenth of San Francisco's sandlot real estate, builder of Sutro Heights and its adjoining forest, he immediately offered to provide thousands of tree seedlings for the planting. "We will have thousands of school children plant them in November so their roots will be firmly set by winter rains," he said.

"We must ask permission of the General," someone remembered. "The Army controls the island." Miller promptly wrote to General O. Howard, one armed Civil and Indian war veteran, in residence at the Presidio, put out to pasture like an old warhorse as Commanding General of Headquarters Division of the Pacific. "Permission granted," he replied. "Capital idea; we'll plant at the Presidio and Fort Mason too. My men will prepare the ground."

Had he not been a poet, Miller might have done well in advertising. He wrote a letter to the children of San Francisco published in THE DAILY ALTA, inviting them to "Come plant a tree with me," and dangling the carrot of possible autographs

for those who would join him. Autograph collecting being the "in thing" for the juvenile set of the day, his letter caused immediate excitement. The planners had originally intended that only high school and kindergarten children would be planters, but there was so much protest of discrimination and sibling controversy-"Ya, Ya, I'm going to plant a tree with Mr. Miller and get his autograph, but you can't go," -that before long arrangements were changed to almost general participation. Mamas and pops volunteered to attend or were pressed into service. After all how could Mary or Johnny go off alone for a whole day's social? They'd probably fall into the bay from the steamer.

Soon it appeared as if the whole city wanted a tree planting holiday. Various committees were quickly formed and their doings duly reported by the press. Donations poured in. Millionaires James Fair and George Hearst, father of William, each gave sacks containing twenty-five $20 gold pieces. James V. Coleman of the Forestry Commission not only gave $500 but headed the Yerba Buena Tree Planting Association's Executive Commitee. THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE commented in mid-November that the names of two who were expected to be donors were missing from the list. One was Senator Leland Stanford who, it was said, was too busy with railroad matters to be contacted in his office, and the other a certain Cornelius O'Connor, who flatly refused to give.

By Friday, November 26, 1886 all seemed in readiness. The children and their parents had instructions from their schools as to whether they would go to the Island, the Presidio or Fort Mason and what transportation would be provided; school teachers were wondering what was suitable to wear and hoping their charges would behave just this once. Adolph Sutro had increased his tree donation to 10,000 seedlings now safely in place at the Washington Street wharf; programs had been printed and important invited guests had promised to be present. Miller checked into the Palace for the night.

The following day there were trowels, trees and thirsty throats on Yerba Buena Island. Harr Wagner, in arranging for barrels of drinking water for the public, had ordered them placed on the dock landing. What he forgot was that once having climbed the steep, slippery hill to the top to plant their trees, few of the participants had courage or desire to slip and slide down again to the bottom for a gulp from a barrel's dipper.

The exercises began at 11:00 A.M. The Army's First Infantry Band played and the elite officer corps from the Presidio perspired in their uniforms. Miller read a special poem, Adolph Sutro made a short speech; Irish's was longer. The Star Spangled Banner and America were sung. To cheers and applause, 79 year old General Mariano Vallejo, the great Californio, made his next to last public appearance when he arrived at the top of the hill just before the ceremony ended, riding a white horse like a wild west movie hero.

After Miller, Vallejo, Ina Coolbrith, Miller's half-indian daughter, Cali-Shasta, and Dona Chonita Fuller Ramirez, daughter of the original goatkeeper, had each planted a seedling, and the instructors from the east bay's College of Agriculture had placed twelve special trees representing distant countries of the world, the children were turned loose. Lovingly, almost reluctantly, they placed their individual seedlings in the holes prepared in advance by the U.S. Army's prisoners, and then harvested a wealth of autographs from the distinguished company.

California's first Arbor Day ended quietly. At the island, 4,000 people were present. Families sat down to picnic; others left immediately in the steamers for home; still others rambled about the hill or went fishing off the dock for an hour or two.

The SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE reported that the ceremonies at the Presidio, where the children climbed on the cannons and played they were soldiers, had attracted many. 5,000 tree holes were filled. Another 1,000 seedlings were planted by the primary students of the area near Fort Mason. The event was voted a huge success.

Miller, of course, did not originate the idea of Arbor Day. Julius Sterling Morton of treeless Nebraska began the celebration on April 10, 1872. Nor did all the trees survive. Some on Yerba Buena Island were subsequently destroyed by fire a number of years later and were replaced by the U.S. Navy. But what Miller did that day with those who joined him, especially the children, was to demonstrate how passionately Californians love their trees. Whether they plant them in November on the coast or in February or March in the interior valleys or in a simple ceremony on the State's official Arbor Day, March 7th, the people will keep their State green.

Today, tomorrow, next month or whenever, as they soar across San Francisco's Bay Bridge, people will breathe a momentary sigh of joy and relief as they glimpse firm ground and Yerba Buena's greenery before they plunge into its tunnel. Whenever they visit their property at the Presidio or Fort Mason, or hike and jog the trails of their public parks and lands, they expect of find a grove to shade them. It's an old California tradition.

WILD GAME IN EARLY DAYS

Nicholas W. Hanson

The present and future generations will never realize the vast numbers of wild geese and ducks that occupied the Sacramento valley in the early days. Large flocks of geese extended from Suisun Bay to Red Bluff and from the foothills of the Coast Range Mountains to the Sierra Nevada.

The unoccupied land of the plains, considered as worthless and usually referred to as "goose land," is where they flocked to roost, unmolested by the billions. Their flight to the north started at daylight and in the evening they returned south. When a large flock arose they resembled a dark cloud. You could hear their quacks for several miles. In the air they scattered, the cloud disappeared, and you could see strings of geese in "V" formations as far as the eye could see. From daylight until midnight you could hear their continual squawk. Flock after flock arose in the morning and started for the wheat fields.

When the north wind blew the geese flew very low. You could nearly touch them with a gun as they flew over you and shooting them did not turn their course of flight. Old muskets and muzzle-loading shotguns were in use and many good shots got by before the hunter could reload.

Perhaps the first breech-loading shotgun ever seen in Glenn County was brought here by J. E. Crooks in 1879. It cost three hundred and fifty dollars. Crooks was the appraiser and land agent for the Southern Pacific Railroad. He did more than any man in the settlement of this valley, excepting Will S. Green.

Crooks was a friend of my father. He was a shrewd business man. In the seventies he lived in Marysville. He, his wife and children, Johnnie and Mabel, who were near my age, visited with us often. He was the man who persuaded my father to locate in Glenn County. Crooks maintained homes in San Francisco, Sacramento, Marysville, Red Bluff, and Benicia, while contacting men to buy and locate on his land. He died in Benicia about 1888.

On January 21, 1882, I killed thirty-eight geese at one shot. Judge E.C. Hart published this in the Willows Journal. San Francisco papers copied the story. Then I thought I was a young Buffalo Bill.

Geese did untold damage to wheat, other than the expense of at least fifty cents an acre to herd them off the grain. Goose land pasture was left so barren of feed the land was leased for ten cents per acre per annum. There was little feed left except rosin and alkali weeds and salt grass plants which the geese did not eat.

From 1880 to 1884 a tribe of Indians camped on the plains each spring for a goose hunt. They killed large numbers of geese. The breast of the goose was removed and strung on barked willow poles to dry. Where these Indians came from I do not know.

About 1884 the slaughter of geese began. Pot or market hunters arrived. They used No. 4 sawed-off shotguns. The guns weighed forty pounds. The hunters used trained horses to sneak near the geese. Seldom less than sixty geese at a shot were killed, and as high as a hundred and eighty, not counting the wounded that died later.

The geese were shipped to San Francisco and other large cities and sold on the market for seventy-five cents to a dollar and quarter a dozen.

Fred and Warren Marvin are the market hunters I refer to. The Marvin brothers hunted for ten years west of Princeton. John Boggs paid them to move there and save his sheep feed. Most of their birds were shipped to J. Ivancovitch, a reliable commission firm in San Francisco. No doubt A. P. Giannini, founder of the Bank of America, as a boy, sold those geese while in the employ of his uncle, J. Ivancovitch.

Warren Marvin was a tall, raw-boned man. His profile and features resembled those of Abraham Lincoln. He married a well known widow of Princeton and resided in that vicinity for a number of years. After the death of his wife, Marvin entered the movie industry and represented Abraham Lincoln in many pictures of the silent screen.

When I first saw the pictures little did I realize that the actor portraying the Martyred President was my old friend Warren Marvin, the market hunter and wild goose exterminator for the Honorable John Boggs in the eighties.

Marvin passed his declining years in Sacramento, where he was a well-known character. He died there about 1936.

Geese were not the only pests to worry pioneer farmers. Jackrabbits were here by the millions. Wheat fields adjoining uncultivated lands were as much as one-fifth destroyed. When the wheat headed and the stalks and sap were sweet, rabbits cut it off, making trails through the grain.

Colusa County gave a bounty of two cents each for rabbit scalps. That proved no relief.

Father solved this rabbit problem, creating a lot of sport as well. He introduced the greyhound with success.

Tim Reidy, an Irish blacksmith, who owned a shop located where Rabbitt's Service Station now stands, was a man of knowledge and an expert wagon maker and horse shoer. He made his own horseshoes and nails. He shod nearly all of the race horses in Northern California. He was considered an authority and expert in his line. Reidy knew where to obtain greyhounds. He would order them for father.

When the pups arrived I was greatly disappointed. They looked like common cur dogs- round, fat bodies, short legs and noses. They would never catch a rabbit! I expected them to resemble the picture of a greyhound- long legs and noses, with slim curved bodies.

Father knew they would develop into thoroughbred greyhounds, if I fed them well. And so they did. They were the most beautiful and swiftest greyhounds in the valley. They could turn or pickup rabbits within a hundred yards.

It was not necessary to buy dog food for those dogs. They lived on rabbits and caught others for the sport of it. Within two years you could not find a rabbit within three miles of our ranch.

Other farmers secured greyhounds. The rabbits disappeared. Then wheat farming increased. Greyhounds were useless as sheep or stock dogs. They disappeared from the valley.

There were many foxes on the plains in the eighties. They lived in dens, holes dug in the ground on high knolls where water would not molest them. They caught crippled geese and rabbits for food. They seldom molested the farmers' poultry.

There were two kinds of foxes, one a dark gray and the other a very light brown or red with a large, bushy tail tipped with white. Red foxes were the more numerous.

Foxes have also disappeared from the valley. I have not seen one in many years.

In the eighties we enjoyed many fox hunts. On holidays men would arrive on the plains southeast of Willows in carts, buggies, wagons, and saddlehorses. There were no fences, drains, or water to interfere with the chase. The dogs would jump a fox and the chase was on. If the fox didn't find a den to enter, he was a dead fox, for the dogs killed him as they would a rabbit. The men on horseback were not far behind the greyhounds when they overtook the fox, and those in vehicles were going as fast as they could in safety.

The men would enjoy their lunch and beer at the Five Mile House that was located on the Princeton and Norman road five miles west of Princeton. If you think people didn't enjoy themselves once in a while in the early days, you are mistaken.

The greatest blessing that ever happened to the human race in this great valley in the past fifty years was the passing of the black gnat. In the eighties man and beast were in misery from May 1 to June 15. Men wore viels or flour sacks over their heads, gauntlet gloves tied over their shirt sleeves, pant legs tied over boot tops. It was hot and disagreeable to work wrapped up in that way. Some men worked by night and tried to sleep in the daytime. Horses stopped and rolled in their harness. No one can realize the pain and misery, except those who endured it in the eighties.

Thanks to the men who brought the land under cultivation and irrigation, no place was left for the gnats to deposit their eggs to hatch the coming year. Today the small black gnat with the glossy wings and poisonous bill is a curiousity here.

Curlew were plentiful in Sutter County in the seventies, and I suppose in other parts of the valley. They were near the size and color of the hen pheasant- a species of snipe, with long legs and bill, unlike the geese and ducks. They were always seen in small flocks, seldom more than a dozen. I imagine the mother and her brood, like the lark, they had a sharp, sweet voice from which they derived their name. One after the other would call "curlew" in a slow, sweet voice, as they circled around to light. Of all birds, I think the curlew had the sweetest voice.

In the spring of 1880 a flock appeared near our home. Mother did not approve of killing curlew. Father had killed them in Sutter County. They were fine eating. The temptation was so great that I killed one. The flock returned like the blackbird and hovered over their dead. I shot again, killing two more. Their lamentations were so pitiful I was sorry I had killed them and shot no more. When mother saw the curlew she exclaimed, "The poor birds! Oh, why did you kill them? You have frightened them away. We will hear their sweet voices no more."

And I never did. They were the last curlew I remember seeing. I suppose they were exterminated by hunters. If one were killed all could be killed.

Plover were plentiful in the valley during the eighties and nineties. They gathered in flocks of a hundred or more. They were near the size of quail and the color of killdeer, excepting the white stripe on the killdeer's head and wings.

Shooting plover was like playing golf. You would make a shot, then walk or run a few hundred yards and make another. Polver would run fifty or one hundred yards, then stop, until you were nearly near enough to shoot. Then they would run again or fly a few yards and alight.

The late H. D. DeGaa and I chased plover many miles in the early nineties. We usually returned tired, with few birds.

The hunter never exterminated the plover. The birds knew the range of the shotgun too well.

Plover arrived here in August, after the wheat harvest, and left in the late fall. I don't know where they came from. They were not like the snipes. They never lit in water.

Another bird that was plentiful in the mountains in the seventies was the road runner. They said he could run as fast as a horse. As near as I can remember they looked like a rooster pheasant. I have not seen one in sixty-five years.

Mountain quail were also plentiful in Lake County near Bartlett Springs in the Seventies. They were twice the size of the valley quail.

Another bird that no longer remains in Glenn County is the snow or chippy bird. They were here in the Sacramento Valley by the millions. They were a small brown bird with a yellow stripe around their head. They had a plump breast like the robin and like the robin many people ate them. It was too expensive to shoot them, as they were small, but they were easily trapped in the snow by placing feed under a figure four trap. The snow bird disappeared from the valley in the eighties like the plover. They lived and roosted on the ground. I don't remember seeing one light on a fence or in a tree.

In 1880 W.H. Barker, who was caretaker on Sam Brannan's ranch in Sutter County, homesteaded one hundred sixty acres of land seven miles south of Elk Creek. In 1882 I visited with his son Birt. Birt and I were schoolmates in Sutter County.

There were thousands of valley quail along Stony Creek in that period. They fed in the barnyard with Birt's chickens. The Barkers never shot the quail and the quail were very tame. Ane how those quail did sing at sunrise! Such music this generation will never know.

The next night Birt, his brother Frank and I went on a quail hunt. The only weapon we carried was a lantern. Small trees along the creek were covered with grapevines. Frank would hold the lantern on one side of the grapevines, while Birt and I sneaked up on the opposite side. The quail would look at the light that seemed to blind them, while Birt and I picked them off the roost. It took only a few minutes to get a mess of quail, though we seldom caught more than two or three at a roost. This story may sound "fishy" to this generation, but it is the truth.

After a while the quail became wild and later they were caught in figure four traps, but this was not the sport that catching them off the roost was.

There were very few swans in the Sacramento Valley in the eighties and they appeared only during very wet winters. When they came in December the oldtimers would say, "This will be a very wet winter, the swans are here." And the swan sign never failed.

Today there are swans here every winter by the thousands. I suppose the rice feed attracts them, as thousands of sacks of rice are left in the fields that cannot be saved. The ducks, geese and swans receive the benefit of it.

The swan is a beautiful bird. It is unnecessarily protected by law. Their meat is dark and tough and not good food.

There were many grouse in the Coast Range Mountains in the early days. They were the best eating of any fowl I ever ate. I believe a few remain today in the mountain fastness near Eel River.

NATIVE WILD GRASSES AND FLOWERS

Nicholas W. Hanson

In early days in the Sacramento Valley there were thousands of acres of uncultivated land. Only the good land of rich loam along the Sacramento River and foothills was farmed to wheat. The poor grade of land was not farmed. This soil was known as black adobe, adobe clay, red gravel, alkali clay, alkali, and goose land. All these different varieties of soil were adapted to different varieties of native grasses.

In the spring these native grasses bloomed and went to seed. This and future generations will never see this great valley as I have seen it, blanketed with thousands of acres of the most beautiful wild flowers.

Snowdrops, a small white flower, would cover a field and make the field appear a great bank of snow. Another field of several thousand acres would appear like a bank of gold, covered with a small yellow flower. The stems of these flowers were fine and the pods were filled with a rich, fine seed. Cattle became fat and made excellent beef in June, by grazing on that feed.

Another field of red, gravely soil would be covered with the state flower, beautiful yellow poppies. the next field would probably be bluebells and violets, and still another with redbells, a solid carpet of red. If you were fortunate you would see a field of the different varieties of soils combined with all the different varieties of wild flowers growing in a great big bouquet arranged by Nature: Poppies, Johnny-jump-ups, butter-cups, primroses, modocs, purple lupine, bluebells, and many flowers I never knew the names of.

And oh! The beautiful bouquets of wild flowers we gathered when we were a child. the fragrance of those fields of flowers was simply grand, a fragrance never to be forgotten.

In the spring shallow ponds of water would evaporate on the plains and a fine growth of vegetation would spring up and bloom thereon, the most beautiful velvet flower that contained all the colors of the rainbow. These flowers possessed the sweetest fragrance imaginable. All these beautiful pictures of Nature have been erased from this valley forever by civilization. Today we view the rice, barley, wheat, ladino and alfalfa fields, and the orchards.