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Sutter County Flag

(Photo by Gina Tarke)



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*The year the director joined the Board.

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The 2012 dues are payable as of January 1, 2012. Mail your check to the Community Memorial Museum at 1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City, 95993-2301 530-822-7141

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President's Message

This is an election year. We are going to be listening to all the campaign speeches morning, noon, and night. Boring! I have a better idea; Why not become a Director for Sutter County Historical Society?

You ask, "What does the Board of Directors do?"

We have fun. We develop projects to preserve history, share information with the public, and raise funds. We have four regular meetings each year, held at our Community Memorial Museum on Butte House Road. Meetings last about an hour and a half. Then we have four quarterly general membership meetings. Our January and April meeting are at Ettl Hall. The June meeting is at Harter Park behind the museum. The last meeting in October has been at Ruthy's restaurant in Yuba City. Everyone who comes to the meetings seem to really enjoy themselves and listening to our speakers.

Two projects we are working on at the present time are century farms in Sutter County and Dust Bowl Migration. As a director you could bring some new ideas to our board. Please consider being part of the board.

I am excited about our picnic in the Buttes on Saturday, April 28th. Margit Sands will be our hostess and speaker. She will talk about the history of the Dean Ranch and wild flowers of the Buttes. People wishing to hike will be able to and those who would like to sit in the shade and just enjoy the Buttes will be able to do that also.

As I'm writing this, our bus trip is in the future, but I have high hopes that the weather will be better than last year, when it rained so hard on the day of the trip no one was able to see the Buttes. This year I'm sure you got to see our beautiful Buttes, with local historian, Don Burtis, telling you many fascinating and interesting things about our mountain range and the history of the people who settled in the area. I'd also like to thank our other stalwart volunteer, Lyle Callaway, who always takes a day out of his life to safely pilot the bus, and Sutter Union High School superintendent Ryan Robison, who allows us to use his district's bus.

Sarah Pryor, President

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Director's Report

I know you will enjoy a visit to the Museum this spring for several reasons. The new exhibit opening on May 4th is sure to be a hit. Everyone loves baseball, and this baseball story is sure to pique your interest. Heroes from the halcyon days of baseball in the 1930s reveal a very human dimension as they respond with graciousness to a devoted fan, whose Sutter County grandson loaned their letters that still speak to us today. Added to the exhibit are some great local baseball photos and souvenirs. The exhibit will remain through August 3rd.

In the multi-cultural wing, the colorful Punjabi-American exhibit has opened to join the Japanese-American exhibit in completion. Both exhibits are filled with riveting stories about immigrants making a home in their new land. The Chinese-American exhibit will be finished in the near future, while work is still proceeding in the Hispanic and other sections. A marvelous attribute of our community is its diversity, and the Museum is proud to tell the stories that have not been told before, all a part of our collective history and a part of our strength as American people.

Save May 18th to sample area wines with hors d'oeuvres and admire local art and photography, all with a focus on our beautiful Sutter Buttes. Enjoy the richness of our *Bounteous Buttes* for a pleasant evening in Ettl Hall. Tickets will be available at the Museum for \$10 per person.

Tickets are now available to enter the Quilt Drawing. See the wonderful quilt in the Museum. A gift from an anonymous dedicated Museum supporter, it is a French Braid design in vibrant colors. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00. The drawing will take place on October 10, 2012. All proceeds will benefit Museum operations.

You might wonder what the Museum staff of two is doing when it is not planning fundraisers, exhibits, or attending to visitors' requests. As one uninformed friend inquired of me, "Whatever do you find to do there all day?" Right now, among many other things, our priorities are the completion of the multi-cultural wing permanent exhibits, addressing the large backlog of artifacts (cataloguing and photographing them, sending paperwork to donors, packing and storing them), digitizing hand-written collection records from 1975 on, digitizing the photograph collection with photographer Allan Lamb, and making the Museum Store an ever more interesting place to shop. We have wonderful volunteers that assist with many of these projects, but, at the end of the day, we find we have somehow managed to stay quite busy.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Museum soon,

Julie Stark
Director

Memorials

In memory of **Richard “Dick” Arnoldy**
Lester “Bud” Doty
Bob & Lee Jones

In memory of **Roberta (Robbie) Burk**
Connie Cary

In memory of **Jim Howard**
Robert Benton

In memory of **Russell Mayfield**
Stanley & Jeanette
Christopherson
Wally & Dealla Crother
Marnee Crowhurst

In memory of **Cecilia McNally**
Helen Heenan

In memory of **Daniel A. Nevis**
Michael & Helen Andrews

In memory of **Jane Roberts**
Marnee Crowhurst
Sandra & Bob Fremd
Bob & Lillie Inman
Ida Philpott
John & Judy Schnabel
Sharyl Simmons
Julie Stark

In memory of **Barbara Kimerer Rooney**
Mary Butler & family

In memory of **Robert Ryan**
Lillie Inman

In memory of **Cecilia Sanborn-McNally**
June & Ed Watson

In memory of **Bill Stenquist**
Sharyl Simmons
Julie Stark

In memory of **Ruth Taylor**
Marnee Crowhurst

In memory of **David Van Pelt**
Julie Stark

In memory of **Bill Vickrey**
Jean Goss

In memory of **Betty June Walden**
Bogue Country Club
Sandra & Bob Fremd

In memory of **Toshi Yoshimura**
Jim Staas

In memory of **Dr. Andrew “Andy”
Zografos**
George & Shyrlie Emery
Elaine Tarke

Outright gift to the Museum
Bob & Lillie Inman
Jeanne Schultz



April Membership Meeting

Saturday, April 14, 2:00 p.m.

Ettl Hall

Program: Ann Foley Scheuring, author

Valley Empires:

Hugh Glenn and Henry Miller in the Shaping of California

Ms. Scheuring lives in Yolo County and has a long list of publications to her credit, including *A Guidebook to California Agriculture* and *The History of the University of California, Davis*.

Please join us for an enjoyable afternoon with her. We will serve dessert after the program.



First Ever Buttes Picnic

On **Saturday, April 28**, the Historical Society will hold a potluck picnic at the Dean Ranch in the Sutter Buttes. After our recent rains we know that everything will be green and gorgeous, and the wildflowers will be out in abundance. Margit Sands will talk about the wildflowers and about the history of the Dean Ranch. If you'd like to walk around the area you can, and if you prefer to sit in the shade and enjoy the escape from city life, that's okay too.

We'll meet at the Museum at 10:00 a.m. and carpool to the Dean Ranch. We'll provide plates, utensils, cups, napkins, drinks, tables and chairs - you bring something to share. We're asking for a donation of \$10 per person or \$20 per family.

Questions? Please call Sarah Pryor, 530-755-0702.



A Warmonger in the Buttes?

by
Larry Harris

In the 1840s Alta California was a “department” of Mexico. The Mexican government was in disarray and had not been really organized after the country’s independence from Spain in 1820. Alta California was pretty much on its own with little to no support from the Mexican government. Many countries had a covetous eye on this Pacific Coast land. This article is a short report on how California became a U.S. state.

It was, perhaps, a million and a half years ago that a seam in the earth’s crust opened and from the mantle volcanic detritus spewed onto the Sacramento Valley floor. With a 60-mile circumference, a unique geological formation arose. This unusual projection in the middle of the Sacramento Valley has been named Spirit Mountains, Los Picachos, Tres Picos, Three Buttes, Prairie Buttes, Marysville Buttes, Sacramento Buttes, Butte Mountains and, finally, by fiat, to be forever the “Sutter Buttes.”

This extraordinary locale is revered by the local citizens and they have dubbed it “the smallest mountain range in the world.”

Into this special place, on May 30, 1846, rode a cadre of 60 Americans. They were scientists, soldiers, and Delaware Indian scouts, and were led by Captain John C. Frémont of the Army Topographical Corps, who was on his third major expedition into the West and California.

They camped at the 800 foot elevation at longitude 121° 38' 04", latitude 39° 12' 03". They later moved to a lower elevation at longitude 121° 33' 36", latitude 39° 14' 41". These coordinates were calculated by Captain Frémont.

While camped in the Buttes, Frémont said the Indian scouts thought they had found the “happy hunting grounds” as they had, on one morning, brought back to camp 80 animals. These were elk, antelope, deer, bears and small game. Frémont reported that “the buttes were pleasantly cool in the morning for a few hours but the heat became very great. The camp was in one of the warmest situations in the Sacramento Valley.”

Even a short synopsis of Fremont’s biography would be lengthy. A few of his exploits are recounted here. He was author of the *Fremont Report*, based on his first two expeditions into the West and California. Thousands of copies of this *Report* were printed by Congress and became the tour guide for western migrants. Much of his third expedition (of five) is covered in this article. He received the surrender of the California Mexicans from Andres Pico at the Cahuenga Pass in Southern California. He became the first military governor of California (self-appointed), became a millionaire from gold mines in Mariposa, was one of the first two Senators from California, was the first Republican candidate for president in 1856, was a Major General in the Civil War, issued a proclamation of

emancipation before President Lincoln's, attempted to build a railroad across the southern United States, was territorial governor of Arizona, went broke, lived on the returns from his wife's writings, received a pension from being a Major General for one month, and in 1890, lying gravely ill in Washington, told his son that he was "going home... to California," and died.

Before Frémont camped in the Buttes he'd had a run-in with the Mexican government. While exploring central California his men were reported to be acting inappropriately. He received orders to leave California. Frémont was angered at this termination of his exploration and built a makeshift fortification atop Hawke's Peak in the Gavilan mountains near Monterey. As the men were piling logs together for a fort they placed a U.S. flag on a sapling tree. After three days the tree fell down. Fremont took this as an omen and after five days left the mountain. He might have been motivated by the 200 soldiers collected at the base of the mountain who were gathering artillery to blast him off the peak.

He slowly marched up the San Joaquin Valley, seemingly taunting the Mexican army that did not pursue.

After traveling through the Sacramento Valley he camped near the Oregon border close to Klamath Lake. At this location he was intercepted by Marine Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie. Gillespie had letters for Frémont from President Polk, the Secretary of the Navy, his father-in-law Thomas Hart Benton (a U.S. Senator for 30 years) and Frémont's wife Jessie.

He was so engrossed in reading these letters he did not post guards around the camp. In the middle of the

night the sound of a tomahawk bashing in the head of a soldier, Basil Lajeunesse, alerted the camp to a Tlamath (Fremont's spelling) Indian attack. Three soldiers were killed and several of the Indians, including their chief, were also killed. After the attack Frémont reversed his departure route and headed back down the Sacramento Valley. As they were on the trail an Indian was about to kill Kit Carson. Frémont spurred his horse and knocked over the Indian, who was immediately dispatched. The horse was named "Sacramento" and was a gift from John Sutter.

This reversal of direction and change of attitude from a mission of exploration to one with a military purpose has confounded historians ever since. Did one of his messages contain a secret code that told Frémont that war with Mexico was inevitably imminent? In his *Memoirs* he definitely states that this was the case.

What Frémont had already known was that on March 9, 1846, General Jose Castro of the Mexican Army had positive orders to drive Fremont out of California. There was also a "Banda" or proclamation to force American settlers to leave California (they didn't have green cards).

He knew that war with Mexico was inevitable as President Polk wanted California. Many politicians and believers in "Manifest Destiny" wanted California. Manifest destiny was the belief that Americans had a divine right to migrate westward. It became a patriotic duty to do so.

The most imminent threat to war with Mexico was the annexation of Texas in 1846. Texas had been a republic wrested from Mexico ten years earlier. The annexation was a supreme

insult to Mexico and the war was begun over boundary disputes between the Nueces and Rio Grande Rivers. Fremont did not know *when* war would start but he knew that it would.

From many settlers that came to the camp in the Buttes Frémont heard stories that they were going to be forced to leave. Frémont decided to aid the settlers. He orchestrated a plan to again irritate the Mexicans. His man Ezekiel Merritt stole 200 Mexican Army horses and brought them to Fremont's camp. He conceived the plan to seize Sonoma and capture General Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo and three other Mexican officers. They were brought to his camp and then imprisoned at Sutter's Fort.

The settlers and ragtag adventurers were called Bear Flaggers after their flag, designed and painted by William Todd – a cousin of Mary Todd Lincoln. Critics said that the bear on the flag looked more like a pig but the idea was there.

The Bear Flaggers formed the Republic of California with a constitution written mostly by William B. Ide, commander. The republic lasted 21 days and the flag was replaced by the Stars and Stripes.

Frémont took charge of the movement, the California Battalion was formed and after what John Bidwell later labeled an “unjust” war the Mexicans surrendered to Fremont at Cahuenga Pass in Southern California on January 13, 1847.

Did Frémont have authority to start the Mexican American war in California? Was he a warmonger, a loose cannon, an arrogant egotist, self-serving renegade acting to gain glory and fame from irresponsible actions?

A philosophical historian, Josiah Royce, thought so. Royce was born in Grass Valley in 1855. He had an unhappy childhood and schooldays there. In his book *California, a Study of American Character*, he delved into everything possible of the written information concerning these actions by Frémont. He found that Lt. Gillespie also delivered a letter from Secretary of State James Buchanan to Thomas Larkin, who was the only Consul the U.S. ever had to the California Republic. The “Larkin dispatch” suggested that Larkin could persuade the Californios to renounce their allegiance to Mexico and proclaim California a U.S. territory, without violence. Larkin was also a successful merchant and had many Californio friends. He was paid \$6 a day as an informer (spy) for the U.S. government. It seems unlikely that after the insult given Mexico by the Texans, the Mexican government could be persuaded by a merchant to hand over California.

Royce interviewed Frémont in his later years and when Frémont denied knowledge of the Larkin letter Royce called him a liar.

Royce's character assassination of Frémont was very harmful to Fremont's reputation. When Frémont published his *Memoirs*, they didn't sell well.

After the book was published Royce had a nervous breakdown. He took a cruise to the South Seas and his “head-weariness” disappeared. After his recovery he said he was “like a bent bow, all ready to thwang.” And so he did, slinging barbs at Fremont and also at another philosopher, Francis Abbot, whom Royce belittled in print. He

ruined Abbot's reputation and severely damaged Frémont's.¹

So – was Frémont a warmonger, starting a war for personal glory, an egocentric power-mad nut seeking recognition with irresponsible actions?

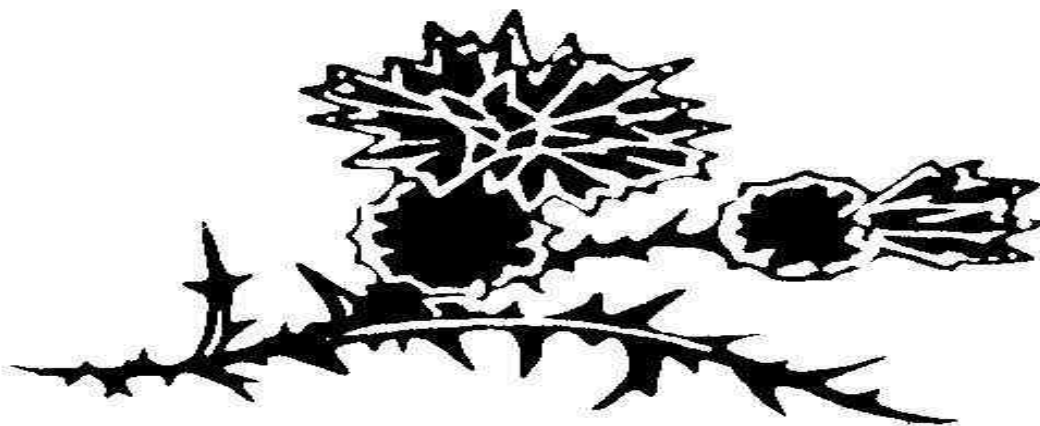
Or was he a patriot, knowing full well that even President Polk wanted California and that war was so inexorably imminent that his actions would be sanctioned?²

¹ Royce attacked Abbot so viciously that Abbot wrote a response (*Mr. Royce's Libel*, 1891) and asked Royce's employer, Harvard University, to intervene. Other philosophers supported Abbot in *The Nation*. (*Wikipedia*, Francis Ellingwood Abbot, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Ellingwood_Abbot, 2-21-12).

² Fremont started his campaign early June 1846. The U.S. Government had already declared war on Mexico May 10, 1846; however, Fremont did not know that.

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- Royce, Josiah. *California: A Study of American Character: From the Conquest in 1846 to the Second Vigilance Committee in San Francisco*. Heyday Books. Berkeley, CA. 2002.
- Biographical information about Josiah Royce is from the Forward to his book, written by Ronald A. Wells.



The Struggle for Stability: Vigilante Justice in Sutter County

by
Barbara Stengel

When, on a clear, cold morning in January 1848 James Marshall plucked some shiny particles from the waters of the millrace at Coloma, he quickly suspected that they might be gold, but he could not possibly anticipate the dramatic changes that his discovery heralded for California.¹ Although Sutter and Marshall initially tried to keep the news of the gold strike quiet until Sutter's mill was completed, they did not succeed. Some of Sutter's workers began to prospect for gold in their free time, and these Sunday prospectors often were able to collect several dollars' worth of gold in a few hours. First-hand accounts of prospectors and the gold dust they displayed began to spread word of the bonanza, but it was not until Sam Brannan loudly showed off a vial of gold dust in San Francisco in early May 1848, that the Gold Rush fully began.² Every day, more and more gold seekers made their way to the Sierra Nevada goldfields, so that by June, half of San Francisco's population had abandoned their jobs and homes.

As a consequence, labor – for construction, agriculture, and other every-day needs – became difficult if not impossible to get and to keep. Grain and produce spoiled in the fields, and prices for mining equipment and food supplies rose. By 1849, flour cost \$44.00 per barrel; potatoes went for \$16.00 a bushel; eggs, brought around Cape Horn, commanded \$10.00 a dozen, and the price of cattle briefly

reached the dizzying height of \$500.00 a head.³

News of the California gold strike traveled quickly via the shipping lanes to the west coast of the Americas, to Mexico, and across the Pacific to Hawaii, China, and Australia, so that only Pacific countries were involved in the 1848 rush. These "48ers" apparently had few problems with crime as there are few reports of robberies, claim jumping, and violence. This may have been due to the fact that in the early phase of the rush gold was still easy to find, thus there was little temptation to steal it, or that the criminal element largely arrived among the vastly greater number of 49ers, which came from the eastern United States and – literally – the rest of the world.⁴

Between 1848 and 1854, at the height of the Gold Rush, several hundred thousand people came to California which before Marshall's discovery had been a quiet and under-populated backwater. Almost 95 percent of the new arrivals were men; nearly one-fourth was foreign-born, and they were young: one-half was 20 to 29 years old, an additional quarter was 30 to 39 years old. They constituted a masculine, rough, and informal society that lacked restraint, was rife with saloons, drunkenness, gambling, prostitution, and personal violence. People felt, and acted, freed from the restraints of established society at home. Who you had been, or what you had done in your previous life

did not matter, as this popular Gold Rush ballad conveys:

What was your name in the States?
Was it Thompson or Johnson or Bates?
Did you murder your wife and flee for
your life?
O, what was your name in the States?⁵

As there was no established government in the goldfields, individual mining camps set up some sort of law on their own initiative. They elected committees that specified how mining claims were made and maintained, and they recorded titles and title transfers. Miners' tribunals dealt with offenses such as theft and claim-jumping and, lacking jails, meted out immediate punishments such as fines, banishment, or flogging, and did not shy away from lynch law and mob justice.⁶

On September 9, 1850 California was admitted to the Union as the thirty-first state, thus ending the uncertainty that had adhered to California's government elected under the constitution of 1849. This raised California to equal status with the "sisterland on the Atlantic side" and promised, as the *Daily Alta California* predicted, "a happy, proud, and glorious future for [the] young commonwealth."⁷ The last remnants of Mexican rule were eradicated when California's legislatures divided the state into 27 counties, replacing the *alcaldes* and magistrates that had formerly administered towns and districts with newly elected and appointed officials.⁸ Although the *Daily Alta California* optimistically claimed that the citizens of the new state now felt united by the sentiment of "one common brotherhood and country, one history of hope and

progression, one name and one destiny," many Californians' everyday experiences proved otherwise.⁹ The new state government and new administrative arrangements did not ease the lawlessness that had become established in mining camps and boomtowns during the rush of '49, for several reasons.

First, the rapid growth, the youthfulness, and the gender disparity of California's population made it prone to lawlessness. Second, gold production tended to decrease as the number of miners increased, making mining less profitable. A miner's daily wage was defined as the value of the gold he could extract in a day. In 1848, this was \$20.00; in 1849 it fell to \$16.00; in 1850 it dwindled to half that of 1848, and in 1851, it plummeted to \$8.00. Disillusioned men drifted into cities and towns where making a living was no less precarious for unskilled laborers.¹⁰

Third, with the organization of counties, law enforcement efforts had become "official," but because communities resisted taxing themselves for municipal purposes, there was generally only one elected law enforcement officer who was expected to get assistance from other citizens when the need arose. Moreover, few communities had jails so that judges could only met out punishment like lashings rather than confine criminals. This ineffective law enforcement added to the violence of society.¹¹

Beginning in 1850, robberies, murders, and other crimes became frequent occurrences, not only in the mining camps, but also in the larger cities and towns, and even in rural areas, and hard-pressed citizens began to take the law into their own hands.¹²

Following a string of robberies and suspicious fires, on June 9, 1851 San Francisco businessmen formed “The Committee of Vigilance of San Francisco,” with the goal to bring criminals to justice through regular courts, if possible, and by more summary means, if necessary. Other California communities quickly followed. Marysville established a vigilance committee on June 14, 1851, but there was none in Sutter County.¹³ This is not to say that there was no crime in Sutter County, rather rural crime differed from crime in the cities, in that it generally consisted of the theft of cattle and horses.

During the 1850s, several organized bands of horse and cattle thieves operated in the Sacramento Valley.¹⁴ The thieves often took livestock some distance away, making it almost impossible for a farmer to regain his animals and for sheriffs to apprehend the culprits. Consequently, neighbors and friends kept a sharp lookout for animals bearing familiar brands. In January 1851, Nicolaus Allgeier, the founder of the eponymously named town, authorized his friend John Bidwell at Rancho Chico to recover any cattle and horses bearing Allgeier’s brand “by any legal process.”¹⁵ John Sutter, who suffered devastating losses at the hands of cattle rustlers, also sought aid and relief through legal means, and handed over a thief caught in possession of his cattle to the law, applauded by the *Marysville Herald* whose editor noted that “many would not have been so forbearing,” implying that others would have exercised their own rough justice.¹⁶ Between 1850 and 1852, nearly one-fifth of the cases brought before Sutter County’s courts

concerned disputes over livestock, mostly horses and mules.¹⁷ By early 1851, livestock thefts had become so frequent and the thieves so audacious, to cause the *Marysville Herald* to predict that thus victimized owners would “rise *en masse* and take the law into their own hands” should law enforcement fail to act speedily and severely.¹⁸

Sutterites refrained from taking the law into their own hands until June 1852, when the people of Sutter County, judged by Heinrich Lienhard, one of Sutter’s Swiss-born employees, to be generally quiet and law-abiding, were outraged by the heinous murder of two respected and well-liked individuals, a certain Mr. Hufius and Mrs. Martin Bader. In the first case, George Washington Rideout, a black resident of Marysville, was forcibly taken from Sheriff Joseph Hopkins’ custody in the courtroom of the American Hotel in Nicolaus while the jury was still deliberating its verdict and unceremoniously hanged, with the members of the court and the jury looking on.¹⁹

Rideout stood accused of the murder of Hufius who, in partnership with a man named Newbald, operated the Bellevue House, a hotel and tavern about five miles south of Nicolaus.²⁰ Hufius was respected and well-liked in Nicolaus. He was alone on the premises when Rideout entered and ordered a drink. When Hufius was unable to produce the specific kind of liquor Hufius had ordered, Rideout became abusive. Asked to leave, Rideout drew his revolver and shot Hufius at point-blank range. Rideout was quickly apprehended and taken to Nicolaus where in the meantime word of the murder had spread and an angry

mob had assembled. The mob proposed to hang Rideout without any further ado, but after some argument, cooler heads prevailed and the would-be vigilantes agreed to let the law take its course. Accordingly, a jury was summoned and Rideout was indicted on charges of murder. He was imprisoned on a government vessel that had delivered supplies to Camp Far West and still lay at anchor at Nicolaus' landing. Within a very few days, Rideout was tried before Judge T.B. Reardon. In due course, the jury retired to consider its verdict. As the jury's deliberations dragged on into the late afternoon and the sun's rays lengthened, the vigilantes became impatient. Determined to see the prisoner hang before sunset, they entered the courtroom, snatched Rideout from custody and marched him to Jacob Vahle's house where they hanged him from the stout limb of an oak tree while the sun was still in the sky.²¹

While Rideout was confined and awaiting his trial, the murder of Mrs. Martin Bader several miles north of Nicolaus provoked the already agitated people even further.²² Like Hufius, Martin and Mrs. Bader were respected and well-liked in the neighborhood. Bader, a Swiss native, probably arrived in California in late 1849 or early 1850, since the 1850 census shows him employed and living at Hock Farm. According to his friend and fellow Swiss Lienhard, Bader was planning to have his wife join him as soon as he had acquired some land and a modest dwelling. Meanwhile, she lived with relatives in Pennsylvania. The Baders were still a young couple – in 1850 he was 30 – and understandably, Bader wanted his wife to join him as soon as

possible, for all that Lienhard tried to convince him not to send for his wife just yet because as a steady, respectable woman, she would not be safe. If she did come, Lienhard advised, Bader should never leave her alone, because California was a “lawless country.”²³

By June 1852, Bader had acquired land and a dwelling several miles north of Nicolaus and had been joined by his wife. While Rideout was awaiting trial in Nicolaus, Bader and his wife gave food and overnight shelter to a certain John Jackson, who arrived at the Bader house on foot, carrying a saddle. Jackson explained that his horse had become crippled and that he was walking to his home, a few miles below Nicolaus. Next morning Bader went to Hock Farm on some business and Jackson announced that he would stay at the Bader place until Bader returned. Mrs. Bader gathered together some clothes and went to a nearby slough to do her wash. About an hour later, two neighbors arrived at the Bader place and noted Jackson running from the location where Mrs. Bader was later found murdered. Jackson was sweaty and, looking confused, told the visitors that Mr. and Mrs. Bader had gone to Hock Farm.

Shortly thereafter, Bader returned home. Apparently, Mrs. Bader usually came outside to welcome him home, but not this time. He called for her but received no response. He searched the house but did not find her. He decided to make a search of the vicinity on horseback. At his corral, he was met by Jackson, who informed him that he could not let Bader go, meaning to kill him. Jackson then drew a revolver and pulled the trigger but, fortunately for Bader, the

gun misfired. Bader ran back to the house, where he discovered his pistol gone and his shotgun, which he had loaded the previous evening, discharged. Jackson had taken Bader's horse, so Bader saddled another at the corral, and both, Jackson and Bader, left the Bader place within minutes of each other, one to get away, the other to raise the alarm and get help from his neighbors.

Mrs. Bader's body was quickly found in the slough where she had gone to wash clothes. Her throat bore finger marks and her body was riddled with three bullet wounds. After a search, Bader found that \$20.00 or \$30.00 and his Colt revolver were missing from the house. These items were found on Jackson when, shortly thereafter, he was apprehended near Yuba City. Once Jackson had been caught, a jury was quickly summoned and, duly sworn in, began an investigation. However, this time the people, enraged by the monstrous murder of Mrs. Bader, and feeling sure that Jackson was the murderer, refused to wait for the processes of the law. They grabbed Jackson, threw a rope around his neck, and dragged him to a convenient tree nearby. Jackson was then asked to confess his crime, which he refused to do, declaring he had nothing to say. Without any further delay Jackson was hauled up about thirty feet. His dead body was left hanging there for several days, as an "example of the execution of justice for one of the most heartless, unprovoked and fiendish murders." Unfortunately, Martin Bader had not heeded the advice of his friend Heinrich Lienhard. Lienhard had returned to Switzerland late in 1850 and read about Mrs. Bader's tragic death in the newspaper.²⁴

The lynching of Rideout and Jackson, which took place in a rural environment, conformed to other such vigilante actions in the state during this period, in that in both cases the victims were well-known in the community, and were well-liked and respected. Their murders thus aroused deep emotion. While California's more populous cities, such as San Francisco, Sacramento, and Marysville had established regular vigilante committees, in small towns, rural areas, and mining camps, such committees usually formed spontaneously, provoked by specific events.

It was also usual that some sort of trial took place first, that there was some sort of pretense to legality. Quite often, in such cases, the mob then became impatient and interrupted the trial, or whatever proceedings were underway, seized the accused and hanged him in short order. Law enforcement authorities usually stood by; only on very rare occasions did they intervene or try to punish the vigilantes. These conditions applied in the case of Rideout and Jackson. In larger cities, especially San Francisco, vigilante justice reached its zenith in the mid-1850s and then began to ease as the state became more settled, although by no means did more settled conditions mean the end of vigilantism. In Monterey in 1864, in Tulare and adjoining counties from 1872 to 1874, and in Truckee in 1874, citizen groups arrested and tried criminals when official law enforcement seemed unable or unwilling to do the job. But Rideout and Jackson's lynching were the only recorded instances of vigilante justice in Sutter County.²⁵

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- ¹ James W. Marshall, "Marshall's Own Account of the Gold Discovery," *Century Magazine* 41, no. 4 (1891): 538.
- ² Barbara Melitta Stengel, "A California River Town: the Early History of Nicolaus, 1840-1900" (MA Thesis, California State University Chico, 2004), 75.
- ³ *Ibid.*, 76; Ralph J. Roske, *Everyman's Eden: A History of California* (New York: the Macmillan Company, 1968), 240-241.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 245; Richard B. Rice, William A. Bullough and Richard Orsi, *The Elusive Eden: A New History of California*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996), 198; Joseph A. McGowan, *History of the Sacramento Valley*, vol. 1 (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1961), 128.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ *Daily Alta California*, 20 October 1850.
- ⁸ Harry Laurens Wells and William Henry Chamberlain, *History of Sutter County, California, 1879* (Oakland, CA: Thompson and West, 1879; reprint Berkeley: Howell North Books, 1974), 31.
- ⁹ *Daily Alta California*, 20 October 1850.
- ¹⁰ Rice, Bullough, and Orsi, 199.
- ¹¹ McGowan, 131.
- ¹² Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California*, vol. VI, 1848-1859 (A.L. Bancroft and Company, Publishers, 1884-1885, and San Francisco: The History Company, Publishers, 1886-1888), 229.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, 742; McGowan, 133.
- ¹⁴ McGowan, 135.
- ¹⁵ John Bidwell Collection, Incoming Correspondence, January 16, 1851, California State Library, Sacramento, California.
- ¹⁶ Richard Dillon, *Captain John Sutter: Sacramento Valley's Sainted Sinner* (Santa Cruz, CA: Western Tanager Press, 1981), 323; *Marysville Herald*, 28 January 1851.
- ¹⁷ Sutter County, Justices Docket 1850-1852, Microfilm, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California.
- ¹⁸ *Marysville Herald*, 28 January 1851.
- ¹⁹ *Daily Alta California*, 15 June 1852; Wells and Chamberlain, 77.
- ²⁰ Neither first names nor other particulars are known about Hufius and Newbald.
- ²¹ *Daily Alta California*, 13, 15 June 1852; Wells and Chamberlain, 75, 77, 97, 79-80.
- ²² Neither first name nor other particulars are known about Mrs. Bader.
- ²³ Marguerite Eyer Wilbur, transl. and ed, *A Pioneer at Sutter's Fort: The Adventures of Heinrich Lienhard*, The Calafia Series, no. 3 (Los Angeles: The Calafia Society, 1941), 246, 254, 255; United States, Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, Seventh Census of the United States, 1850 Schedule of Population (Washington, DC: National Archives Microfilm Publications, Roll No. 30).
- ²⁴ *Daily Alta California*, 14 June 1852; Wilbur, 255; Noel C. Stevenson, "Sutter County Lynch Law," *Sutter County Historical Society News Bulletin* 6, no. 8 (January 1961): 4-6.
- ²⁵ McGowan, 132; Rosky, 291.

Trip Across the Plains in 1863

by
Eliza Belle Gray

The handwritten account of Eliza Belle Gray's trip across the continent in 1863 was donated to the Community Memorial Museum by Louis J. Peterson of Los Altos, California.

My trip across the plains in the Spring of 1863 was a very quiet trip considering the trouble the different trains had in the years 1862 and 1864. During these two years the Indians were especially warlike.

My father came across the plains with six children, 5 girls and one boy, in company with several friends and their families. I was sixteen years old and I had lost my mother two years before. We were living on a farm near Carthage, Illinois. My father sold the farm and leaving my two brothers in the war, one fighting on the North, the other on the South, he started for California. His family was originally from Kentucky and Virginia.

He was three weeks getting his outfit ready. He went to Nauvoo, a town twenty miles north of Carthage, to buy his mules. My sister and I got everything ready that we were to take. Then on Friday, Apr. 20 we started before daylight on our long trip to California. There were seven of us in a small two horse wagon so the going was slow. We arrived at Nauvoo about noon.

We stayed in Nauvoo with a friend until Monday. This friend was a painter and had painted beautifully our two covered wagons. He came with us as far as Virginia City - leaving his family at home.

On Saturday afternoon the boys in the train decided to take the girls for

a ride, and hitched up our four mules to the new wagons just freshly painted - the body dark green with yellow wheels striped with black. The young mules were just off the pasture and felt like traveling. They made quite a show. Our wagons and teams made quite a vivid impression on my mind. There were two wagons and ten mules.

On Monday we left Nauvoo for Fort Madison where we crossed the Mississippi River. Passing thru several small towns, we reached Ottumwa, then on thru Eddysville, just small villages. The next town of importance was Council Bluff, where we stayed for several days getting ready for the main trip.

In passing thru Iowa, we were joined by a friend Mr. Clabe Winston - his son having started with us from Nauvoo. This son afterwards became a Judge in Honolulu.

After leaving Council Bluff, we reached the Missouri River, at noon on Monday, and crossed it then. The next town was Omaha, a small town with only a few houses. A friend left us here, as he had started for Omaha intending to start a grocery store.

From there we traveled for three days, then camped a day to make up our train as others joined in. There were now 52 wagons, each one numbered. Our number was 123. Each evening on camping we would form a circle for protection from the Indians.

In the middle of the circle was placed wagon for an office. It belonged to three New York boys and was used for calling out the guard which was done at half past seven and midnight. We also had our captain. He arranged for the camping places and attended to all details attached to the camp and started the train on the next day's trip.

We traveled west for 200 miles to Ft. Kearney, along the south side of the Platte River. Here there were 700 Sioux Indians, mostly women and children. The young men were all gone to war on a neighboring tribe. The old men were left in the camp.

We crossed the river to the north side, traveling northwest and went across country, passing near the landmark Chimney Rock. This mountain is unique and one always remembers it. From there, we went on to Ft. Laramie. Leaving here we went across the Eastern part of the Rocky Mts. - the hottest and dreariest part of our trip. We never stopped from early morning until noon.

At noon the news was given out that an extra passenger had arrived - a baby. So we laid up for a couple of hours. Then the man said his wife could go on, so we traveled until almost dark, when we reached a soldier's station.

The next morning we traveled west to Green River, crossing that stream and going over the mountains to Salt Lake Valley through vast expanses of sage brush, across miles and miles of desolate alkali plains - through the parched region known as the "Sink of the Carson River."

After crossing the sink we came to another Soldier's Station. During the day one of the families lost their only child, a year old. They wanted to

reach the Station so as to bury the child as the poor mother was afraid the wolves would dig up the remains. They wondered what they could use as a box. My father thought of an extra flooring or decking as he called it, that he had had built in the wagons to provide a place for us girls to sit on while traveling. This decking was used for a casket for the little child. That made the trip sad.

The Sink of the Carson is very dangerous for horses and mules. In places the ground would be white with alkali. In one place I remember seeing three fine large horses lying dead from drinking alkali water. On reaching this sink my father gave each of his mules two slices of fat bacon, 6 x 3 inches, which prevented the alkali from affecting them. He also had the water boiled and we drank tea.

We came to a station near Ft. Bridger about six in the evening. As we were forming in a circle for the night, several soldiers came in with a young man who had been shot by the Indians while guarding a station about ten miles ahead of us. The Indians drove off all the horses that were at the station. The soldier was buried just at sun-rise. Just as the sun rose up over the mountain the soldiers fired their guns.

We started the next morning for the station. On our way, we passed the young soldier's horse which had been shot, also a calf and a dog. They were all laying along by the road. There was considerable excitement there.

The next station was Ft. Bridger which is 134 miles north-east of Salt Lake City. It was Fourth of July and the women got together and celebrated it with a big dinner.

We were fortunate enough to have a fine hunter with us. He furnished the antelope meat for the dinner. After it was over everyone visited until sundown. When we started again, we had a long desert to cross and it was much better to do it at night. The next places were small towns on the outskirts of the long looked for Salt Lake City and weren't we glad to arrive there.

We remained a week and enjoyed our visit very much. We became acquainted with many of the women. It was a beautiful town with large trees growing on both sides of the street. The streets were covered with a fine gravel. Along the curb near the trees, there was a small stream of water an inch deep running the full length of each street. It seemed wonderful to us after crossing the barren deserts and hills. Then the Mormon Temple was a beautiful place. It had just been finished, and they had a choir of 100 singers. They dedicated it while we were there.

The houses in the city were built mostly of adobe. At a distance you would think they were built of stone, they were so nicely finished.

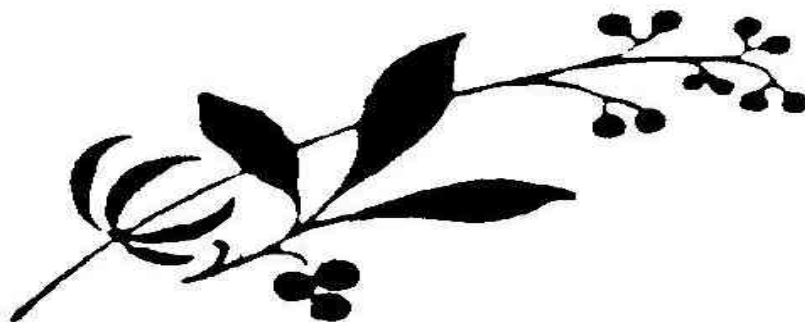
On Monday morning, a young woman, daughter of a New York

merchant, was married to a young man she had met in the train. The wagons formed in line and drove to the office of the Justice of the Peace where the ceremony was performed. After that the train started and went down a block and crossed the River Jordan over a fine bridge.

We traveled on past where the Donner Party perished, past the beautiful Truckee River, gradually winding our way down the Sierra Nevada Mts. Coming into the foothills and then reaching the level country. My how pretty everything seemed - so quiet and still.

We went to Yuba City where a friend lived on a ranch. My father took the chills and fever and decided to go on farther toward the bay. I married in Sutter County and remained there.

The only time we felt we might have trouble with the Indians was as we entered the Humboldt Pass. This is a narrow pass thru the mountains. Just as we got well in the pass we saw here and there Indians approaching on both sides of us. The men were beginning to feel trouble was ahead and word was going from wagon to wagon when the U. S. stagecoach entered into the pass. The Indians quietly turned and disappeared.



Calling all Honorary Members!

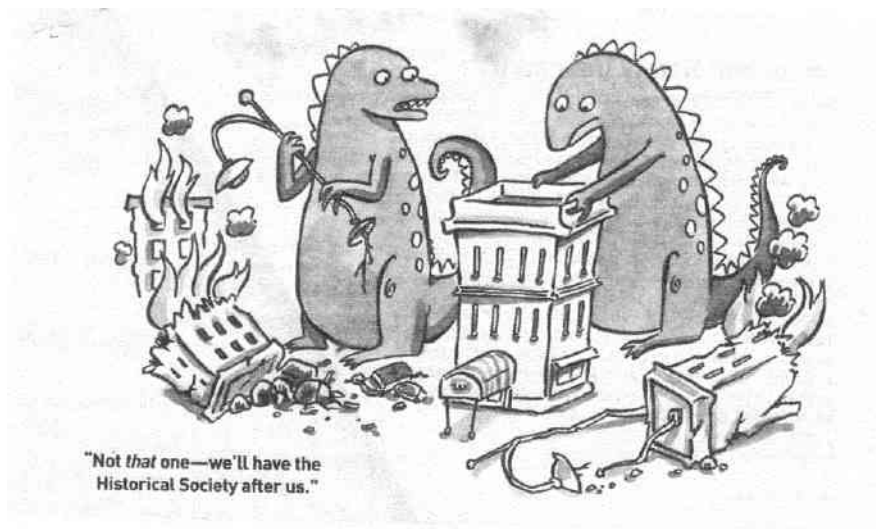
We're revitalizing an old Historical Society tradition. Anyone born in Sutter County at least 90 years ago is eligible to become an Honorary Member of the Sutter County Historical Society. You can nominate someone in your family, a friend, or even yourself! With the nominee's permission, we'll showcase our honorary members in the New Bulletin.

Please provide the person's full name, place and date of birth, parentage and any other information of interest, and if you have photographs, even better! You can mail the information to:

Sutter County Historical Society
P. O. Box 1004
Yuba City, CA 95992-1004

Or call one of the Bulletin editors with the information:

Phyllis Smith 530-671-3261
Sharyl Simmons 530-822-7141
Vicki Rorke 916-852-8144



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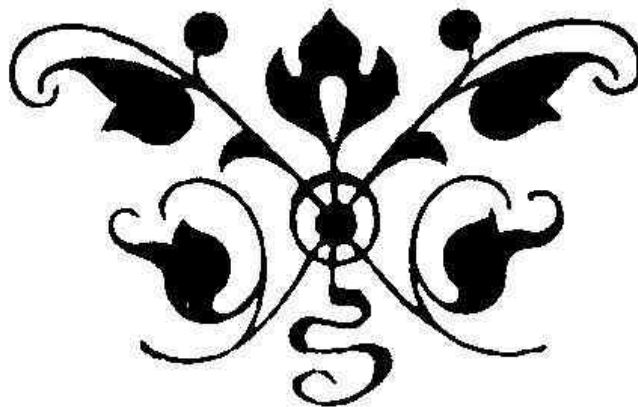
AAUW Garden Tour 20th Anniversary
May 5, 2012
Art in the Gardens

The Marysville-Yuba City branch of the American Association of University Women's Garden Tour is May 5, 2012. Tickets are \$15 per person and are available April 1 at the following locations in Yuba City and Marysville: The Flower Petal'er, The Candy Box, Sperbeck's Nursery, Union Lumber, Yuba City Florist, Botanica Landscapers, and Yuba Sutter Regional Arts Council, or from any AAUW member.

Tour maps are not available until the day of the event and can be picked up between 9:30 and 1:00 at the island at Plumas and C Streets at the Town Center in Yuba City just west of the fountain. Tickets can be purchased on the day of the tour at the Town Center location and after 1:30 at Sperbeck's Nursery. In case of rain, bring an umbrella.

Each of the beautiful gardens will feature a local artist's work. Several artists will show their work at a reception to be held at the Yuba Sutter Regional Arts Council gallery, 624 E Street in Marysville, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Everyone who goes on the home tour is invited to the reception which will be hosted by the Harkey House Bed and Breakfast Inn, The Brick Coffee House Café, and Cakes By Request. To attend the reception, tickets for the Garden Tour are required.

The Annual Garden Tour proceeds benefit the local educational programs and projects of Marysville-Yuba City Branch of American Association of University Women. Projects include Math-Science Conference for 8th Grade Girls, Tech Trek Science Camp, and other scholarships. For more information contact Garden Tour Chairperson, Barbara Kenney, at 671-5995.



Coming Events

April

- 1 Punjabi-American exhibit opens at the Museum
- 12 Children's Spring Vacation Program at the Museum
- 14 **Historical Society Membership meeting**
2:00 p.m.
Ettl Hall (at the Museum)
Program: Ann Foley Scheuring, Author
Valley Empires: Hugh Allen and Henry Miller in the Shaping of California
Dessert follows the program
No charge
- 28 **Picnic in the Buttes**
10:00 a.m. – meet at the Museum to carpool
Location: Dean Ranch
Program: Margit Sands on local wildflowers and
the history of the Dean Ranch
Potluck, donation \$10 per person or \$20 per family

May

- 14 Baseball exhibit opens at the Museum
- 5 AAUW Art in the Gardens Tour
- 18 Bounteous Buttes, art, hors d'oeuvres & wine tasting in Ettl Hall

June

- 23 **Potluck Picnic in the Park, 11:30 a.m.**
Howard Harter Park (behind the Museum)

Puzzle Page

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Saturday, April 14 at 2:00 p.m.

at Ettl Hall (behind the Museum)

1333 Butte House Road, Yuba City

Program: Ann Scheuring, author

Valley Empires:

Hugh Glenn and Henry Miller in the Shaping of California

Dessert follows the program

No charge – all are welcome!

PICNIC IN THE BUTTES

Saturday, April 28 10:00 a.m.

See details on page 4