

BULLETIN

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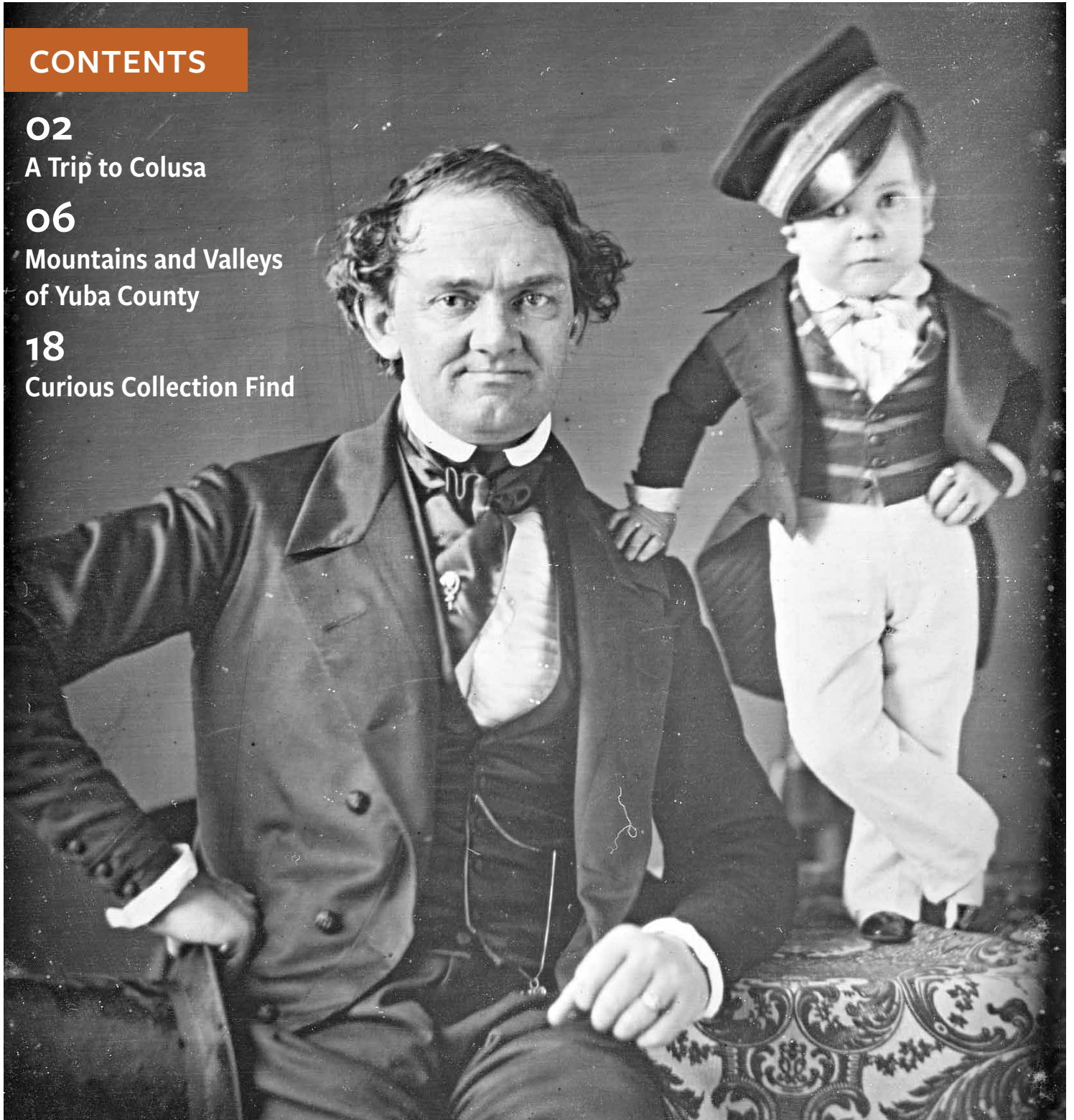
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Curious Collection Find



ON THE COVER:

P. T. BARNUM & TOM THUMB (CHARLES STRATTON)

DAGUERREOTYPE C. 1850 - SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE, NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

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Visit the Museum

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Yuba City, California 95993

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www.suttercountymuseum.org



Sutter County Museum



suttercountymuseum

Our Mission

The Sutter County Museum shares local stories to strengthen community bonds, to inspire celebration of our diverse cultural heritage, and to demonstrate how understanding the past prepares us for the future.

About the Bulletin

The **Bulletin** is published quarterly by the Community Memorial Museum Association. Editors are Sharyl Simmons and Phyllis Smith. Payment of annual membership dues provides you with a subscription to the **Bulletin**.

Museum Association

The Association is a 501(c)(3) organization that fundraises and supports the operation of the Museum.

Applications to join are always accepted (available on the Museum's website). If you are interested in history and want to do something meaningful for our community, please consider applying! New applicants to the Association are approved by a vote of the full Association. Members serve for 4 year terms.

Current Association Members:

Phyllis Smith, President

Margit Sands, Vice President

Debbie Reid, Secretary

Amber Milner, Treasurer

Carol Bordeaux

Scott Hankins

Manny Cardoza

Wade Kirchner

Babs Cotter

Tony Kurlan

Eric Gruenthal

Sukh Sidhu

Barbara Hankins

Chuck Smith

From the Director

We have some big news.

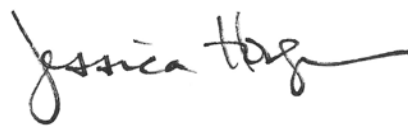
First, the Sutter County Board of Supervisors has approved a new fundraising position that will be shared 50/50 between the museum and the library. This is the first time since the 1980s that the professional staff of the museum has been expanded, and it is going to dramatically change how we are able to serve our community. Not only will we have someone dedicated to fundraising 20 hours per week, this person will take on work currently handled by the Director/Curator and the Assistant Curator, freeing them up to take care of other things. This is a huge step forward for us, and I hope you will welcome whomever we hire and make them feel at home here.

Second, it is with mixed emotions that I share with you all that I am leaving the museum. My last day physically here was July 30th. I am continuing to handle many aspects of the job remotely until my successor is hired, and I'm pleased to say that the County has involved me in every step of the hiring process. I am confident we will find the right person to take on the work we have begun.

It has truly been a pleasure being the Director/Curator of the Sutter County Museum for the last 6 years. I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished, and it would not have happened without the support of our members. Thank you for your support and your belief in us throughout the changes of the last six years. Thank you for welcoming me into your community, and for trusting me to take the museum into a new phase of service to our community. And thank you for your ongoing support during the pandemic.

Many of you have been in to see us since we reopened. If you haven't been in yet, we have a couple of great temporary exhibits, and more on the horizon. We're still operating on a reduced schedule due to a lack of volunteers. Current hours are Tuesday-Friday 1pm-5pm, Saturday and Sunday 12pm-4pm. If you've ever considered volunteering at the museum, now is a great time to start. Just give us a call and talk with Sharyl about it.

I will miss all of you, and I will miss the museum, but I'll be keeping an eye on things from afar. Thanks again for all that you do to make our museum great.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica Hagg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Museum Director

A Trip to Colusa

Marysville Daily Appeal
Volume XXV, Number 31
February 7, 1872

Editor's Note: We tend to think of stagecoaches as we see them in movies: passengers enclosed in a cabin riding on springs. Early stages took all forms and not all of them were enclosed. This image is of a stage with canvas sides which could be rolled up if the weather was tolerable. With the sides up, passengers were liable to be hit with anything the galloping horses' hooves tossed at them. It was hot and dusty in the summer and muddy and cold in the winter. To be profitable, stages kept to a schedule and getting to a destination on time took precedence over the passengers' comfort.

A day or two since, business called us to Colusa, and we got aboard of Kimball & Green's stage early in the morning, so early in fact that we were not fairly awake when the stage rolled out of town. Kimball handled the ribbons over four lively animals, who took the light coach over the muddy road at a merry rate. They were not very particular as to how much mud they threw behind them, and as we sat in front¹ we managed to receive a very fair share of it.

After passing Yuba City the road was quite heavy, owing to the recent rain. The morning was warm and pleasant and the clear bracing country air seemed to affect the horses and passengers alike, both men and beasts being in fine spirits.

Staging is exhilarating, especially if the road is rough or muddy. It warms up one's idea to go down in a chuck hole as though he was trying to break through the bottom of the road. If it does not brighten his ideas it aids digestion, and that is the next thing to it. Then when he pitches up and jams his head through the roof of the coach, the sudden view of the surrounding scenery has the effect of mollifying his temper. If anything more is required to put him in the best of

spirits, let one of the horses throw about a couple of pounds of soft mud over his shirt, in front and into his face. After that nothing will disturb his equanimity, and he will finish the trip in calm serenity of mind unless the stage upsets, and then he will be rendered perfectly happy, unless he is a natural misanthrope. If he is inclined that way or has been crossed in love a few times, he may not laugh very heartily with his mouth full of mud, or smile very sweetly when both eyes are full of gravel, not at first probably, but after enjoying these blessings for ten or fifteen hours, his temper cannot fail to improve.

The fields of grain bordering the road from Yuba City to the Butte House are looking well. The volunteer has a fine growth, and some of the summer-fallow is putting in an appearance. Much of the land is yet to be planted, and a good sized area remains to be plowed. The Buttes have put on their green garments, and already there is very fair picking for stock on the dryer slopes. A fine view of these singular mountains was obtained when distant about six miles from them. A heavy body of white mist, like clouds, came floating along, enveloping them as with a fleecy mantle, through which the bald

¹ Note that the reporter is sitting next to the driver and therefore exposed to the elements.



STAGE

PHOTO FROM SCM COLLECTION

peak of the north Butte rose dark and forbidding, the only pleasant features perceptible about it being the sunbeams which were playing on and lighting up the craggy pile, and along narrow streams of mist which hung on one side of the highest peak.

A sentimental young lady passenger remarked that “the cloud-enfolded mountain looked like a bride enveloped in the voluminous fold of her white robes, with a bridal veil floating from her brow.” She looked sweetly on us with one glass eye and asked our opinion of the scene and the aptitude of the simile. We informed that the fog hid the mountain, so we had not seen much, but what we could see of it looked more to us like a big Dutchman sitting in a pile of froth, engaged in smoking his Meerschaum.

Arrived at the Butte House.² We changed outfits – getting aboard the coach drove by Miller, while Kimball took Miller’s load and started on his return. We asked Kimball if Miller was a good driver. He said he was. Then we asked Buchanan of the Butte house the same question with like results. Satisfied of our safety, we entered the stage, sat down alongside of Miller, and the team started. They wanted to go. They were in a hurry to get to Colusa.

The road soon became hard as we neared the hills, with now and then a puddle of water standing in it. The leaders did not like to wet their feet and generally tried to jump those mud puddles. They generally managed to land in the middle of them, throwing the muddy water back by the gallon. Occasionally Miller would say, “whoa Maggie,” but she did not seem to hear him.

² The Butte House was a hotel and stage stop in present day Sutter. When Sutter was known as South Butte it was the Post Office as well. The only reminder of that important location is a watering trough installed by local businesses in the 1910s.



WATERING TROUGH AT SITE OF THE BUTTE HOUSE

PHOTO FROM SCM COLLECTION

“Maggie” was the off leader and a most remarkable animal. There is an evident fault in the construction of that mare. Her neck and shoulders must be too heavy for the remainder of her body. She found it extremely difficult to keep her hind feet on the ground. In fact, she could not keep them down at all. We concluded that the center of gravity was placed too far forward, and consequently she was not to blame because the after part of her body would fly up. She was kind and gentle, the driver said, and we believed him, for she laid both ears back alongside of her neck, ready to hear every word the driver said, and if she had not a kind disposition she would never have done so. Even when she slipped nearly over forwards, those ears were still pointing back at us in a sort of apologetical way, as though she was sorry for her infirmity.

Thus she went, up and down, without cessation for the first three or four miles. Her mode of traveling was eminently adapted to the hilly country we were passing, when her foot went a little higher than common, sending about two pounds of blue-black soil of the Buttes plump into our face. Turning, we tried to make the driver understand that if he drove slower we could see more of the country. “I will be in Colusa by noon, don’ you fear for that. Get Maggie,” was his reply, and she spun a little higher up and a little further ahead. She was perspiring terribly, and we intimated that she would tire out before she got to her journey’s end. He would not take the hint, and not wishing to appear alarmed, we attempted to whistle “Shoo Fly” in an unconcerned manner. Before the first note escaped our lips, a ball of mud filled our mouth, affording us ample food for reflection.

Over the low divide, down the crooked ravine-like road, we rattled, until suddenly Maggie’s heel’s (sic) came in contact with the whiffletree freeing herself and mate, “Charley,” from the stage. The lines were drawn through the driver’s hands and the loose team dashed away down the road. “Throw her Charley,” cried the driver as he stopped the wheelers. “Charley” seemed to understand the command, for he ran ahead of her, and in a moment her legs, the traces and the whiffletrees were tangled together, and she ended over into a gully, with “Charley” stretched alongside of her. Driving the wheelers down opposite them we left them with a fellow passenger and assisted Miller to extricate the animals from the unpleasant position.

This was speedily accomplished, and we were once again speeding along towards Colusa. But the center of gravity seemed to have been moved a little farther back. In Maggie’s case it seemed much easier for her to keep her hind feet on the ground. We met with no further incident worthy of note until we arrived in Colusa promptly on time, with about an acre of the soil of Sutter county sticking to our person. We will reserve our impressions of Colusa until another opportunity, when time and space permitting we may tell what we saw and did while there.

If you haven’t signed up for our **eNewsletter** yet, you should!

It’s the best way to keep informed on how COVID-19 is impacting the Museum, particularly our open hours and public programs.

Just visit our website at

www.suttercountymuseum.org and scroll to the bottom.

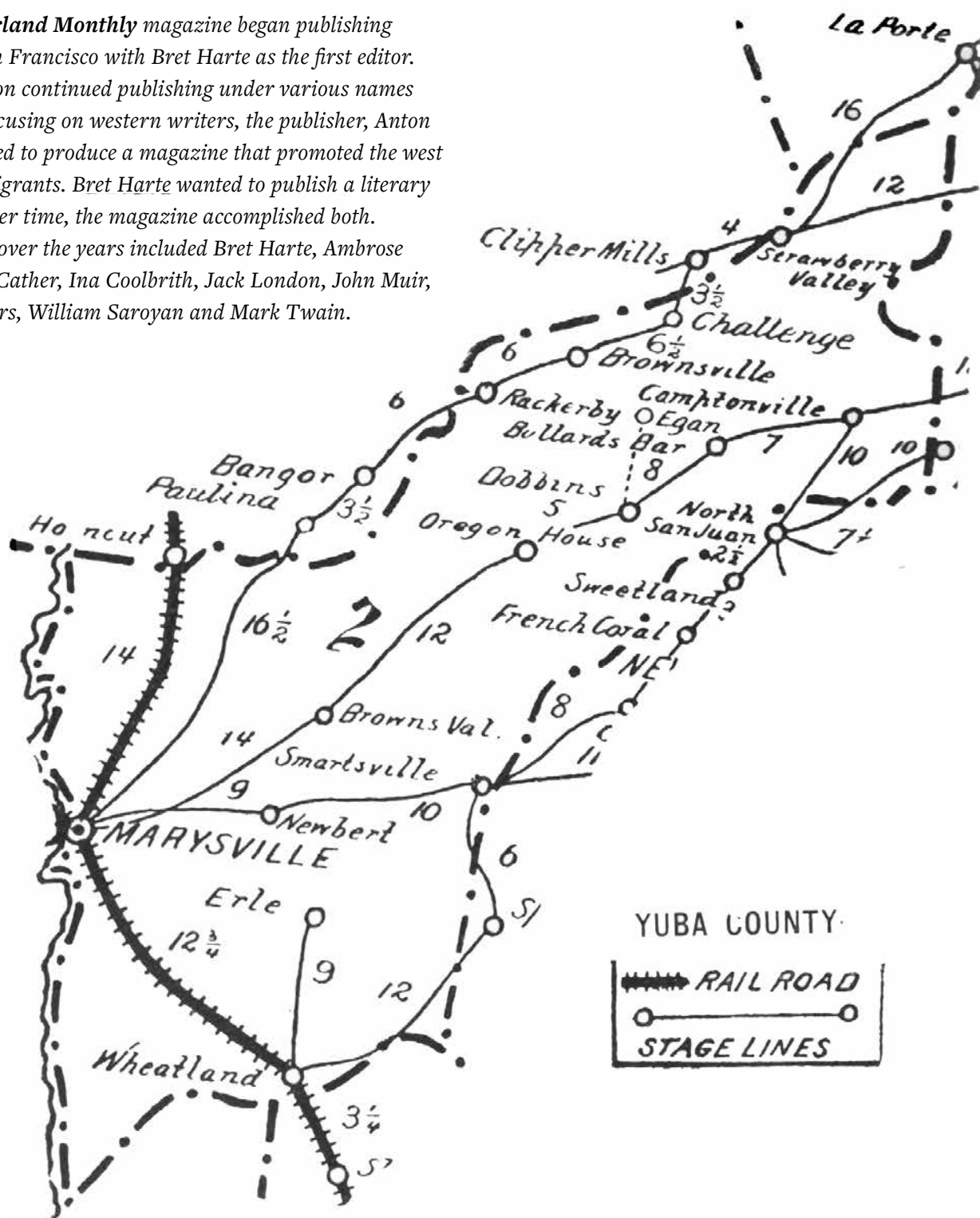
You’ll see the box to sign up.

Mountains and Valleys of Yuba County

Caroline M. Olney

Published in *Overland Monthly*, December 1902

Ed: **The Overland Monthly** magazine began publishing in 1868 in San Francisco with Bret Harte as the first editor. The publication continued publishing under various names until 1935. Focusing on western writers, the publisher, Anton Roman, wanted to produce a magazine that promoted the west to entice immigrants. Bret Harte wanted to publish a literary magazine. Over time, the magazine accomplished both. Contributors over the years included Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, Willa Cather, Ina Coolbrith, Jack London, John Muir, Stephen Powers, William Saroyan and Mark Twain.



In 1902 Caroline M. Olney wrote a series of articles promoting the Sacramento Valley. Her articles would have delighted Anton Roman. Focusing on Butte, Yolo and Yuba counties, she wrote prose that could have come out of a Chamber of Commerce publication.

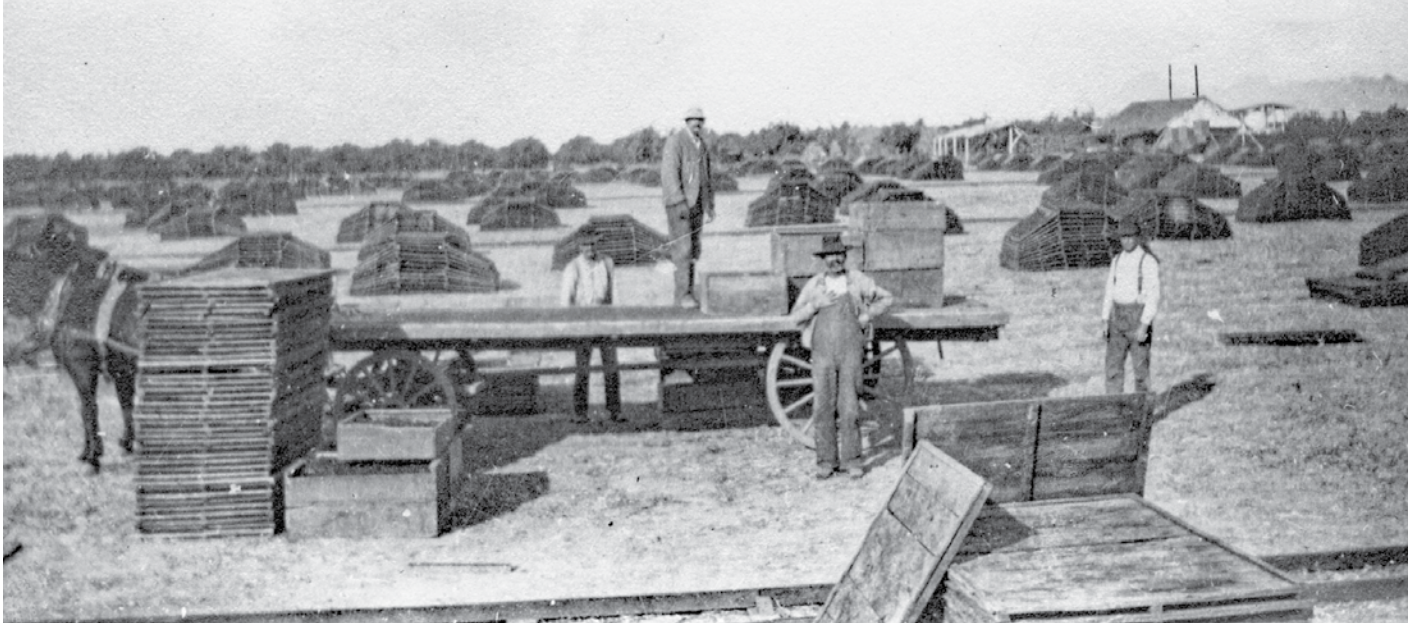
To make known the vast possibilities of a land rich, fertile, productive, beautiful, where some kind of fruit ripens every month of the year, roses blossom from Christmas to Christmas, where neither snow nor ice abound, where out-of-door life embraces twelve months of the year, and where man is happy because he lives in comfort surrounded by plenty. Such is the 393,800 acres or 965 square miles of a fair and beautiful country entitled Yuba County, centrally located in the great Sacramento Valley, surrounded by the counties of Sutter, Butte, Nevada, Placer and Plumas. Half mountainous, half valley, lying between the Honcut Creek on the north, Bear River on the south, the Feather on the west, with the Yuba River running its full length through the center.

Owing to the topography of the country its climate is not a matter of latitude and longitude; its average mean temperature is 50.1; mean summer, 78.3; mean annual, 64.2; while the rainfall is from 18 to 20 inches.

With all the natural advantages presented for irrigation these fertile lowlands produce, with little or none whatever, grapes, figs, pears, peaches, apples, prunes, apricots, cherries, walnuts, almonds and pecan nuts,

besides berries of all kinds, all of which are ripe for the early markets and in demand, owing to excellence of quality. Citrus fruits from this section are ready for the market six weeks earlier than are the fruits of Southern California. A large demand both at home and abroad is supplied for cereals of fine quality, as well as for hops, hay and garden truck. Sheep, cattle, hogs, horses and mules are raised and shipped to different markets. Located here is the largest power house of the group owned by the Bay Counties Power Company which transmits power the longest distance yet attained. And the mines which add their share to the world's wealth, contribute annually about \$100,000 in gold and silver.

While the valley is old that it boasts of the most ancient town in California, the mountainous section is seemingly so new and undeveloped that some of its timber lands are still held by the United States Government; but as one stands on some high precipice overlooking the scarred mountain sides or down some deep canyon adorned by an old quartz mill, or into the great caverns from which the miners have taken millions upon millions of dollars in precious metal before the hand of the law was raised against hydraulic mining methods, or at the "Mighty King of the Forest" and his lesser brothers, the fir and the spruce as they lift their stately heads heavenward, one remembers that here, too, are the sources of the beautiful snow-fed strains that sing as they flow.



DRYING GRAPES

PHOTO FROM SCM COLLECTION

THE CITY OF MARYSVILLE



D STREET

The county seat of Yuba County, with a population which exceeds 5,000, is situated at the junction of the Yuba and Feather Rivers on the line of the California and Oregon on the east, the San Francisco and Oroville on the west [Southern Pacific System], 52 miles from Sacramento, the State capital, and 142 miles from San Francisco, the metropolis of the West.

The city is well equipped with transportation facilities, being a terminal point, thus enjoying the same freight rates on the Eastern shipments arriving at San Francisco, Sacramento and Los Angeles, and is an important shipping point and trading center for a vast territory including the rich farming and mining section by which it is surrounded, and is

considered one of the best business towns on the Coast.

Its streets are well paved with bitumen and macadam, its sidewalks are of cement, while the streets on either side are shaded by beautiful ornamental trees. The



MARYSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



YUBA COUNTY COURTHOUSE & HALL OF RECORDS



ELLIS LAKE

comfortable homes in their settings of magnificent orange and lemon trees, pretty lawns and gardens laden with a profusion of flowers of myriad variety, add much to the beauty of the city. Its banks (three in number) have combined deposits of \$2,000,000, their aggregate capital surplus and dividends being \$648,000. Its business houses and public buildings, its seven churches and splendid public school system extending to every district in the county, within easy reach of pupils, affords the best facilities for common school education, excellent teachers are employed at good salaries, and besides the High and Grammar schools in the city, additional educational advantages are presented by the College of Notre Dame and a business college. With the Marysville High School accredited to the State University and the two daily papers – all would do credit to a city of much larger growth, credit to a city of much larger size.

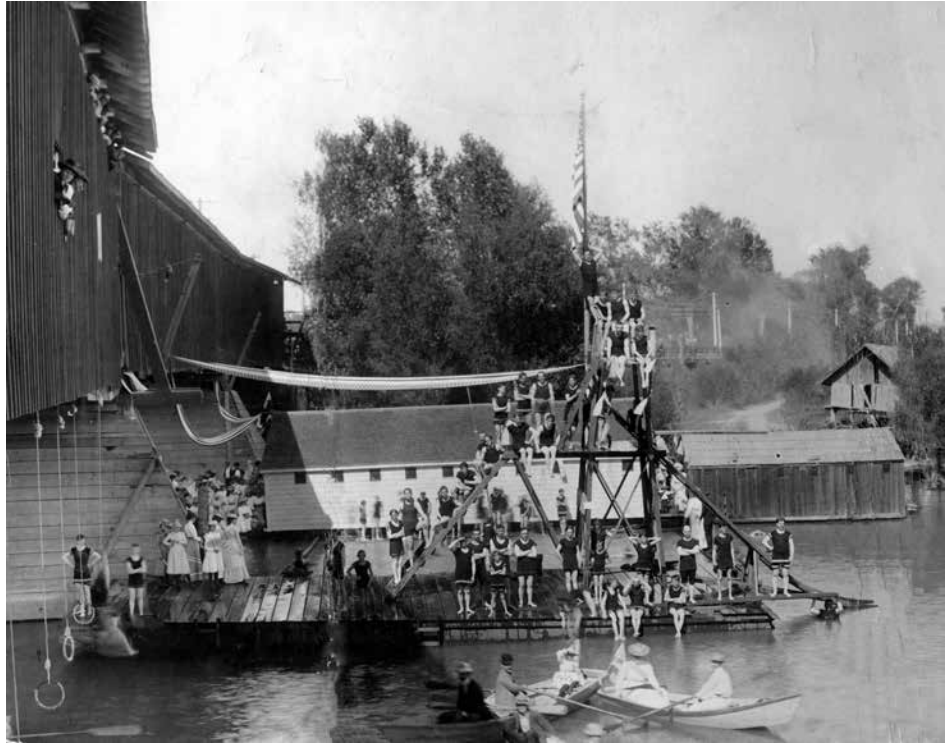
Marysville is incorporated, and has at the head of its government an energetic and progressive young Mayor, who is supported by able officials. The city is soon to be bonded in the sum of \$40,000, with which the sewer system is to be amplified and its water park, known as Ellis Lake, improved and beautified. Marysville will, as far as known, be the first city in Northern California to make the most of its opportunities by adding parks, drives and pleasure resorts

to its premises.

The city is well lighted by electricity, being on the main line of the Bay Counties Power Company, of which the Marysville Gas & Electric Company is the distributing agent.

In its history Marysville is associated with some of the most striking incidents of early California life, and some of the nation's most prominent men at one time and another resided here, among them Hon. Stephen J. Field, Hon. George C. Gorham, Noah Brooks, and John Q. Packard, the mining millionaire of Utah who will in the near future erect an everlasting monument to himself in the form of a new library building, costing \$75,000, to be the home of the Public Library, already established for many years.

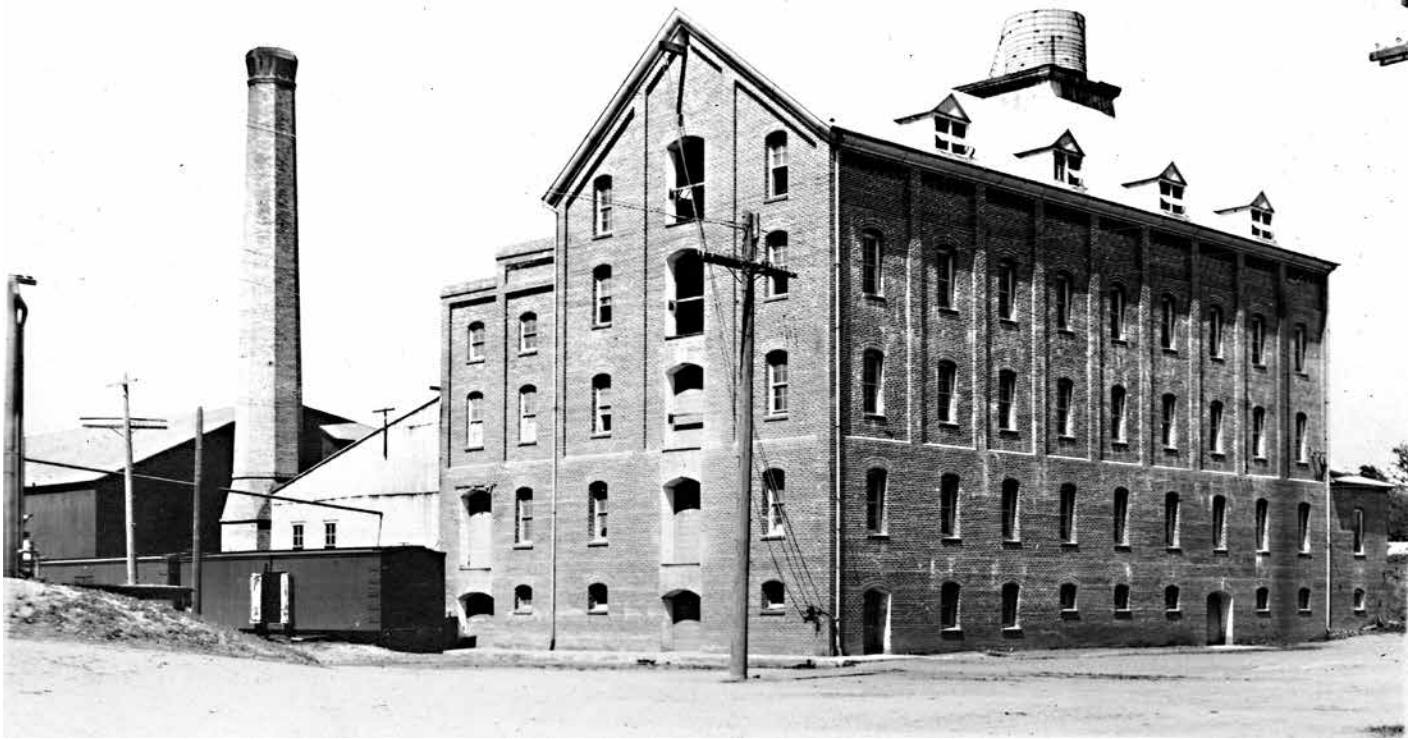
Marysville is also well known through its manufacturing interests. The reputation of the product of its woolen mills, built in 1867, is known from ocean to ocean, and the demand for the superior quality of blankets, underwear, dress goods, flannel, lap robes, steamer shawls and other articles of woolen manufacture far exceeds the supply. In 1899 the old plant was destroyed by fire, but in 1901 the mill was rebuilt on an enlarged basis and is equipped with forty looms which have a rated capacity of 480,000 yards of cloth a year. The place so long filled by the old Marysville Woolen Mills bids fair to be held indefinitely, as the policy of the present lessee is to follow strictly the methods which



FEATHER RIVER RESORT



PACKARD LIBRARY



BUCKEYE MILL

for thirty years made the business of his predecessors so successful. Although the trade has only been solicited a few months, orders enough have been received to justify a material enlargement of the plant, which insures a first class home market for the wool produced in Yuba County.

Another industry of great importance and interest is that of the Buckeye Flour Mills, one of several plants of Sperry Flour Company whose reputation for a most excellent product is favorably known from the shores of the Pacific to the Orient. A few months since the old Buckeye Flour Mills, with their warehouses, were destroyed by fire, and there now stands on the old site a five story brick building fully equipped with the best grade of modern machinery. The mills have a capacity of 600 barrels per day, and at present are being operated night and day. The motive power is electricity. The grains which supplies this mill is practically all grown in this section and the output of the flour and mill products supplies the trade of Northern California, Southern Oregon, State of Nevada, and is also largely exported, Hong Kong being the principal market in the far East.

The Marysville Canning and Packing Company gives, at fair wages, employment to a thousand women and girls during the fruit season of six months, besides affording an unlimited market for fruits and vegetables grown in the section. This concern disburses during the summer as much as six thousand dollars per week to its employees, all of which enters the arteries of commerce in the city of Marysville and does much to stimulate trade.

THE CITY OF WHEATLAND

Twelve miles south of Marysville, by grain fields and stock farms, beautified by stately oaks, one reaches the enterprising and prosperous town of Wheatland, situated directly on the line of the California and Oregon [Southern Pacific System], and thirty miles from Sacramento, the state capital. Wheatland is well located on a ridge a little higher than the surrounding country, and has 1,000 inhabitants – with its pretty homes and gardens, its board of efficient city trustees, its well-kept streets, cement-paved sidewalks, its stores that meet all the needs of man, its Merchants & Farmers' Bank doing a good business both locally and at a distance, its modern hotel, which caters to the needs

and comforts of the public, its finely built warehouses, its large shipments of hops, hay, grain, wool and livestock, its five churches, weekly paper, and a unanimous vote for bonds to the amount of \$15,000 with which to build a High School. Wheatland certainly has much of which to be proud.

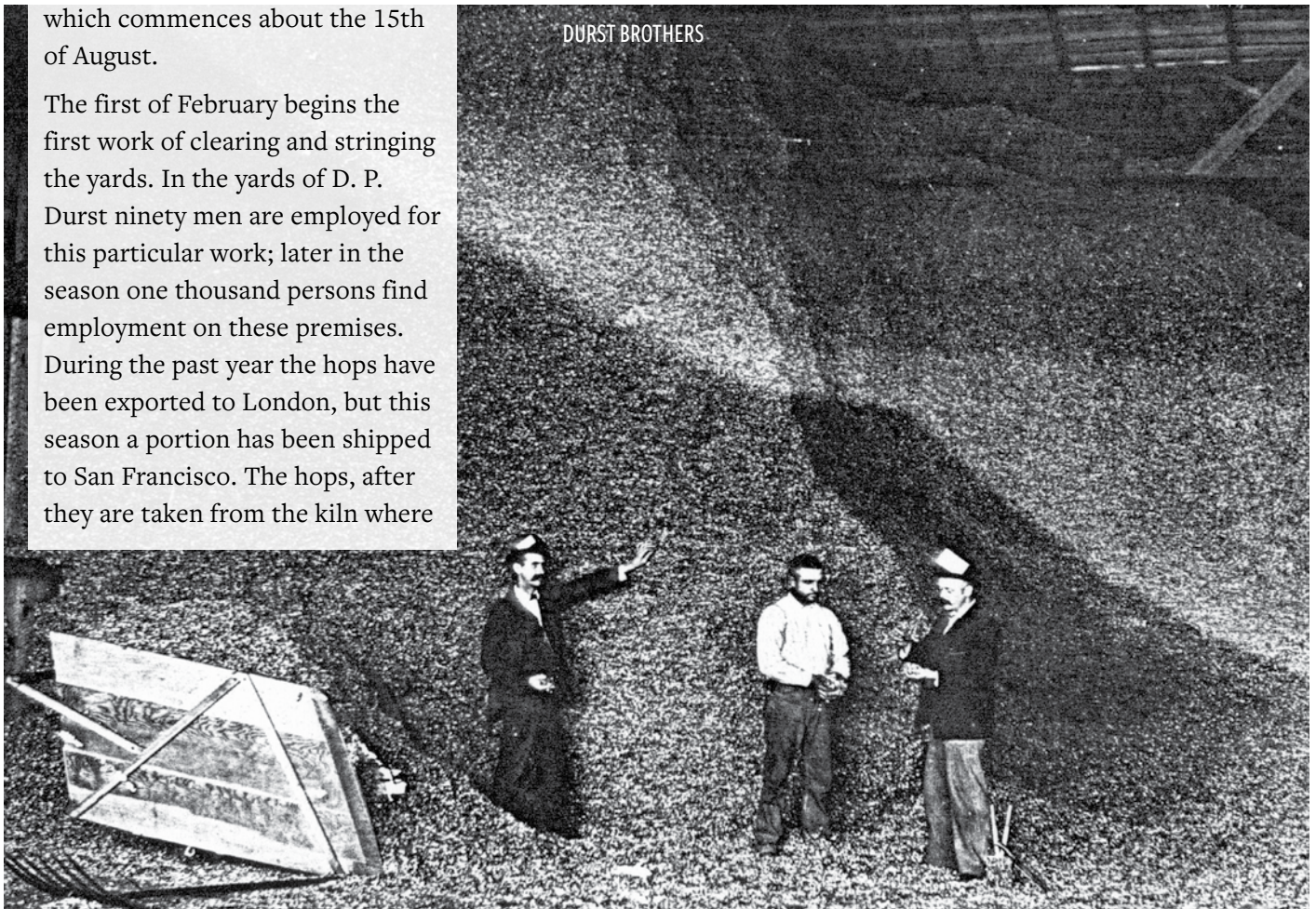
To the south, and tributary to Wheatland, along the banks of the Bear River, stretching from the low hills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains on the east to Dry Creek on the west, are the wonderfully fertile lands of the Bear River. Here are located the largest hop yards in the world. These yards afford employment to many men, women and children during the hop picking season, which commences about the 15th of August.

The first of February begins the first work of clearing and stringing the yards. In the yards of D. P. Durst ninety men are employed for this particular work; later in the season one thousand persons find employment on these premises. During the past year the hops have been exported to London, but this season a portion has been shipped to San Francisco. The hops, after they are taken from the kiln where



WHEATLAND NEWSPAPER OFFICE

DURST BROTHERS



they are dried, are made into large bales, which weigh about 185 pounds, and are then ready for the market. With the high prices which prevail this year, the hop men seem not only cheerful but perfectly happy.

These lands are especially adapted to the needs of the man with a medium capital, who wishes to build a home and make for himself and family a comfortable living on a small farm. Land in this section can be purchased for \$12 per acre for the red land, which is suited to the culture of olives and citrus fruits. The river land is held at about \$14 per acre, and is the best in the world for grapes, bartlett pears and alfalfa. An orchard will bear the third year after setting out. Alfalfa will yield on an average seven tons to the acre, and will produce about five crops, affording three months pasture. Alfalfa hay brings in the field \$7 per ton. This seems like a good location for a creamery colony as there is already built and well equipped in Wheatland a creamery, which at the present is closed, owing to the lack of milk. The cheese factory of W. O. Olmstead produces from 65 to 85 pounds of cheese a day, which finds a ready market in San Francisco at 12½ cents a pound. This factory clears to the owner from fifty cows an average of \$200 per month.

Some of the ranches in this section are stocked with sheep, which are kept for stock purposes. The lambs are shipped to San Francisco, where they bring \$2.50 per had. Wool at all times brings fair prices.

Five miles from Wheatland, in the Bear River, are located four gold dredges, two of which are in active

operation. This dredging company has secured sufficient land to keep these dredges at work for fifty years.

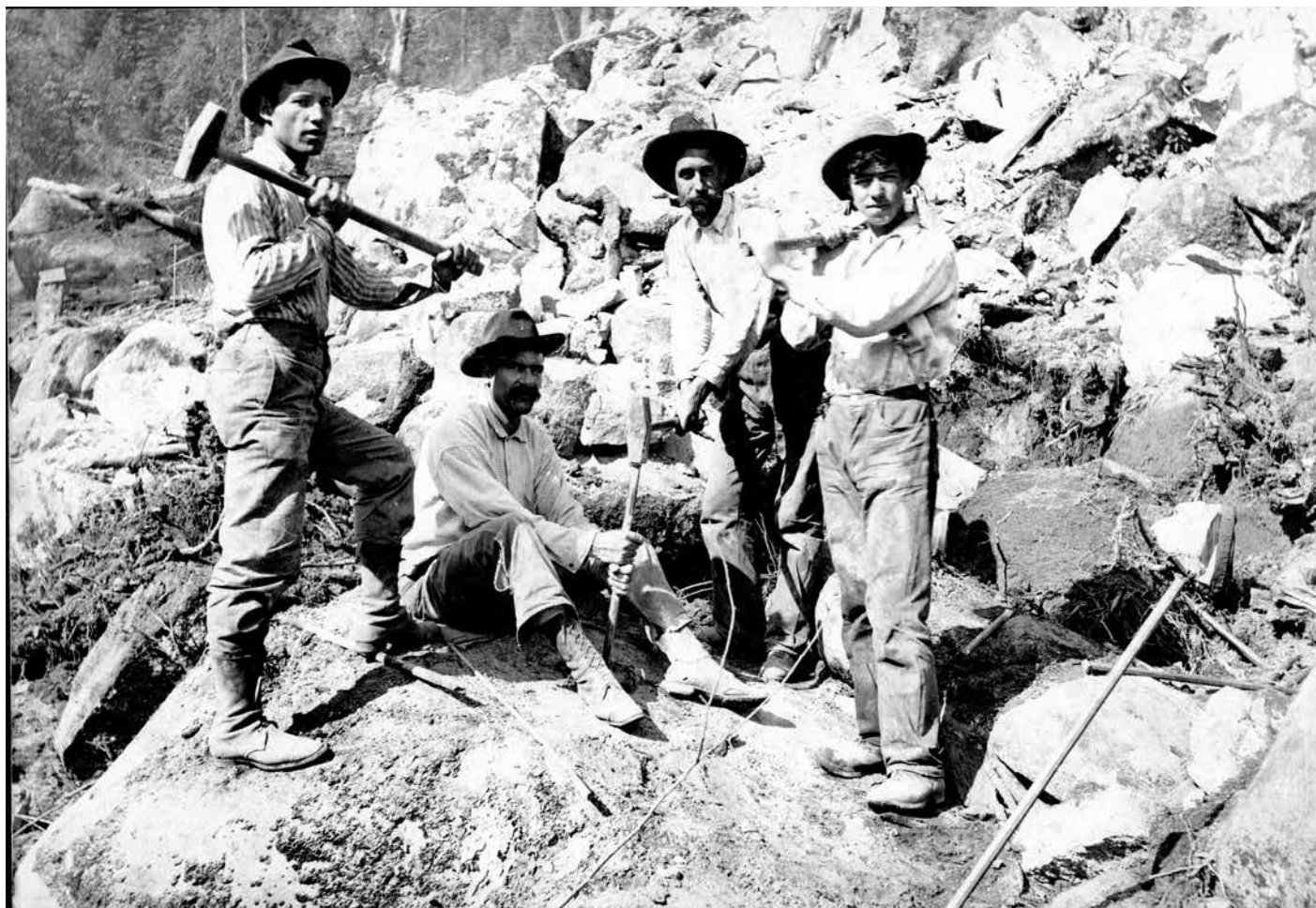
BROWN'S VALLEY DISTRICT

To the northeast of Marysville, some twelve miles, nestling among the foothills which fringe the eastern boundary of the Sacramento Valley is the Brown's Valley District, of about 45,000 acres of choice land, which ranges in price from \$5 to \$25 per acre. An irrigating system (the property of the district), consisting of 100 miles of flume, canals, pipes and a head-dam across the North Yuba River, furnishes an unlimited supply of water, which is conducted over this entire acreage. Owing to the irrigating facilities and the sheltered position of this section, the choicest berries, deciduous and citrus fruits, are grown and marketed at a good profit. Grapes are grown to perfection, while cereals and alfalfa are produced in abundance.

To the north of the town of Brown's Valley, and in the immediate vicinity, quartz mining is carried on, the leading mines being the Smethurst, Flag, Sweet Vengeance, Pennsylvania, Jefferson and Donnebroge. The latter three mines, which have a record production of over a million and a half dollars in the past seven years, join and are under one management. The ore is crushed by a 20-stamp mill, the motive power being electricity. There are also a number of other quartz mines in this locality which promise well. The Cleveland placer mine has produced well for a number of years and is still worked by an energetic town official.



FLOCK OF SHEEP



MINERS IN YUBA COUNTY

With land at low prices and rich enough to grow anything man may wish to plant, a climate free from snow and mild in winter, with a moderate rainfall, this section seems to offer many advantages to those looking for investment.

THE TOWN OF SMARTSVILLE

To the east of Brown's Valley and eighteen miles from Marysville, is the town of Smartsville. This district is also noted for its fine fruits, both citrus and deciduous, and perhaps more especially for its production of fine oranges. This district has an advantage over some others, owing to the fact that it is well irrigated. On the south of the

Yuba river in this locality are large placer mines, from which millions in gold have been extracted, and where millions still remain. Thereabouts are to be found some good quartz claims which have been extensively developed. In the section lying to the south of Smartsville, and extending to the Bear River, and known as The Cabbage Patch, are rich mineral deposits of gold and copper which have been only slightly developed. However, to the east a couple of miles there is one valuable copper deposit from which much ore has been taken, and which is equipped with extensive machinery for crushing ore and manufacturing mineral paint. This

section also produces fine fruits and cereals, and land can be purchased at a reasonable figure.

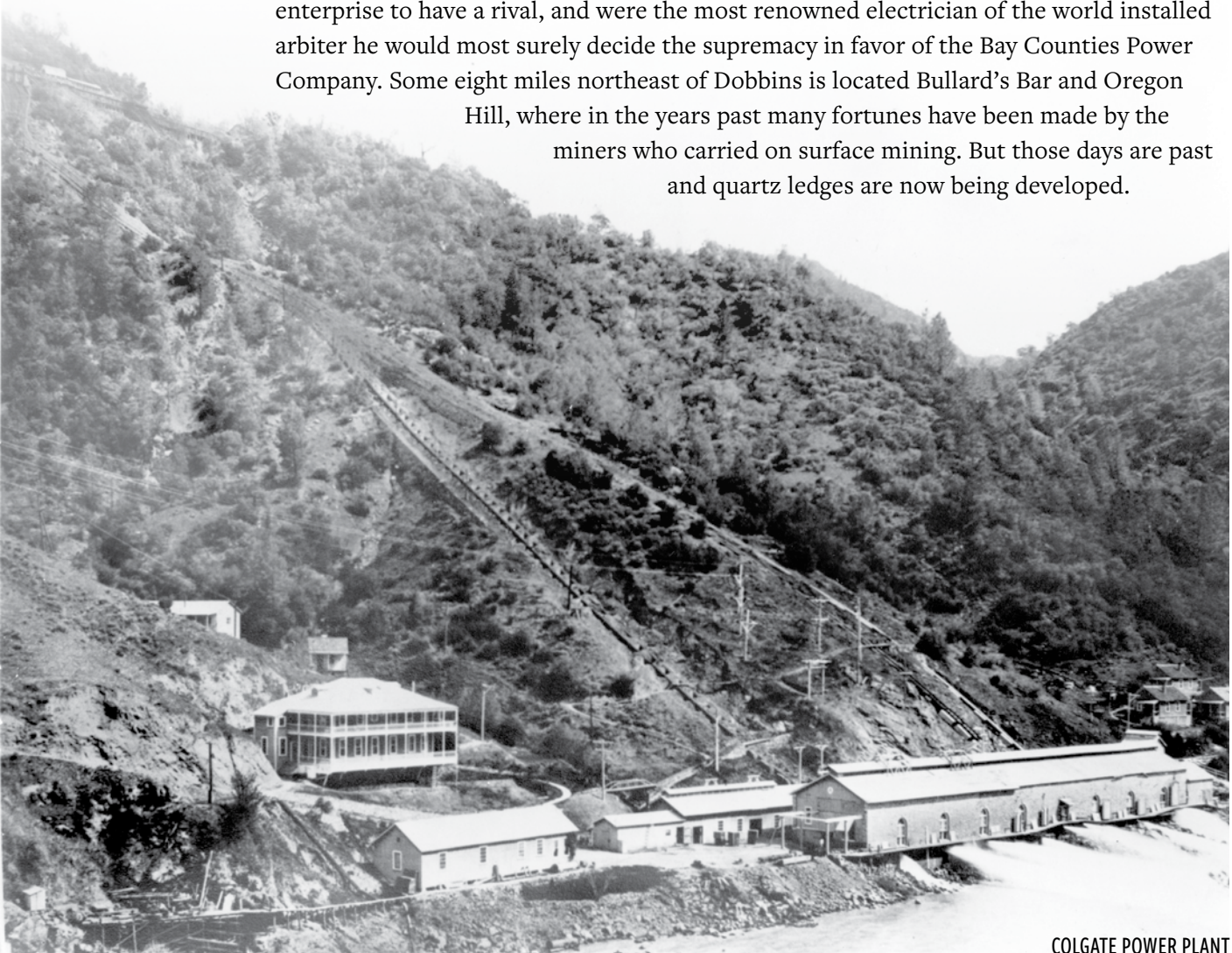
THE TOWN OF DOBBINS

Thirty-one miles northeast of Marysville, in the midst of a district rich in farming, mining and fruit growing, is the town of Dobbins. Four miles from these points, over a little level country, then down a steep hill to the very banks of the north fork of the Yuba River, is Colgate, where the largest and most extensive of the group of power houses owned by the Bay Counties Power Company, is located. With its peerless long-distance service, the electric current is delivered a distance of 220 miles, propelling

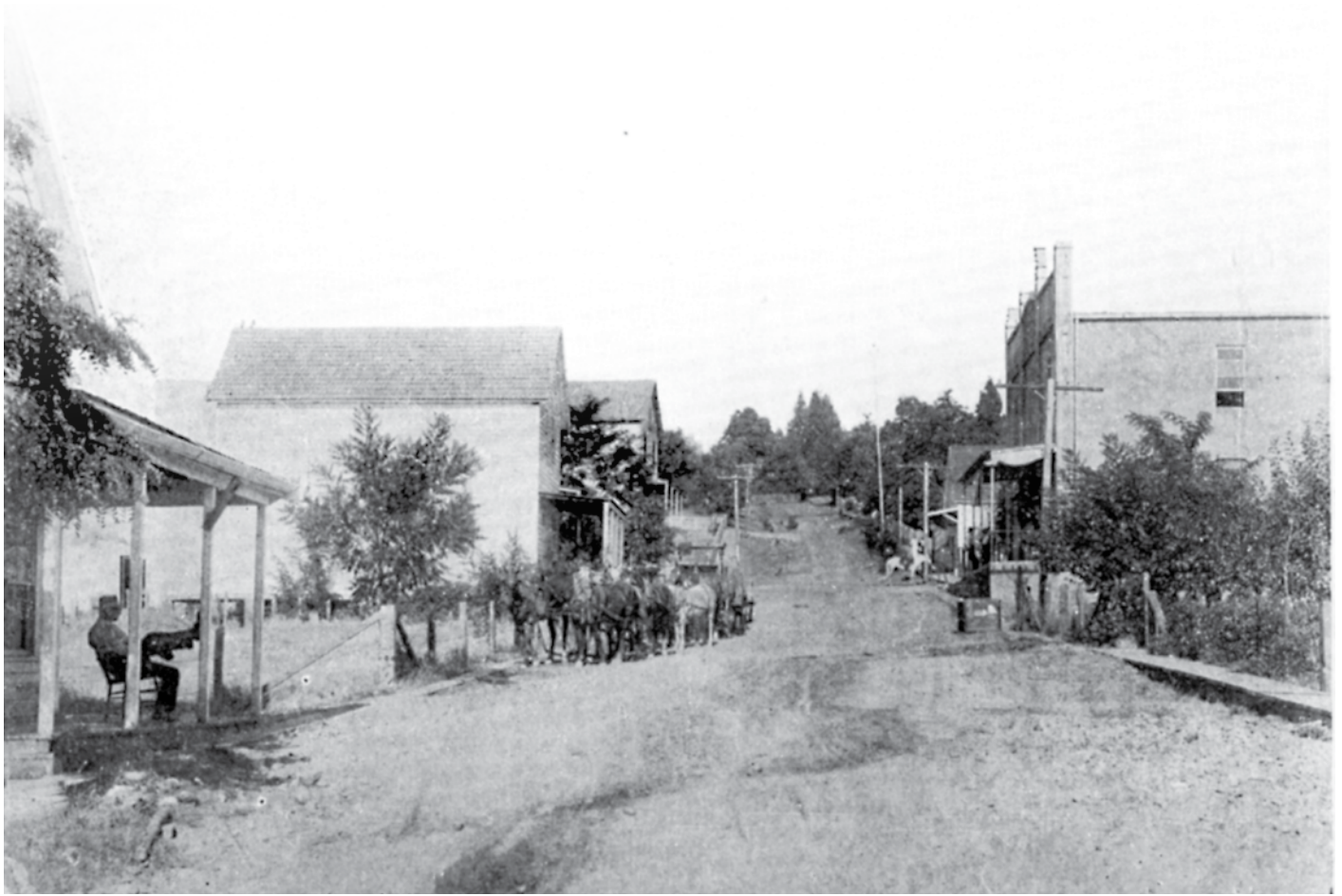
the cars of Oakland, Alameda, Berkeley, San Jose and Sacramento. Electricity is also furnished from this point for lighting purposes at Oakland, Sacramento, Woodland, Marysville, Martinez, Vallejo, Napa, San Jose, Benicia, Port Costa, Dixon, Nevada City, Grass Valley and many other towns on its pole line. Power is also delivered to the Pacific Portland Cement Company, Benicia Tannery, Copper King Smelter, Benicia Agricultural Works, Selby Smelter, Marysville Pumping Station, Buckeye Flour Mills, Victor Mines, Brown's Valley and the Marysville Woolen Mills.

In Butte County, motive power is furnished to fourteen dredges, requiring about 2,000 H. P. This great plant has only one rival and that enterprise is the famous Niagara Falls system of New York State. However, after viewing the unique suspension bridge at Carquinez Straits, after a visit to the largest plant of the group owned by the Bay Counties Power Company, deriving its power from water flumed a distance of seven miles, which is then discharged into a penstock 715 feet above the power house, from where it is conducted to the water wheels through five large pipes 30 inches in diameter with seven generators connected to as many water wheels which deliver current to step up transformers at 1,500 volts, and these transformers in turn deliver current to the various lines at different voltages, which again in turn furnish power and light to the thousands of people for such a variety of purposes, it seems impossible for such a vast enterprise to have a rival, and were the most renowned electrician of the world installed arbiter he would most surely decide the supremacy in favor of the Bay Counties Power Company. Some eight miles northeast of Dobbins is located Bullard's Bar and Oregon

Hill, where in the years past many fortunes have been made by the miners who carried on surface mining. But those days are past and quartz ledges are now being developed.



COLGATE POWER PLANT



CAMPTONVILLE

THE TOWN OF CAMPTONVILLE

To the east a few miles many large hydraulic mines were successfully operated, and here came into existence the town of Camptonville, picturesquely situated on the edge of a bluff, with a population not large but truly hospitable and generous. This little mountain town keeps itself in touch with the great world through a telephone and telegraphic system. The stores and post office are a benefit to all those living in this district, and its hotel, commodious and well conducted by a genial landlord and a pleasant hostess, who look to the comforts of the traveler, cannot be surpassed even in a more convenient locality. In every direction from

Camptonville one encounters the beautiful, not to say the grand, in nature. Well-kept roads lead through forests of sugar pine, spruce and fir. As you gaze up to the very tops of these straight, symmetrical trees, and out through the great thicket where here and there glints the sunlight, and again look down to the cool green earth, your very soul seems to expand, and you drink in the grandeur, the beauty, the coolness that surrounds you. Unexpectedly you are ushered into some clearing where over undulating hills are growing orchards of beautiful fruit, rich red apples bearing the limbs of the trees almost to the ground, peaches

exquisite in coloring and luscious in flavor, and vineyards from which are picked black table grapes as large as cherries, wine grapes from which the fine wine is produced, and last, but not least, by the side of these fruits, are fields of ripened grain. (It may be mentioned that the black grapes took the first prize at the State Fair for three consecutive years notwithstanding the fact that they were transported by team.) Passing again into the woods one is interested in the sawmills, the property of the Yuba Development Company, employing one hundred men and ten large teams, which haul its product to its yards at Grass Valley, Nevada County.

A number of quartz mines have been prospected in this section, and some are being re-opened, among which may be mentioned the Alaska and the Honeycomb. Nevada capitalists have become interested in the latter and contemplate putting up a mill for the further development of the mine.

With all the advantages which present themselves, there seems an exceptional future of prosperity for the investor in Yuba County. Whether it be mining, lumbering, stockraising, agriculture or horticulture, whichever may suit his calling, each man may choose for himself from nature's bounteous storehouse. These grand forests, plentiful streams and fruitful lands will not, even in the near future, be as they are today, for the tide of immigration will be turned to this land, the welkin will once more ring with the song of the woodsman, the miner (with perhaps a new method), will delve for his gold, the



LOGGING CAMP

horticulturalist and agriculturist will be working side by side with one great and vital end in view; and he who is wise is he who early seeks and appreciates that which his Maker has provided for him to call his own.



FEATHER RIVER – COVERED BRIDGE IN BACKGROUND



TOM THUMB AND PARTY

Curious Collection Find

By Sharyl Simmons

I've always been puzzled by this photograph in our collection. I'd heard of General Tom Thumb, but never understood why a photograph of him was relevant to our local history. Dave Hurd sent me an article from the local paper dated 1869 that started me on a search to learn more about the origin of this photograph.

FROM THE MARYSVILLE DAILY APPEAL DATED SEPTEMBER 18, 1869:

ACCIDENT TO THE TOM THUMB PARTY – The Tom Thumb party, consisting of Tom Thumb and lady, Commodore Nutt, Minnie Warren, and the gentlemen and lady traveling with them, left this city yesterday for Colusa, in a thorough-brace wagon drawn by four horses. On arriving at the Butte House, Sutter county, seven miles west of Marysville, the team was stopped in front of the house when the male members got out of the wagon and entered the hotel. While inside, the leaders began to kick, and after thrashing around for a while broke loose and ran away. Soon after the wheel horses turned about and ran in another direction, very much to the dismay of the three women in the wagon. Fortunately the leaders ran into a fence and became tangled and the wheel horses collided with a dead tree, where they were stopped without any injury to the ladies and but slight damage to the establishment. By the use of old wire and rope the wagon was temporarily repaired and the party drove on to Colusa.

That article put Tom Thumb in the area, but my interest was piqued and more research was called for.

Charles Sherwood Stratton, renamed General Tom Thumb by promoter P. T. Barnum, was born in Connecticut in 1838. Normally sized at birth, he stopped growing at about six months of age when he was 25 inches long and weighed 15 pounds. By the age of 4, he stood only 26 inches tall, but was otherwise a normally developed four year old.

P. T. Barnum heard about the boy and hired him as an act for his museum of curiosities in New York. Young Stratton

was a quick study and natural showman.

At the age of 5 he began touring with Barnum's show doing impersonations, songs, and dances. Barnum did lie about Stratton's age and claimed he was 11 years old to make his diminutive size more astounding. At age 6, Barnum took him on his first tour of Europe where he was a sensation. The act became more complicated until it consisted of Stratton singing, dancing, telling jokes and acting in full-length melodramas.

Stratton's career made him a very wealthy man. It's been suggested that if he had stopped performing before he was 10, he



P. T. BARNUM & TOM THUMB (CHARLES STRATTON)

could have lived comfortably off his savings for the rest of his life. As he matured, he took over more and more control of his career. When P. T. Barnum declared bankruptcy in the 1850s, Stratton contacted him and offered to go on another tour of Europe to help Barnum reverse his financial problems.

Stratton continued growing, but very slowly. By the time he was 21, he was 35 inches tall and his fame continued to increase. In 1863 he wed Lavinia Warren and it was a huge event with 10,000 guests and thousands more who lined the street to see the couple. For a short time, their marriage drove the Civil War off the front pages of New York newspapers. Mathew Brady took the wedding photograph. The best man at the wedding was George Nutt (Commodore Nutt), another diminutive performer

in Barnum's show and the maid of honor was Minnie Warren, Lavinia's sister. Their wedding trip took them to Washington, D. C. where President and Mrs. Lincoln welcomed them to the White House.

In 1869 Stratton, his wife Lavinia, her sister Minnie and George Nutt began a nationwide tour of their show that would ultimately take them around the world. The transcontinental railway was finished in May of 1869 and theirs was one of the first, if not the first, traveling show to cross the continent by rail. Once they reached their destination, a small carriage pulled by ponies was unloaded from the train and the group made their entrance into town. An account from Utah published in the Sacramento Bee on July 29, 1869 describes the sight:



WEDDING PHOTO, PHOTOGRAPHED BY MATHEW BRADY

When we first saw the team approach, we were sort of startled for the moment. The outfit looked like a pair of monstrous crickets harnessed up and hauling their provisions with them in a home sat on wheels.

The troupe arrived in Marysville, but unfortunately one of the ponies foundered in Woodland and their grand entrance was thwarted. However, the Marysville Weekly Appeal revealed that Stratton and Nutt borrowed a small pony and sulky from local man Pat Carr to “take an airing and show their presence.”

On September 16th and 17th they performed four shows in two days at the Marysville Theater. Women and children were advised to attend the 3:00 show so “that they may avoid the crowd at night.” Prices ranged from 50 cents in the gallery to \$5.00 for a box. The advertisement read:

THE ORIGINAL AND ONLY

GEN. TOM THUMB AND WIFE

(Mr. & Mrs. Stratton)

COMMODORE NUTT and MINNIE WARREN

**IN THEIR BEAUTIFUL PERFORMANCE CONSISTING OF
SONGS, DUETTS, COMIC ACTS, BURLESQUES
AND LAUGHABLE ECCENTRICITIES.**

The review printed in the August 17, 1869 San Francisco Chronicle probably describes the act seen in Marysville a month later.

“Mrs. Stratton and Miss Warren were dressed in an elegant and costly manner, wearing the same garments in which they appeared before Her Majesty Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle, on the 24th of June, 1867....The levee consisted of songs, dances, representations of comic characters, etc. ... The entertainment closed with a very laughable representation of “the Old Folks,” dressed in the ancient costumes our ancestors wore a great many years ago. The little ones then seated themselves on the edge of the stage and the audience passed round the Hall, the pretty girls kissing the Commodore and the old women going after the General.”

It was probably at one of the performances at the Marysville Theater that the photograph in our collection was acquired by a local who wanted a souvenir from the performance. The image was taken that year and photographs were most likely offered for sale in the lobby.

After another month traveling through California, the show embarked on a three-year tour around the world performing in Japan, Hong Kong, India, Australia,

Egypt and then on to Europe before arriving back in New York. On their return, Mr. and Mrs. Stratton built a grand home in Massachusetts. They continued performing, but returned frequently to their home that was built for their comfort.

Charles Stratton died at home suddenly in 1883 of a stroke at age 45. He was buried in the Mountain Grove Cemetery in Bridgeport, Connecticut – a cemetery founded by P. T. Barnum.

PHOTOS:

Our Picture from 1869 Tour

Daguerreotype c. 1850 – Smithsonian Institute, National Portrait Gallery

Wedding picture from 1863 – Smithsonian Institute, National Portrait Gallery

SOURCES:

Barnum: An American Life by Robert Wilson

Marysville Weekly Appeal

Marysville Daily Appeal

San Francisco Chronicle

The Real Tom Thumb – History’s Smallest Superstar

Phineas Taylor Barnum – Wikipedia

Thomas Stratton – Wikipedia

Memorials & Gifts

January – May 2021

In Memory of **Loretta Dean, D.V.M.**

Sharyl Simmons

In Memory of **Kristen Tarke Emery**

Jan Perry

In Memory of **Georgeann Correll Giles**

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In Memory of **Helen Heenan**

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In Memory of **Kenneth Lux**

Helene & Michael Andrews

In Memory of **Joyce Magenheimer**

R. James Staas

In Memory of **John Michael McConnell**

Susan & Paul Hayes

Lois Licari

Barbara McConnell

In Memory of **Mary Louise “Lou” Peters**

Joe Benatar

In Memory of **Pat Pinney**

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In Memory of **Pete Sands**

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to everyone
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January – May 2021

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Joe Benatar	Scott & Barbara Hankins	David Rubiales
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Audrey Breeding	Christine Hodgkins	Phyllis Smith
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Ann Burrows	William & Marillyn Kenyon	Julie Stark
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Tonya Byers	Gail & Michael Kunsman	Marcia Stranix
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Marie Dankman	Zachary & Amber Milner	Janice Wallace
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There are many ways to donate to the Museum:

- Mail a check
- Donate online through our website
- Planned Giving

We also have corporate sponsorship opportunities for our events and temporary exhibits.

Membership Information

Our members are vital to the success of the Museum. The funds we raise from this program help us to properly care for our collection, bring in traveling exhibits, and provide education programs.

For a complete listing of benefits by level, visit www.suttercountymuseum.org

Membership Levels

Basic*	\$35
Basic Plus*	\$60
Bronze**	\$100
Silver**	\$250
Gold**	\$500
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*\$10 discount for Student/Senior/Military/Long Distance (200+ miles away)

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Puzzling

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Renew your membership today!

Funds from membership directly support the work we do, including taking care of our collections and offering stellar education programming.

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For more information, visit www.suttercountymuseum.org