



Quarterly Bulletin of the Calaveras County Historical Society
Volume XVII April, 1969 Number 3

WADE JOHNSTON TALKS TO HIS DAUGHTER

By EFFIE ENFIELD JOHNSTON

A native of Jefferson County, Missouri, Wade Hampton Johnston joined the California gold rush on the spur of the moment and "ended up" at Yaqui Camp, just south-east of San Andreas. There he died in 1927, at the ripe old age of 95. He was an entertaining story-teller, a popular fiddler, and possessed of an amazing memory. During the concluding years of his long life he recounted his gold rush adventures and his early years in Calaveras to his daughter Effie.

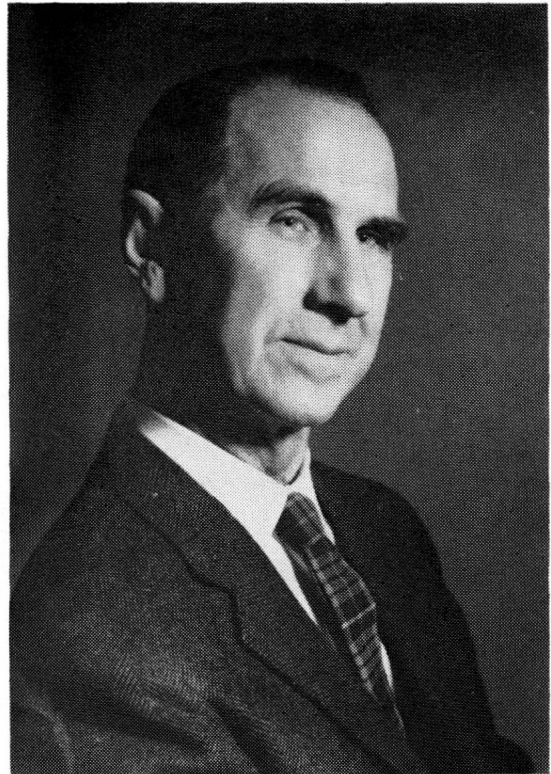
Although she had but a modest amount of "book-learning," Effie had the remarkably good sense to write down nearly everything her father said. These memoirs were written on wrapping paper or anything else at hand, for there was little money in the Johnston home at that time. Later she sewed these sheets into some forty or more little booklets. It is from this unusual manuscript that we print the first installment of the "Talks," where we pick up the story the night before Johnston left home.

Off to California in the Morning

On April 3rd, 1854, my brother Austin and I played for a farewell party at the home of Billie Ellington's mother, Mrs. Sutherland. It was given for Billie Ellington, Jake Hershbarger, Hal Richardson and the Hensley brothers, who were to leave for California in the morning.

Just before daylight the Hensley boys backed out. Richardson came to me and said, "Do you want to go to California?" I replied that I expected to go sometime. "Now's your chance," he said. "I'll furnish you with a horse, saddle and bridle and grub you through, to go as a cattle driver." And so I consented to go.

I had to walk four miles back home to get my clothes. My father was not at home. Only Sarah and Emma were there. Moriah was at Waters,' and Enfield and Cousin Bet Byrd were at Mag Winer's. Mag was the only sister married then. Sarah and Emma got my clothes ready. I had hard work to make them believe that I was really going. They gave the Hensley boys fits for backing out. If the rest of the family had been there I guess they would have held an indignation meeting.



R. COKE WOOD

MR. CALIFORNIA

In January, our eminent charter member and friend, Richard Coke Wood, was honored by receiving the title of "Mr. California" from the state legislature, in recognition of his achievements and labors in the field of California history. This is a particularly noteworthy honor, as Coke is not a "native" but was born in Oklahoma, "crossing the plains" when 10 years old.

Dr. Wood has written a number of books, articles and pamphlets. Those of especial interest to us are "Murphys, Queen of the Sierra"; "Tales of Old Calaveras"; "Calaveras, Land of Skulls"; "The Big Tree Bulletin"; "A Night in Wingdam"; "O'Byrnes Covered Bridge"; "Ebbetts Pass"; "Mark Twain and the Jumping Frog Story"; "Centennial History of Murphys Congregational Church," and "History along Highway 4."

The Woods restored the P. L. Traver building in Murphys in 1949. They have maintained the popular Old Timers Museum in this building which also serves as their week-end home. And, as most of us know well, Coke helped organize the Society in 1952, has served long and faithfully as an officer and committeeman, and for 12 years was editor of this quarterly.

It is always a source of wonder to us that a person as busy and as involved in so many organizations, in addition to his teaching and other commitments, as Professor Wood is, that he has time for our Society and its projects and problems. For this we are all most grateful.



WADE HAMPTON JOHNSTON

From a daguerreotype made shortly after Johnston arrived in California. We reprint it from the January, 1966, issue of "Las Calaveras," which contained a sketch of Johnston's life.

I didn't eat any breakfast. It was drizzling rain. The grass was about two inches high. With my clothes and my violin under my arm, I said "good-by for five years." Then I had to walk seven miles to the Meramec to catch up with the wagon train. On the way I passed Richardson's place. Virginia Richardson walked with me down to the Meramec.

A crowd had gathered at the Meramec River to see us off. Perhaps fifty people. My father was there.*

We said good-by and with two four-ox wagons and a hundred and thirty head of cattle we started for California.

It was the 4th of April, 1854. The train consisted of eleven men: Henry Richardson, the boss; William Ellington; Jacob Hershbarger; James Gamble; Jacob Snyder; Gideon Adams and John Q. Adams (not related); Joseph Martin, who kept a diary; Lewis Fine, who was from Arkansas; Yankee Bill, who came in at St. Joseph, Missouri (I don't know his surname), and me, Wade Johnston.

The first day we went as far as Florissant in St. Louis

County, up on the Missouri River. Some of Billie Ellington's people lived there. It rained on us most all that afternoon. On the third day out I lost my \$5.00 violin bow.

We arrived in Nebraska on the 2nd of May and camped near the Missouri River. Here, four hundred head of steers belonging to a Mr. Nye came near running over us. The steers had been gathered in the center of a lot of corneribs. It came a rain and the rails began to slip and the corn piled high in the cribs forced them out, stampeding the steers. When the cattle came past us, a man was hanging to the tail of a big steer and yelling. They ran away down on the Missouri bottom. He stayed with them all night and brought them back next day. He didn't lose any of them.

I think this man Nye was afterwards Governor of Nevada. Hal Richardson said that he was a well educated man. Nebraska was just settling up then. The Nebraska Bill was before the House.

The next night we camped at Big Blue. It was about dry when we crossed it. But that evening there was a cloudburst in the mountains and Big Blue went out of its banks! The cattle ran off. Some of the boys stayed with the cattle all night. Jake Hershbarger and I stayed with the wagons. There was rain and sleet all next day. We had the roughest time here of any while crossing the plains. We stayed here three days in the rain and sleet.

When we arrived at Fort Kearney the soldiers were on parade. We camped where we could see them. We stayed two or three days there and took a rest.

Old John Q. Adams used to give us the history of a soldier's life everynight. He served all through the Black Hawk War, and I think he was in the War of 1812, for he was an old man, about the age of my father. He knew my grandfather, Ben Johnston, Sr. He called him a "big-nosed Englishman."

He was one of the roughest kind of talking men. But he was a Bible reader. He had an old-fashioned Bible like my Grandmother Byrd's that he carried through the Black Hawk War. He died right up here at the old Tom Villa place (Calaveras County) where Rattos live now. His son was here at the time. I got his Bible but when I went to the copper mines near Copperopolis in 1863, someone stole it, as well as another book of mine, "California Scenery."

*Johnston was always reluctant to speak of that farewell. One can well imagine the scene between the impetuous young man on his way to the gold fields and the father, Ben Johnston, Jr., a very busy country barrister, judge, and farmer, about to see his youngest son for the last time. Cousin Betty Byrd (Hascall) wrote of the event some 70 years later: "The Johnstons were a very agreeable and happy family. . . . I often think of when Wade left for California. Enfield and I were at Margaret Winer's staying all night. When we got home Sarah said, 'Wade has gone to California.' I knew home was broke up; Charley gone (to California), now Wade gone. I sat out on the porch and cried for a long time. When I think of it now I can hardly keep back the tears."

In after years, Johnston said, "I would have been better off if I had done as my father wanted me to do—stay at home and work in his office two years more." Although he wrote faithfully to his father and sisters, he never returned to Missouri.



CALAVERANS BOTH

Two young men from Calaveras County pose for their pictures, one at a studio in Sonora, the other at Stockton. Even though they were dressed up, they wore their boots, as was the practical custom of the day. These portraits, as well as the other early day pictures in this issue, are from tintypes and photographs from the extensive Eva Soracco collection.



While at the Platt, I bought a new violin bow and an elk skin to keep my violin in. It kept it dry. I had had nothing but a sack to carry it in.

Jacob Hershbarger and I went out hunting on an island in the Platt River. We were only on the island a few minutes when wolves got the scent of us, and the first thing we knew we were almost surrounded. All around we could see their noses sticking straight up in the air, in the tall grass, coming towards us. We didn't lose any time getting out of there. The island must have been alive with wolves.

For miles and miles along the Platt River, we always had a quarrel for supper. They all quarreled except me. I don't know why it was, unless it was the old violin.

Joe Martin used to always read his diary to us in the evenings. He was the best educated man in the train—really the only educated man. I guess he had lots of things jotted down that he never said anything about, though.

We camped one night about June 15th just below Fort Laramie on the Laramie River (Wyoming). It was a big clear stream that looked good enough to drink.

Before reaching Fort Laramie we passed the Black Hills, and about June 5th we came to the poison alkali water. Everybody that drove stock across the plains had to watch out for them and not let them drink that poison water. We found lots of dead animals here. These dead animals would swell up and burst. We would hear them in the night and the odor was so strong you could hardly stand it.

We camped along the Sweetwater River, a nice stream about forty yards wide and four feet deep. Somewhere along here old Gid Adams stampeded the cattle. He got

scared of a hare. Sometimes he was ahead and sometimes the cattle were ahead in the mad rush. He thought it was a bear. It was one of those great big jack rabbits.

We passed Ham's Fork of the Green River and the Soda Springs near Johnson's cut off.

Jacob Hershbarger was a nice boy about nineteen. He was lots of company crossing the plains. He liked to sing. Two of his songs were "Old Zip Coon" and "Caroline of Edinboro' Town."

Jake got possession of Billie Ellington's buckskin pants. At Green River Jake came in wet one day and stood by the fire until the pockets twisted around where the seat ought to be. To look at his pants you couldn't tell which way he was a'going. After we got to California Jake wore these to some of our stag dances.

For miles and miles along Bear River there was just room for a wagon to pass. All along on both sides were cinders thrown out at some time by a volcano.

At the sink of the Humboldt we passed hundreds of skeletons of cattle and horses and many deserted emigrant wagons.

We passed near what is now Virginia City and through Carson Valley, then called "The Eagle Ranch." I think we were at Carson when we heard of Joaquin Murietta and his capture. At the Hot Springs I killed a snipe and cooked it in the Hot Spring just as nice as if I'd cooked it on the fire. We camped at Lake Tahoe, where we bought half a deer of an Indian and we ate it all for supper. We were hungry for fresh meat. We gathered and ate lots of wild gooseberries, but we were afraid to eat the thimbleberries.

We were crossing the summit about the 24th of August. We arrived at Hangtown (Placerville), California, on August 26th, 1854.

My Placer County Adventures

Hangtown was then a big town and full of Chinamen. Every way you looked you would see Chinamen. We only stayed one night in Hangtown and I played for the boys to dance that evening. The next morning an emigrant woman pointed me out, saying, "Thar goes a young man that's going to make his pile." I was offered fifty dollars for my violin at Hangtown. I had paid ten for it in St. Louis.

In the morning Lewis Fine, William Ellington, Jacob Hershbarger and I struck out for Yankee Jims, with one mule as a pack animal to carry our blankets. And, we four agreed, in case of anyone's death, we would see that each other had a decent burial.

We passed through Coloma and reached a point on the Devil's Canyon, on the North Fork of the American River, just in sight of Yankee Jims that day. We rested a few minutes and then went down to the town. The streets were full of men night and day. But there wasn't as many Chinamen as at Hangtown.

Here we met our old friend, Billie Smith, of Jefferson

County, Missouri.* He took us over to where he was operating a mine at Spring Garden called the Eagle Tunnel. He found us an old miner's cabin to stop in. We got in a sack of self-rising flour and some fresh beef and spent several days there just looking around.

There were a few big hydraulic claims running out, just west of Yankee Jims. I guess this is where hydraulic mining started. Many of their drift mines were open and paying well. If I'd had my way I would have stayed in Placer County.

Billie Smith showed us the different places. He picked out a place on Spring Garden Creek where he thought we could make grub. So we got three or four sluice boxes and went to work. We made enough to keep us but that was about all.

Hal Richardson used to say, "All the gold is down in the deep places, on the bottom. There is nothing on the rim." Billie Smith told me if I wanted to pan, I might go down in a hole that he showed me. This hole was fourteen feet deep and, although I had never panned before, I got half an ounce of gold in two days. But this ground belonged to Billie Smith's company and his partners didn't like it so I quit.

Spring Garden was three miles from Yankee Jims. The business men were John Dick, merchant; Mr. Hollister, hotel keeper; and Mr. Harris, who ran a sawmill. We did our trading with John Dick. Mr. Hollister was lucky enough to draw his money, \$4000, just the day before Adams and Company went broke. Mr. Hollister, who had a wife and a little girl named Zitta, left Spring Garden in the spring of 1855. The last I heard of him he was at Sacramento.

We visited Iowa Hill and Wisconsin Hill. At Iowa Hill, I met William Frey, from Jefferson County, Missouri. He had interests there and he had married at Iowa Hill. We found it to be a lively mining camp. But we didn't meet anybody else here that we were acquainted with, so we returned to Spring Garden.

Todd's Valley is about half a mile from Spring Garden. At that time it was another lively camp. There were several merchandise stores, a fandango house, and they had a string band, called "Old Shave's Band."

I only visited Todd's Valley once. That was to attend Lee and Marshall's circus. I think it was the first one to visit Placer County. I think the name of the tightrope walker was Miss Sin Clare. The Lee brothers were the trapeze performers. I think they were English. George Peoples, of St. Louis, was the pole climber. He got a fall down around Los Angeles and was killed. The celebrated clown, "Frencha," was with Lee and Marshall's Circus. He had his fun with the Chinamen.

Soon after I arrived in Placer County they hung a Johnston. His name was George. They had a joke on me there for a long time, about hanging one of the Johnston family. He killed a man at Yankee Jims. A mob just threw a rope round his neck, and dragged him to the nearest tree. This was his second victim. He had killed a man before this, over about Georgetown. I think this happened in '54.

I got my first experience as a drift miner in 1854, in the Eagle Tunnel. I was working here for J. C. Colehower

*In 1852 Billie Smith crossed to California with the Richardsons, Israel Waters and others from Jefferson County.



GIRL OF THE GOLD RUSH

There were few women in the early gold rush camps and these by necessity needed much courage and fortitude to face the vicissitudes of the day. This Calaveras girl was such a person if one can judge by the tintype, a fine example of the art of photography in the 'fifties.

for \$4 a day. I made many mistakes. My first one was to run the car off the track fifteen feet high.

The dump had got filled up, so I shoveled the muck off the track. I must have knocked the little block off that we kept on the end of the track, to stop the car. When I got to the end with the loaded car, it started to go over. I used all my strength, and held it there on a balance. I felt myself going over with it. Then I let go of the car and threw myself back on the track. Colehower, who was setting at the cabin door, kicked over his chair, and hollered: "'Way goes Johnston and the car."

Down the car went, end over end, dumping the load at the first turn. Then it went on wheels for about 200 feet farther down. We finally got the car back on the track and found the only damage was to the car bed. They then put in a new track. It should have been done before.

My next mistake was in the Eagle Tunnel. It was about 800 feet long. The first 600 feet out had a down grade. You could jump on the car and it would run without being pushed. At the end of the 600 feet there was a reverse grade, for the next 100 feet, at a three foot rise. At the top of this grade or incline, they had a windlass to draw the loaded cars up. There was a 100 foot rope, with a hook on the end of it, on the windlass.

I was mucking with William Fero. We filled the car. Then Fero gave me a piece of candle to light my way out. The candle went out. I couldn't find the hook. I was afraid of being too long on the job. So by putting my heels against the ties, I found I could move the car about four feet at a time.

When I got it up to within six feet of the windlass, Fero came up and said, "Johnston, what are you trying to do?" I replied, "I'm trying to get this damned car up." Fero said, "That's a job no other man could do. It's a big load for a mule."

If I'd had ten minutes more, I would have got it up, and Fero would never have known the difference. We had many laughs over it, and they gave me the name of the strongest man in the company.

Two years after I left Placer County and came to Calaveras County, I received a letter from Jacob Hershberger, saying that a new company had come in there, jumped the Eagle Tunnel claim, put in a hydraulic, and made a pile of money.

The first sparring match I ever witnessed was at Yankee Jims. I paid a dollar to see it, between Yankee Sullivan and John Heenan.

John Heenan at that time was known as the "Benecia Boy." He was working for the boilermakers at Benecia. That was where they first learned of his power of striking from the shoulder. Yankee Sullivan had picked him up and was training him for a match with Tom Sayers, a sailor and English Champion at that time. Heenan was very awkward. But Yank said, "After I get him trained he will make a good one." And he did.

Yankee Sullivan and two or three other pugilists were touring California. They had a local sport with them, from Georgetown. His name was Timothy Howling. He was very popular with the miners of Georgetown. Howling Flat there was named for him. He had mined on the flat in early days.

It was the local sports that made the fun for us, after the regular sparring match was over. Their awkwardness amused the boys. This pleased the trained men. And once



"HOLD IT ONE MORE MINUTE!"

"Consarn it, hurry up. I've got places to go." The ubiquitous pedestal was there to lean on, so that the pose could be held for the long exposure necessary. Often the photographer would color-tint the flowers draped across it in the final tintype.

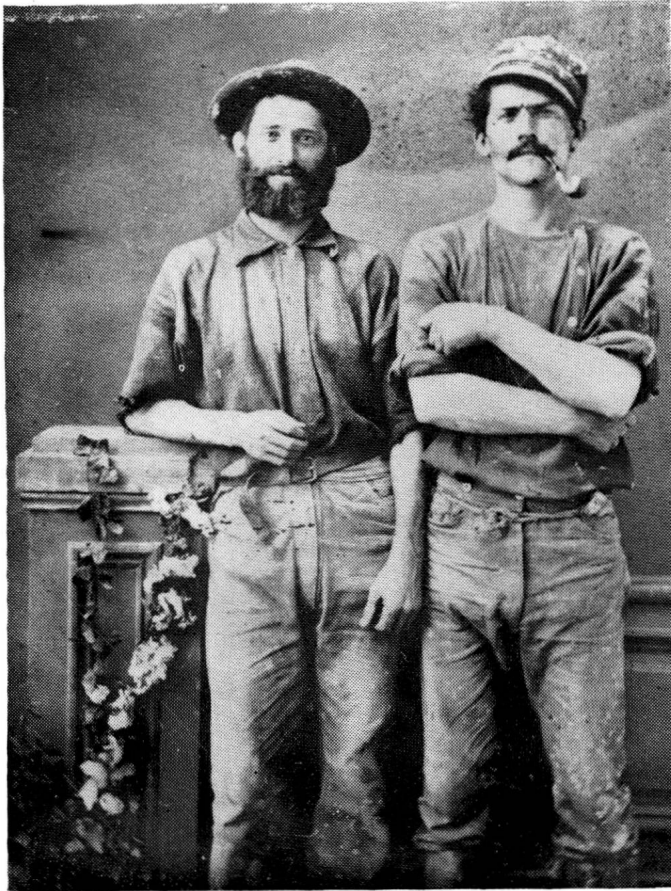
in a while they would take a hand with the greenhorns, just for the fun of it. We spent most of the night at Yankee Jims. All of us were satisfied that we had got the worth of our money.

Jim Allen came in one day, the blood streaming from his nose! He wanted to get mad, but he couldn't. He and J. C. Colehower had been practicing. Jim Allen afterwards became a prize fighter.

He was the Allen that I struck between the shoulders, with the double-jack. He was holding the drill, and I was striking. He just settled down and didn't even grunt. Then he looked around and said, "I don't want you to do **THAT** again if you can help it."

This happened at the North American Tunnel, just below and running up into Todd's Valley. J. C. Colehower and Jim Allen were interested in this tunnel at the time, and I was working for Colehower. The water was coming down "like your fingers" and blinding me. I was striking overhanded when I hit Allen in the back.

The North American Tunnel was 400 or 500 feet long.



"YOU BOYS FROM JEFFERSON COUNTY?"

These Calaveras Argonauts casually wandered into a traveling photographer's salon right near the diggings and had their likenesses fixed on this candid tintype.

They ran their dirt out in a car. Colehower was paying me \$5 a day, and offered me \$6 if I'd stay. But I couldn't stand the water.

We looked forward eagerly to letters from home. Here is one that I saved from my sister Enfield:

"Jefferson County, Missouri.
Jan. 7, 1855

"My Dear Brother:

"You cannot imagine the pleasure it is to us, to get a letter from you. I have never received but one letter from you since you left.

"O Wade! You wrote to most everybody around, before you wrote to us girls. And I thought you would have written to us first. Dear brother, you may not think it hurt our feelings. But I can tell you, I have shed many a tear for you, since you left. But I will overlook that if you will write again.

"O Wade. Come home. I think you can do very well here, if you would only come home, and think so. And then we could be together and be so happy.

"We are all well but Betty Byrd. Her health is very bad. Cousin Durrie Casey is married to a lady in St. Louis.

"Wade, you said, you thought it was time some of us were getting married. Well I expect it is. But at the same

time, I think we better look before we leap.

"Oh, you said something about Lewis Fine. I told Olive Kendall what you said. She told me to give her best love to you. And she wished you to tell Lewis Fine, if he was her only chance she would remain as she was. She said, 'I think I can get married, and not marry Lewis Fine either.'

"Now Wade, give my best respects to Mr. Fine, and tell him, if old Enfield is his only chance in Jefferson County, he had better remain in California. I think his cake is dough!

"Papa has not got his house finished yet, though he has all of the boards nailed on, and had not enough. Newman had to make more. He has not got the plaster laid yet. I don't think he will get it finished this winter.

"Brother Austin has finished his house, and is living in it. They are well.

"I expect Israel Waters has told you all about the wedding and the parties, as he told me that he had written to you.

"Papa has John Prater hired this winter. We have had but little winter yet. Yet we have had two snows. It rained three days and nights this week.

"We have not had a letter from Margaret Winer for some time. She was well when we heard from her. She said that she wanted me to write her directions on how to direct a letter to you.

"Wade, I must quit. It is late. Little Emma sends her love to you. Here is my best love for you.

"Your affectionate sister Enfield"

I think we only had one Bloomer Dance at Spring Garden. But we had many oyster suppers and stag dances, as we called them. There were no women then to dance with. Crossing the plains, you would see many of the women wearing bloomers. Billie Smith was the first one to suggest the bloomer dances. So we sent to Sacramento for four pair of bloomers, enough for one set.

We had the Bloomer Dance at the Spring Garden Hotel (Hollister's). There were three lady spectators that sat back and did their share of laughing. They were Mrs. Hollister, the landlady, Mrs. Williams and a Miss Byrd.

The funniest part of these dances was the boys trying to play lady. Some of the boys looked like sharks in their bloomers. Jacob Hershbarger was as good as a circus, in Billie Ellington's twisted buckskin pants.

I played for all of our little dances. Four or five of us stood all of the expenses. We found it too expensive to continue with the Bloomer Dances. We had the supper to pay for, too. I don't know what became of the bloomers. I think they were left at the Spring Garden Hotel. Our oyster suppers were cooked by a French chef. I couldn't eat one of those French style oyster suppers now.

Some of the boys would have a game of cards. It was a good time to spin California yarns, getting all of the boys together. We had a lot of good singers in pioneer days. The most of them were sailors. Billie Ellington and Lew Fine had left Placer County and were in Calaveras at the time of these gatherings.

The names of some of the boys that sang, danced, played cards and spun yarns at Spring Garden in '54 and '55:

Ben Locke	Bob Johnson	David Bowers
John Kagle	Billie Smith	William Fero
Mr. Buckingham	J. C. Colehower	Frank Piper
Jacob Hershbarger	Jim Allen	

Mike Dace, a preacher's son, from Jefferson County.
 Mr. Harris, who ran the sawmill.
 John Dick, the merchant.
 Billie _____, John Dick's clerk.
 Barney _____, who worked in the Eagle Tunnel.
 And a sailor, who was a fine singer, I forgot his name.

While I was at Spring Garden, the Eagle Company ceased work in the Eagle Tunnel, and gave a contract to run a new one from the east side. William Fero, a partner, being the lowest bidder, got the contract. Fero started the tunnel. But he gave it up. I don't think he did much work before dropping it. Anyway, he took the contract too cheap.

I got well acquainted with one of the merchants at Yankee Jims, Mr. Harris. He was a great fellow to tell jokes on the Missourians. His partner, Bob Craven, was afterwards elected State Librarian. I also got to know Jim Cartwright, the constable there, but I never met the sheriff.

Just before leaving Placer County, I worked about ten

days with Mike Dace. We mined in a gulch that ran into the Devil's Canyon. We worked it with a rocker and made \$4 and \$5 a day. While we were working here, a China company came along and wanted to buy the claim. Dace thought it was pretty well worked out, and offered to sell to them for \$25.

He gave me some gold and told me to salt the mine for the Chinamen. So I put the gold where he told me to. The Chinamen came back, and of course, went to prospecting. It showed up too nice. I happened to salt it right where there was already a good prospect. The Chinamen got suspicious. They went off, and waited until we worked that piece of ground out. We made \$25 in two days. When they came back and found us still working, they gave us the \$25 and took possession. The Chinamen only stayed with it a week. The ledge raised up and there was no gravel to work on. Dace said, "I'm satisfied they didn't get their money out of it." It was all nice coarse gold and may have been close to a quartz vein. No channel gold in it.

This was my last mining in Placer County where I stayed until May of '55. I had made no mining locations there. I did no hunting in Placer County. I didn't handle a gun at all. Not even a pistol. And that May, Billie Smith and I said goodby to Placer County and hello to Calaveras.



CALAVERAS PIONEERS

Their identity is lost, but these were the type of people that stayed on after the gold rush and found a good home in the County.

Yaqui Camp

Billie Smith and I arrived in Calaveras County in May, 1855. I had \$130 in gold dust. I used this to pay my share of the bills when I took possession of my quarter-interest in the Poverty Hill Mine, two miles southeast of San Andreas.

Lewis Fine came down here before I did. He struck the first prospect in '54 that led to staking the claim. He and Hiltz Sanborn made the first locations, calling it Poverty Hill Mine. It was later called the Missouri Tunnel Mine and eventually the Wade Johnston Mine. Lewis Fine took me in as a partner and Hiltz Sanborn took in a Mr. Churchill, making four in the company. Although I was at Yankee Jims when the first location was made, they put my name on it. There were four claims in all, each 100 feet wide and running through the hill (east-west).

When I first came to Yaqui Camp we lived in a cabin where Hedrick's orchard is now, where Harvey Hedrick afterwards (1859) built a dwelling house and where the most of his children were born. We lived here from '55 until '59. What is now the Hedrick Gravel Mine was at that time owned by the Allen Miller-Nickerson company. I worked for Allen Miller but I never was interested in the mine. They located it in 1852.

Of the four locations on Poverty Hill, all changed hands more than once, except my share. Billie Ellington who came down to Calaveras County in 1854 before Fine did, later became a partner.

We changed the names of most all of these gulches. When I came to Yaqui Camp you could hardly find anything around here with a decent name.

In Joaquin Murietta's time Yaqui Camp was a town of mostly Mexicans, Chileans and Yaqui Indians. There

were fandango houses and one or two stores on the flat where our old dump is, and across Willow Creek on the high point, at the mouth of Mexican (Chileano) Gulch, was another store, and old boots and tin cans were laying around Yaqui Camp in the 1880's. There were two or three cabins on the point and a number on the flat. There were several cabins and rock chimneys at the mouth of the Charles Bannon (Hedrick) Gulch at the Hedrick orchard. On both sides where Yaqui Gulch enters Willow Creek there were several houses and two or three cabins on Paradise Gulch and at the mouth of the gulch.

There was a business house, either store or hotel, on Bannon Gulch, about midway up where the old wagon road crossed it in the '70s.*

I worked some on Mexican Gulch. Chinamen got a nugget weighing one pound at the head of the gulch. Chileanos also worked it. Just across Willow Creek on the flat Dick Stackpole found a one pound nugget. Old Cap Ferguson used to say, "The Mexicans took gold out of that gulch by the pound." Much later Len Wilcox and Mike Schanin were interested in a quartz mine at the head of this gulch at the time Len died in Altaville (Feb. 1892). Len was an old friend of Demarest's, a machinist, and worked in the Altaville Foundry.

Many of the pioneers wore white wool hats and white duck pants in the '50s. One of these wool hats would last twenty years. You could wash them. The white duck pants would become waterproof with clay and grease. They would stand up alone.

There was no post office and no blacksmith shop in San Andreas in 1855. We went clear down to North Branch to get our mail and to have our picks sharpened. The first post office was opened in San Andreas in '56. Charles Faville was the postmaster. Ed Purple was Justice of the Peace in 1855. Judge Taliaferro was Justice before Ed Purple. Mulford was sheriff in '55.

We used to carry six picks down to the bridge, at North Branch, to Hall and Robinson's twice a week and then when these were used up we worked with dull picks. Hall and Robinson at that time carried on a blacksmithing business at Central Hill and another at North Branch, near this end of the bridge. Jack Hall later ran a blacksmith shop in San Andreas, where he raised his family, a son, Austin, who married Miss Anna Washburn, and a daughter, Ada, who married Lee McAdams.

We claim the credit of introducing the first flat-eyed pick in Calaveras County. The flat-eyed pick was invented by Hugh Graves, the blacksmith at Yankee Jims, when he lived back in Wisconsin. It was different from the common welded-eye or bulls-eye as it was called. Instead of a welded eye, it was punched through a solid block of iron. It had a flat eye, similar to an ax, and required a flat handle. A long wedge was driven in at each end of the eye and clinched. And several small wedges were driven in the center of the eye.

Hal Richardson was acquainted with Hugh Graves in Wisconsin. Just before I left Placer County for Calaveras County, Hal Richardson came up there on a little visit. Before he returned he said, "Be sure and bring a flat-eyed pick with you. There are none in Calaveras County."

So I went to Hugh Graves at Yankee Jims and bought

*I am told by Johana Nuland that Bob Redmond ran a store in Yaqui Camp in early days. E. E. J.

a new one. Just the pick and wedges, without the handle. I paid \$4 for it. And Billie Smith brought one of his that he had used in the Eagle Tunnel.

When Billie and I arrived in Calaveras County, I took my pick to Hall and Robinson. They took the pattern of that pick, and it was known as the Wisconsin drifting pick. Pretty soon the bulls-eye pick was dropped, except by Chinamen. Miners wouldn't use it any more in a drift. The flat-eyed pick was so much lighter and better that after using it once, a man would throw away his bulls-eye.

In 1856 Jacob Hershberger wrote me that the town of Yankee Jims burned down, and the miners wouldn't let them build it up again. They located it for mining ground and mined it out. The best part of the gravel channel was right under the town. It was shallow and very rich.

Jacob Hershberger remained in Placer County. I wrote him to come down here, to Calaveras County, and buy into the mine. When he replied, he said that his father and brother had come out here. This was the first time that he gave his right name. He had run away from his parents in Philadelphia when he was about 15 years old, and he had gone by the name of Barger. He had worked his way up into Iowa, and then down into Jefferson County. And he was living with Billie Ellington's mother, Mrs. Sutherland, when he joined Hal Richardson's train, to come to California.

Yaqui Camp and San Andreas Old Timers

John Osgood told me, "if that big piece of gold taken out on Willow Creek wasn't gold, I don't know what gold is. I was in the San Andreas Express Office when three Frenchmen brought it in, in a wheelbarrow, with gunny sacks thrown over it. It weighed 160 pounds, gold and quartz mixed."

It was found just below where Gianninis live now, about August 1854. I read about it in the papers while in Placer County. It was said that it was sent back to France. There doesn't seem to be any record of it, but John Osgood was considered a reliable man.

Old Boone of San Andreas had very little education. He had great confidence in David Gay. They were mining partners at one time. Dave Gay told me that Boone called him up to his cabin one time when he wanted to look for a bill. He began taking down bills that were stuck in crevices all around the top of the cabin. The notes that he showed him amounted to \$60,000 that he had against the people of this vicinity. He never took anything but a plain note. When he was pronounced crazy his cabin was robbed right away.

Boone used to talk to me about his Uncle Daniel Boone of Kentucky and Missouri. He said, "I have met lots of men from there, that knew old Dan." Boone had a brother that was wealthy. He didn't like him and he used to say, "I just want to live until I have more money than my brother." He loaned money to people that never could or intended to pay him. He would say, "Oh, Mr. is an honest man. If he ever makes it he will pay me."

When I came to the County, Old Boone was mining at Chilean Hill, this side of Mokelumne Hill. Joe Marshall was one of his partners. This is where I first met them. At that time Joe Marshall was just such a fine-looking fellow as his son Jack. Boone, Marshall and others were interested in a mine there called the Missouri Claim. I think

Joe Marshall came here in 1852. He was from Ohio.*

Billie Ellington used to tell me about two miners burying two black chunk bottles of gold dust, while they were drunk at Chili Gulch, and they never could find them again.

When I came to the County in '55, Cap Pope was mining at Mokelumne Hill. He carted his dirt down to the Mokelumne River to wash it. He once told me, "When I don't get \$40 to the cart load I think I am out of luck."

Bill Irvine claimed he got \$2100 in one pan at French Hill. French Hill was near Nigger Hill and Mokelumne Hill. In '55 Bill Irvine ran a sawmill on Willow Creek, just above where Gianninis live now. We used to buy lumber of Irvine.

Bill Irvine married the adopted daughter of Mike Callahan. Callahan ran the Kinderhook Hotel at San Andreas. Irvine was boarding there at the time. His children were Tom, Henry, Carrie and Lewis.

Callahan later adopted Bill Irvine's son Tom and left him a little fortune (\$15,000, I think). Bill Irvine invested this in a ship-load of goods and, unfortunately, all was lost at sea.

Bill Irvine had a siege of litigation with old John Rathgeb over what is called the Old Irvine Mine. The Rathgeb's were drifting in on Irvine's ground. This is where they got \$2000 to the pan. Old Jim Dean said that he saw it and it bent the pan to lift it. Bill Irvine was later interested in some good mines over at Carson Hill.

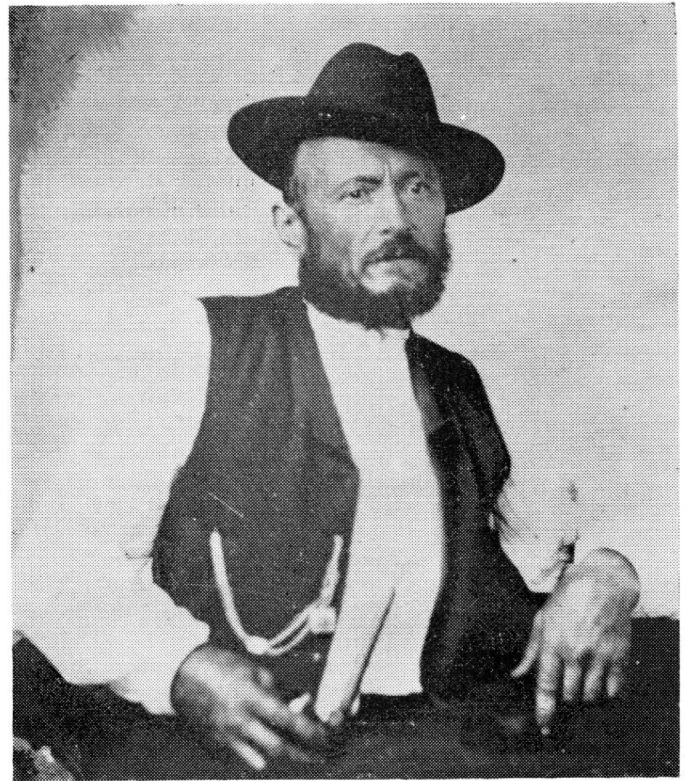
One time in '55, when there was a lot of donkeys in town, a good talker was trying to preach a sermon on what was later called "Friedberger Corner." Some fellows around there blocked both ends of Main Street with pack animals and then set a lot of dogs on some more and ran them up and down the street in an effort to drown the preacher's voice. He went right ahead with his preaching. I think it was Bill Irvine, who with tears in his eyes, walked up and gave him his hand.

The Rathgeb's of Lower Calaveritas** were German Swiss. There were three brothers, all named John, and a fourth, Charley. One of these Johns was killed at Mokelumne Hill. A bucket full of drills was dumped on him while he was in a shaft. When they came over here to Lower Calaveritas, one of the remaining Johns was called

*Joe Marshall married Miss Mollie Sullivan in the '70s. She was teaching school at Murphys at the time. She was born in Boston of Irish parents and came to San Francisco when she was about 14. Mollie had a brother, Peter, and a sister, Hannah, who married Mr. McGuire. Peter and Hannah reared families in San Francisco. Joe Marshall's family of two sons and two daughters were born and raised near the County Hospital, San Andreas.

Mrs. Marshall used to say, "When Joe Marshall asked me to marry him he thought himself worth \$30,000. Soon afterwards his stocks became worthless." He said to me, "Well I have lost everything and I guess I have lost you too." I answered, "No you have not lost me, if you will promise that I may have a hired girl." And he did. E. E. J.

**Lower Calaveritas was the name for the little settlement at the junction of Willow Creek and Calaveritas Creek. The latter was often called O'Neil's Creek, a name now restricted to one of its headwaters.



"CAP"

Desperado or responsible citizen, this unknown resident of a Calaveras gold camp was one to be reckoned with most carefully, you may be sure. From a tintype.

Hans.

All three Rathgeb's were interested in the Union Mine. Old John took out a \$40,000 pocket while Gus Cottle was working there.

The Georgians had a hard time in California. They used to go in bands, single file, with a fiddler at the head. They'd say, "Take my long stem (shovel) and go down and heave slickens awhile." They called pay dirt "pay grit."

Joe Zwinge, Antone Shackton and old Watson were running a restaurant and bakery on Main Street in San Andreas in '55. I think it was called the American Restaurant. Zwinge was married at the time. They did a big business in 1856. Joe later quit the restaurant business and moved out to his ranch on Murray Creek and peddled fruit and vegetables around San Andreas. He fell from his peddling wagon on Murray Creek in '88 and was killed. He had come to California in 1852.* Old Watson

*In 1927 Will Zwinge told me, "My father and Joe Shackton first ran a restaurant in a big tent that cost \$1600. It burned down and they put up a wooden building. The wooden building burned down and they put up a stone building which still stands (This building was renovated by Desiré Fricot in 1936 and is now the Library. Ed.). My father moved out to the ranch on Murray Creek for his health. I am the eldest child. I was born July, 1855, where the old brewery used to be. Now Mary Ann Rathgeb's property. I am 72.

"The names of the other ten children are John, Mary, Lizzie, Henry, Theresa, Joe, Theodor, Kate, Ed and Nat. Eight are still living. They leave numerous descendants. My father had a brother in New York." E. E. J.

ran the restaurant in the seventies. They were all three from Germany.

Old Bill George, an Englishman, was a '49er. He used to run a water wheel on Dean's Hill (now Byers) before old Jim Dean came there and he used to come down to Lower Calaveritas to see Lucy O'Mara. At one time Judge Ira Hill Reed and Bill George were mining partners in West Point. I don't know what ever became of old Bill.

Taliaferro Gulch was named for old Taliaferro who later became Superior Judge of San Francisco. It is the gulch that empties into O'Neil's Canyon just below Smith's on the east side. John Robertson wrote me in 1901 about early days in that gulch.

"Speaking about quartz, the two leads in Lower Calaveritas have quite a history. The one that we prospected was struck by a man named Westfield in 1852. Billie Watt, Taliaferro and others sunk it about 14 feet in 1854 and quit. In 1857 I was examining their dump and saw gold in the rock. I got Jim Hunter, Bill and Frank Wallace to go in with me. We sunk about 40 feet. We struck rock that assayed \$2000 a ton, but the water troubled us and we sold out to a Swiss for \$500. The Swiss company prospected awhile and quit. And the Swiss was afterwards killed.

"The men on the creek north of us (Lemon Syrup Creek) had an arrastre. But they didn't seem to make it pay. The gold in Taliaferro Gulch was scraggy quartz gold. Above where the vein crossed the gulch there was nothing. Taliaferro lead was not prospected much until '59 or '60. We talked about it. But we never got at it. But some Greasers did, and they struck some rich rotten quartz. And to help them hold it from professional mine jumpers, they gave Jeff Gatewood an interest. I recollect one day Jeff Gatewood and the Greasers came into the store at Lower Calaveritas with \$400 or \$500 worth of clean gold that they had panned out."

People used to think here that nobody but miners used beans. Lots of beans are used now. My mother only used the little white beans once in a while, for soups or to bake. The miners used to put half a ham in a kettle of beans and then sometimes fry them afterwards. They were too greasy. Old Judge Norman used to say: "I've sent half the men of Calaveras County to the asylum just from living alone and eating beans."

Old Dick Rhead in San Andreas, who was Justice of the Peace many years, liked beans. He used to go up to the Colombo Hotel once a week in the '80s to eat beans. He said they cooked them "miner-fashion." He was a good cook, too. He raised two children in San Andreas, Allie and Belle.

Lloyd and Norman were both very fond of cabbage and bacon. Old Pittman, who worked for them here on the ranch, went into town once, saying, "Cabbage and bacon once a week is all right, but cabbage and bacon twenty-seven times a week would kill anybody."

I first met Cap Ellis in old Herchel's barbershop in San Andreas (Down near Agostini's store. E. E. J.). Billie Pfortner was there too. He was just raising a mustache like myself. I was next in line to be shaved when Cap Ellis who was also waiting for a shave said, "I have some papers to serve." I gave him my place and that was our introduction. He was a good-looking man, with a fine pair of Cherokee eyes in his head. He ran for State Senator on the Know-Nothing ticket and was defeated by the Irish. I have heard lots of Irishmen say they would like to vote for Cap Ellis, but they couldn't do it because

he was so bitter against the Irish. He was a nice sociable man and he wasn't down on a decent Irishman. He used to borrow money of old Maurice Murphy here at Lower Calaveritas. Maurice used to laugh about it. But Cap Ellis was an honest man and Maurice couldn't refuse him.

Cap Ellis was another dare-devil like Ben Thorn. Not afraid of anything. He went back to his native state, Texas, and joined the Confederate Army. I never heard how he came out of the war.

I saw Cap Ellis save an Irishman's life here in San Andreas in '56. This Irishman walked up to John Swett, who lived on the River, and said, "How old was you when your mother was married?" Swett pulled out a long knife and was coming down on the Irishman when Cap Ellis rushed across the street and caught his arm. It all started over the Know-Nothing Party. Ellis was single. Allen Miller thought the world of Cap Ellis and old Cap Pope.

I don't know anything about Ike Betts, only that he was a deputy, with Henry Schroebeel. Once when they came to our claim to collect poll taxes, we told them to "clean up the flume." We couldn't get water to work with.

Hunter used to live at the old Alabama House (where a part of an old chimney still stands). It was a large adobe building. The stage used to go past his door, across O'Neil's Creek, where it passed C. Henry Schroebeel's butcher shop, then over the hill not far from John Cottle's (Guttinger's) place and on to Formans (Fourth Crossing) where they changed horses, and then on to Angels Camp and Sonora. Joe Bryan used to drive stage on this line in 1850-53. Scott's Grade on this side of the ridge (along Willow Creek) must have been made about '54-55 when it became the stage road. It was supposed that Henry Schroebeel sunk this big hole on the quartz, here near the top of what was Scott's hill. It was sunk before I came here.

I never attended one of Hunter's balls. He killed a man while he was at the Alabama House over his wife who was to blame. This fellow was Sarah Darnell's beau. There used to be a nice orchard at the Alabama House and a number of dwelling houses on both sides of O'Neil's Creek.

More Memories of Yaqui Camp

Most every evening there was about fifteen of the boys in our cabin, playing cards, singing, dancing and spinning yarns to pitch pine torch lights. The pioneers used lots of pitch pine.

One evening they got to telling snake stories. Some one told a story about a snake that made a peculiar noise. Lew Fine asked, "Was it a bull snake?"

He said, "Well, I don't know whether it was a bull snake or a cow snake." He wasn't trying to be funny—he had never heard of a bull snake—and they all had a good laugh over it. Len Wilcox and partners, Allen Miller and his partners and several more of the boys about Yaqui were there.

In 1855, during the Crimean War, English Jack used to hoist a white shirt on a pole whenever he got good news from the English at Sebastopol.

When I came to the County there was two stores and a butcher shop down here where the old Binum place is at Lower Calaveritas. Maurice Murphy's store was later Binum's dwelling house.

Tom Corcoran had a store and butcher shop where



LOWER CALAVERITAS

A view from Lower Calaveritas, taken from just above the present Route 49 bridge, looking downstream to the Union Stamp mill and O'Neil's canyon. Courtesy of Calaveras County Museum.

Binum's or Kennedy's barn stood, where that old foundation is on the other side of the creek, near Lemon Syrup Gulch. They kept a bar, too. Dennis and Tom Corcoran had another store in San Andreas.

Tom Corcoran could neither read nor write. One day when his clerk was weighing some gold dust Tom made some remark about it and the clerk said: "What do you know about weighing gold? You can't read or write." Corcoran answered, "Well, I just put the gold on one side and the weights on the other and guess at it and I never was beat yet."

He made lots of money. Yet it was said all of his clerks stole from him. One of them afterwards made him a present of a \$250 gold watch. One time his clerk was rolling out a barrel of condemned whiskey. Tom said to him, "Roll it back in the cellar, it'll do for Dennis to drink."

Dennis used to say, "It ain't what you make that makes you rich, it's what you save." Dennis was walking along the street in town one day when a storekeeper who had been cleaning out his store threw out a lot of old hats. Dennis picked one up, compared it with his own, and said, that's a better hat than mine." He put it on his head and

threw his on the pile.

Maurice Murphy went to Chili Gulch (about 1860). His daughter Mollie later married Ed Rigney. Ed Rigney told me he came here in his mother's arms when he was a year old, in 1857.

(The next installment of the "Talks," in which Wade Johnston will describe some of the desperadoes, ditches, mining and other events of the "late fifties" around Yaqui Camp, Lower Calaveritas, and San Andreas, will appear in a forthcoming issue, Ed.)

Forthcoming Meetings

May 22—At the Old Costa Home at Calaveritas. "Early Days in Calaveritas," by Fred Cuneo.

June 26—San Andreas. Program to be announced.

July 24—Annual Meeting. Place and program to be announced.

August 10—Big Trees Picnic of the Mother Lode Historical Societies.

OFFICERS OF CALAVERAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

San Andreas, California

President	Mrs. Otta Leonard, Angels Camp
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2nd Vice President	Drew Garland, Murphys
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Editor of Las CalaverasW. P. Fuller, Jr., San Andreas

Las Calaveras is published quarterly by the Calaveras County Historical Society. Individual memberships (\$4.00 a year), Family (\$6.00) and Junior memberships (\$1.00) include subscription to Las Calaveras. Non-members may obtain copies of Las Calaveras from the Secretary. The original historical material in this bulletin is not copyrighted and anyone is invited to use it. Mention of the source will be appreciated.

The Calaveras County Historical Society, a non-profit corporation, meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Grange Hall in San Andreas—except for dinner meetings which are held each quarter at different places in the county.

Mother Lode Architecture Awards

The Society initiated a new project at the March meeting—one that may have far-reaching effects over the long term. Each year at our Annual Meeting, the Society will present awards of merit to those public agencies, businesses and home owners of Calaveras County who, in the opinion of the Society, have recently contributed to the preservation of Mother Lode architecture.

Three categories will be considered. These include authentic replicas, restoration and refurbishing of an original building, and construction of a new building that is clearly symbolic of a specific cultural aspect of the gold rush period and is identifiable as such.

Anyone, whether or not a member of the Society, may nominate a building to be considered for such an award. The construction or restoration must have been completed within the past three years or so. Your letter of nomination must reach the screening committee by July 1 of each year, describing the building, listing the owner, the location, which category for consideration, and your reasons why the building should qualify for an award. Send your nomination to Mrs. John Lemue, Angels Camp, California. Awards will be made at the annual meeting in July by the presentation of an attractive and appropriate certificate to the owner.

Back Issues

All except a few of the old issues of *Las Calaveras* may be obtained from the Secretary of the Society. They are priced at fifty cents each for members.

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES

Twelfth Essay Contest

Our twelfth essay contest was held in the fall, and the winners read their essays at the January meeting:

High School Division

Cheryl Nelson, Mountain Ranch
"Historic El Dorado"

Craig Kingsbury, Hathaway Pines
"Discovery and History of Mercer's Caverns"

Scott Foster, Murphys
"Old Ditches of Calaveras County"

Trevor Thomas, Murphys
"Snowshoe Thompson"

Seventh and Eighth Grades

Brian Altaffer, Avery
"Camp Tamarack"

John Blake, Avery
"The Emigrant Trail"

Stevenot Memorial Bridge

The Calaveras Board of Supervisors have designated the Historical Society to form a joint committee with the Tuolumne Historical Society to work with the State Highway Department in regard to the location and design of the plaques to be placed on the proposed high-level bridge across the Stanislaus Canyon for Highway 49. A time capsule will be placed in the new structure.

New Members

Mr. Michael Ibold, San Andreas
Mr. William B. Clark, Sacramento
Mr. George Nelson, Mountain Ranch
Mrs. Vera Nelson, Mountain Ranch
Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Foley, Murphys
Mr. Dahl C. Burnham, Stockton
Wisconsin State Historical Society
Mr. and Mrs. James Claydon, San Andreas
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Boles, Hathaway Pines
Dr. and Mrs. Leonard O'Byron, Stockton
Mrs. Violet Morales, San Andreas
Mrs. Josepha Wolfenbarger, San Andreas

Beaver Creek Road Dedication

The dedication of the Beaver Creek Road to the newly-opened South Grove will take place in July. The Society has been invited to participate in this dedication.

Gold Spike Centennial Excursion

A most intriguing outing has been arranged for the Centennial on May 9th. A train will run from Sacramento to Truckee, with several stops for plaque dedications. Anyone desiring to make the excursion, contact Dr. Coke Wood at University of the Pacific, Stockton, Calif. 95204, for reservations.