

TURNER LILLIE'S CALAVERAS TRANSIT, 1914 TO 1941

by C. R. Haynes

From Horse Drawn to Horse Power

The Calaveras Transit was a bus company for passengers and freight founded by James Rufus Turner Lillie. Turner Lillie, as he was always known, was born in 1869 to an early pioneer ranching and business family of Valley Springs. Turner's father and uncle had settled in the area in the 1860s and were already well established businessmen when, in 1885, the railroad line came to Valley Springs connecting it with Lodi. This provided an opportunity for Lillie to start what became a successful business. He transported freight and passengers arriving on the train that needed to be delivered to outlying areas of Calaveras County.

In the late 1890s and 1900s Turner Lillie's enterprises included a number of activities that interconnected. He operated a butcher business with cattle provided from his own ranch and delivered meat by wagon. He hauled freight and passengers to the mining camps and he took

"drummers" (traveling salesmen) to various places in Calaveras County when they came to Valley Springs on business. Lillie soon saw that it was the passenger and freight delivery service that had the most potential. Lillie made the transition from horse drawn wagons to



Raymond Lillie, the son of the man who built the Calaveras Transit bus company, with a mail car on Channel Street in Stockton, 1934. The Stockton bus depot is visible at the intersection of Hunter Street in the right of the picture.



A young Turner Lillie on a horse giving a ride to a dog, around 1888. Photo courtesy of Don Neilsen, Turner Lillie's grandson.

horsepower in 1914 when he acquired his first automobile. This was the start of motorized "stages to Stockton".

The transition from horse-drawn stages to motor car was to be slow and frustrating. At first both horse-drawn and motor vehicles were needed to mutually support each other. Many ironic stories exist about teams of horses needed to pull the "new-fangled" automobiles out of the mud. It was also not unusual for the auto-stages to rescue

passengers from a horse-drawn stage with a broken axle. In fact, Turner Lillie met his wife-to-be, Marie Louise Fairchild, during just such an incident when he was stuck in the mud with a team and wagon. According to one of his six sons, Everett, "Pa was stuck in front of the school house and the children, one of them being Marie, were jeering him." Marie Fairchild was born in Glencoe on March 18, 1877. She and Turner were married on November 4, 1896.



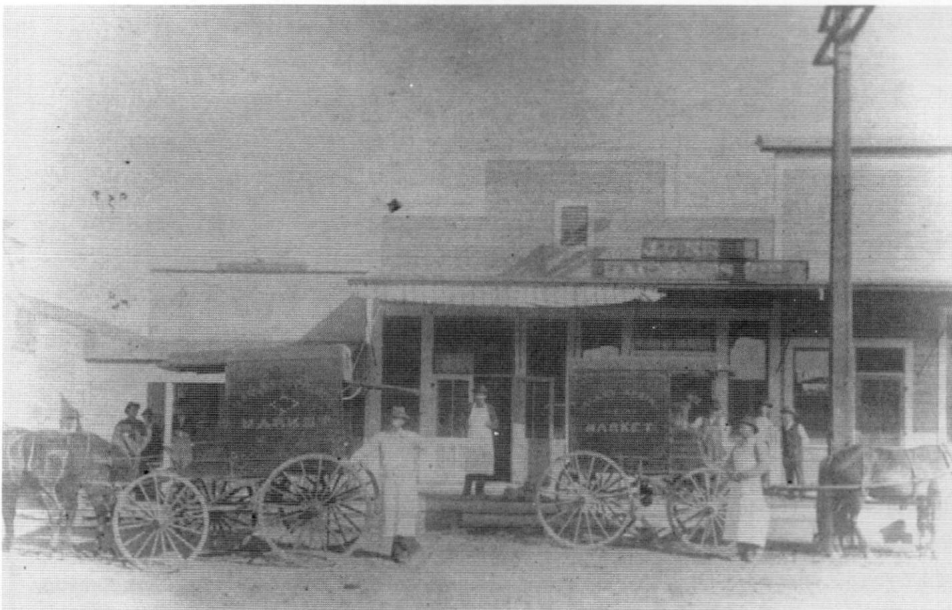
Marie Louise Fairchild of Glencoe, circa 1897.

Turner Lillie purchased his new Model T in May of 1914. His first trip with paying passengers transported five ladies out for a shopping trip from Valley Springs to Stockton. This was not a "new service" as open wagons and even fringe-topped buggies had

previously taken passengers to Stockton for shopping. It was the mode of transportation and the passengers themselves that had changed. The ladies now traveled in an enclosed automobile and were as stylishly dressed as any of their Stockton counterparts.

The Sierra Railway had reached Angels Camp from Jamestown via the Melones grade in 1902. With the automobiles and the condition of the roads becoming more reliable Turner Lillie's transportation business expanded at a faster pace. In late 1914 he moved his business and his family to Angels Camp to be closer to the hub of transportation

in Calaveras County. Mining and the supporting industry of logging made Angels Camp the logical choice. In Angels Camp Turner Lillie purchased two adjoining houses on Main Street for his large family of now eight children (none of which were then out of school or married). The fact that Lillie was already forty-five years old when he started his new venture was amazing. It may not be so surprising when we consider his often stated philosophy, "When lacking in ambition, get in debt." With a heavy debt and



Lillie's meat delivery wagon in front of his meat market in Valley Springs, 1895.

ten mouths to feed Lillie was driven to ambition and his dream of a bus transportation system became a reality.

Regulation by the California Railroad Commission

By 1915 the daily train service of freight, passengers, and mail into Angels Camp was only marginally profitable. Automobile transportation had taken most of the train's passenger business.

From 1914 to 1918 bus service was completely disorganized. There was no published schedule or fares and operators did not even work together. This created tremendous difficulties and frustrations for passengers. The State of California threatened to regulate the bus business, but had no agency prepared to do so. In 1916 the "Star Auto Stage Association" was formed in Sacramento to organize smaller independent operators and include operators around Sacramento, Stockton, Modesto, Merced and the "hill counties" around them. In 1917 "Star" moved its headquarters to Stockton at 27 South Hunter Street to be near the center of its territory.

The State of California then began regulating the bus industry through a new department set up in its already established California Railroad Commission. This agency established its control slowly because the new rules had to be written and the Commission depended on the bus industry to help define these new regulations. All operating rights were "grandfathered in" back to April 1, 1917. The question came up at several commission hearings as to who owned the rights at Star - the individuals involved or the association as a whole? The Commission suggested that Star incorporate to settle this question. A man named W. E. "Buck" Travis, who at the time was the largest bus operator in the country, solved the problem. Travis bought and incorporated Star in 1920, and in 1921 changed the name to California



Turner and Marie Louise Lillie, circa 1910.

Transit. Turner Lillie continued to operate as an independent and changed the name of his company from "Angels-Stockton Stages" to Calaveras Transit. However, the advantage of a name that sounded similar to California Transit would only last a few years.

By the early 1920s the Railroad Commission rules were well defined. All bus companies were required to publish their fares and schedules and adhere strictly to them. The routes they operated were specifically defined. Calaveras Transit had the rights to operate their mainline service north from Angels Camp to Altaville and San Andreas, then west over Highway 26 to Stockton. Their main line always ran through Valley Springs and continued west serving Stone Corral, Bellota, Linden, and Glenwood Road Junction, then on to the Stockton main bus terminal on Hunter Square to connect with other bus lines.

The New Buses

As the Railroad Commission worked to regulate the bus industry, Lillie worked to expand his operation with additional vehicles. In 1917 he ordered two new Packard buses through a dealer in Stockton to upgrade his service. These Packards, known as "Dream Coaches", were among the finest vehicles available at the time. Unfortunately, the buses were awaiting delivery in the dealer's two-story building when the building caught fire. At that time two



An early Lillie stage, pictured in front of the Valley Springs Railroad Depot, circa 1895.



The Stickle Building in Angels Camp as it appeared around 1926. The original Stickle Building is the building on the right with the porch, built in 1856. The building in the middle, the garage with the archway, was built after 1900. Both buildings were built by Italian stone masons and still stand today. The building on the left was built by contractors from San Francisco and still houses a bank today. Note the gas pumps in front of the depot and the dirt street. Photo courtesy of Rene Baylor Photography.

of Lillie's daughters, Florence and Loretta were living in Stockton. Loretta was attending Humphreys Business College. Lillie's daughters as well as others watched in horror as the buses fell through the floor of the burning building. Turner's new Dream Coaches were destroyed.

It would be two more years before Turner's order could be re-filled. During these years all buses were either stretch

limousines or truck chassis with special bodies. In 1919 he finally took delivery of a new twelve-passenger

**LILLIE'S
Angels-Stockton Stage
Star Auto Stage Assn.**

Lv. Stockton	Lv. Angels
7:30 A.M.	7:00 A.M.
1:00 P.M.	1:00 P.M.

SAN ANDREAS (east bound)

Arrive 10:30 A.M.	Leave 10:35 P.M.
Arrive 4:00 P.M.	Leave 4:05 P.M.

SAN ANDREAS (west bound)

Arrive 7:45 A.M.	Leave 8:00 A.M.
Arrive 1:45 P.M.	Leave 2:00 P.M.

Sage Stops at All Way Stations.
Connects with Outgoing Trains.

Direct Road to Big Trees and Dorrington. Leaves Central Auto. Co., 118 N. San Joaquin St., Stockton

Stockton Phone 436.
Angels Office, City Garage, Phone 128.
Angels Res. Phone 33.

Newspaper Ad—Lillie's Bus Schedule as it appeared in the *Calaveras Californian*, January 26, 1918

Packard. The new Packard gave Calaveras Transit the edge it needed to compete.

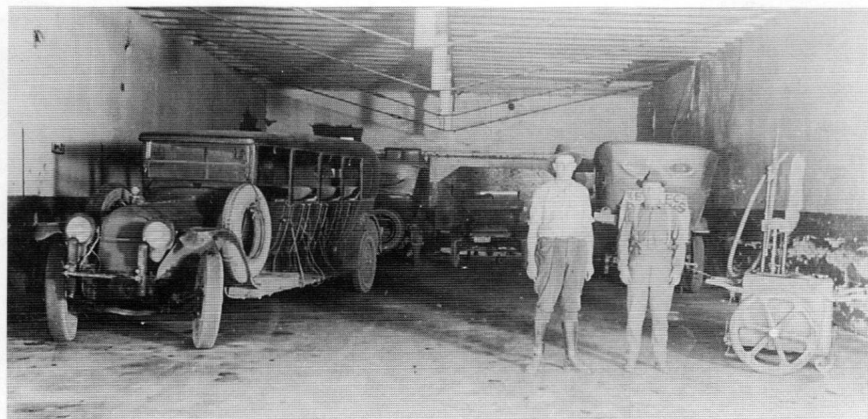
In 1921 Frank Fageol built the first vehicle specifically designed as a bus. The first true bus came from his truck building factory in Oakland, California. These buses, known as the Fageol (rhymes with fragile) were painted gray and the name "Safety Coach" was attached to the radiator grille. Frank Fageol could have saved his money and material on these nameplates, because as soon as people saw the new slim, trim and streamlined coaches they said the buses looked as sleek as "greyhounds." Fageol should have patented

this name, but he continued to call his buses Safety Coaches. In just a few years he went out of business.

Buses built in the 1920s and 1930s were fascinating in their appearance then as they are now. Although not built as curiosities, they often were. Up until 1936 buses appeared in so many styles and shapes that the only place you were likely to see several buses that looked alike would be on a Greyhound's main line.

Expanding Competition

The railroad never regained its prominence in passenger service. Since it was so unprofitable, the railroad was allowed to abandon service to Angels Camp



Inside of Stickle Building with Turner Lillie on the right and the 1919 Packard bus in the left foreground, and various Ford buses in the background, circa 1926.



The "Central Garage". Turner Lillie in front of the somewhat updated bus depot and Ford Garage in the Stickle Building, circa 1928.

in 1935. This opened the door even further for motor service. Passenger service to Stockton from Calaveras County using the now proven automobile was provided by at least six others trying to capture part or all of this business. John Carley and his sons Joe and Earl; Fred Winkler and his partner O'Connell; Chappie Eberhardt; the Raggio brothers; as well as drivers Dave Foppiano, L. S. Hutchinson, Frank Cooper and Thomas Kelly had previously provided service to Melones, Murphys and Stockton by horse drawn carts, buggies and wagons. These men recognized the opportunity in auto stage transportation and they gave Turner Lillie fierce competition. Lillie faced this competition head-on and prevailed. He was known for his hard work and honesty. With his willingness to back his ambition with risk-taking by going into heavy debt, he established a transportation system that would endure.

Lillie owned a number of Ford vehicles, because he had also become a Ford dealer. He rented the Stickle Building in Angels Camp for his stage line business, Ford dealership, and to use as a garage. In 1926 Lillie bought the Stickle Building.

In the 1930s Lillie bought one of the Fageol buses and it became the pride of the Calaveras Transit fleet. As Greyhound absorbed smaller bus companies and combined their larger ones they would release some used buses for sale. Besides the Fageol bus, Calaveras Transit also purchased two Garford buses to add to the fleet of

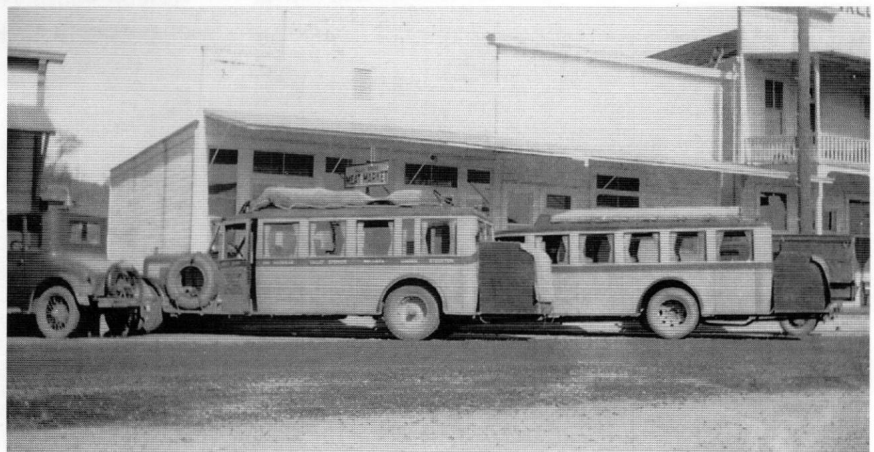


Drivers Everett Lillie on the left and his younger brother Raymond on the right. Stylish lady in the center is Raymond's wife Nadine. Photo taken in Angels Camp a few steps from the Calaveras Transit Depot, circa 1932.

smaller Ford buses. In all, Lillie operated a variety of buses totaling seven from the headquarters in the Stickle building.

The U. S. Mail

Calaveras Transit was also allowed to operate passenger service through Copperopolis to Stockton. Although this route carried few passengers, carrying the mail made it profitable, and Lillie was awarded the mail contract. "Feeder service" could also be operated to Melones through Carson Hill, because this was inside Calaveras County, so that a mail contract also made this route viable. East from Angels Camp Lillie operated service to Vallecito, Murphys, Avery, and Arnold, and until the snow closed the road (usually around October) to Dorrington. When carrying mail, the bus sign boards read "U.S. Mail" rather than the usual destination of the bus.



Two Garfords and a mail car at the Valley Springs Hotel in 1936. The hotel also served as the bus depot, the Western Union office, and the phone company office.



Garford bus in front of the Altaville Post Office and Bus Depot in 1939. The stone building in the right background is the easily recognizable Prince-Garibaldi building.

In 1927 Lake Alpine Lodge was built to accommodate the increasing vacation and tourist trade from Calaveras Big Trees State Park and the continued development of PG&E lakes such as Lake Alpine. The new lodge only stayed open until snow closed the road around October. Calaveras Transit was awarded the mail contract and the Railroad Commission also extended their rights to operate passenger service from Dorrington to Lake Alpine from May to October of each year. If the bus did not have a passenger destined for Lake Alpine, the driver still had to carry the mail, stopping at Dorrington, Camp Connell, Tamarack, Blood's Station, and finally Lake Alpine. There were no eight hour days for those bus drivers. Fortunately, the Forest Service leased cabin sites and Lillie had a cabin built at Lake Alpine for his family and for the drivers who would have to stay overnight.

The Lake Alpine Lodge was also the post office. In some places the depot and post office were in separate locations requiring separate stops. In the cases of Felix, in the Salt Spring Valley and Eugene the post offices/depots



Buses at Valley Springs around 1936. The bus in the front is the Ford with destinations Stockton, Linden, Bellota, Valley Springs, San Andreas, Angels Camp and Murphys listed on the side. On the right is the Fageol.

were in a ranch house with the ranchers' wives as the postmistresses. In all, Lillie's depot stops included the post offices of Altaville, San Andreas, Valley Springs, Bellota, and Linden as well as the main post office in Stockton at the back of the Federal Building on Hunter Street.

The mail contracts were so important to a bus company's revenues that it was literally its "bread and butter." If there were no passengers the service still operated because the mail had to be delivered. The mail contract was up for bid every year creating a risk to the dependent company. Losing a mail contract could close a bus company in a rural area.

A Family Affair

Turner and Marie produced a tight family. In all they had ten children, at least three of whom went in to the family business and were involved in the daily operations. Born between 1897 and 1920, their children were Florence, Elmer, Loretta, Wilber, Ethelyn, twins Everett and Ernest, Raymond, Vivian, and Elwin. Turner Lillie personally drove his buses for only the first few years until he could afford to hire drivers. Son Everett Lillie was a driver and a mechanic in the 1930s. Raymond Lillie became a driver right out of high school in 1932. Wilbur Lillie and his wife Arlene were the managers of the line from 1932 until it was sold in 1941.

Non-family employees maintained a longtime and closely connected relationship. Jack Vettorazzi drove through most of the 1930s. He was the lead driver and usually drove the Fageol. His younger brother Louie Vettorazzi sometimes drove relief. Adolph "Dufo" Gualdoni was a driver in 1936 and 1937.

A Day in the Life of a Bus Driver

A typical work day for a driver would be to start early in the morning from Angels Camp to take a load of miners to Melones, via Carson Hill, and return with



Bus #101 with driver Jack Vet standing alongside, circa 1938.



The 1936 Ford coming home from Stockton, photographed at Stone Corral in 1939.

passengers for the Stockton schedule. Or, passengers from Angels Camp and Vallecito would go to the Sanitarium in Murphys and the bus would return with passengers for the “main line to Stockton.”

Leaving Angels Camp at 7:30 A. M. this bus served Altaville, Forth Crossing, San Andreas and Valley Springs where the bus had a connection from Mokelumne Hill and the northern end of the county. The bus would then continue on to Stone Corral where it would meet the bus from Stockton on the side of the road to exchange mailbags. This stop would also give the passengers a chance to exchange greetings and news and take a few photographs. The bus would then continue westbound to Bellota, Linden, and Glenwood Road Junction to the main Greyhound Depot on Hunter Square in Stockton.

In the winter when the road was closed by snow beyond Arnold, usually at either Big Trees or Dorrington, the driver would make a round trip to Arnold, serving Vallecito, Murphys, and Avery as well. In the summer this run also included Camp Connell, Tamarack, Blood’s Station and Lake Alpine.

More than one scheduled run a day was operated to Stockton with an afternoon run operating on most days. Jess Arthur drove this run. He stayed overnight at the Stockton Hotel, garaged the bus at the Pacific Storage Building at 544 North Hunter Street, and operated an early morning run back to Angels Camp.



The Fageol and Ford meet on the road, Highway 26. Photo taken at Stone Corral in 1939.

“Dufo” Gualdoni often drove the mail car through Copperopolis. The mail run was with a Model A Ford two-door sedan or a Ford wood-sided station wagon that could also carry one or two passengers. This run served Farmington, then Eugene at the Kelliher Ranch where the postmistress, Mrs. Groves, might serve him pie after he unloaded the mail. Next stop on this schedule would be the old rail town of Milton. In the horse and wagon days the mail had been brought in from Stockton on the Stockton and Copperopolis Railroad. Next stop was Felix on the Tower Ranch where Agnes Tower was the postmistress, then to Copperopolis where the mail was delivered to Mrs. Edna Lane. Postmistress Lane’s daughters, Kathleen Lane Supinger and Ina Lane Latin were sometimes passengers to Stockton for shopping, doctor’s appointments or to attend the theater.

The Altaville stop was next. Mrs. Delia Callahan was more than a postmistress. Besides the post office located in a small separate building, she also operated a gas station, store, and lunch counter for school children from Bret Harte High School, which was across the street. Mrs. Callahan had a hole cut in the wall of the two adjoining buildings so she could run back and forth from handling mail to serving other customers.

Only one mile away at the Angles Camp Depot the station schedule would end, but the driver’s day might not. The driver sometimes would be asked to take another bus to Carson Hill or Melones, or to go east to Dorrington and sometimes all the way to Lake Alpine. There were no regulations on drivers’ hours as there are today.



The 1930 Fageol bus leaving the Stone Coral stop.



The Fageol on the mail docks at Stockton's main post office in 1939. The large building in the background still stands today and is the Pacific Storage building where Turner Lillie rented space in the garage to store the buses overnight.

Destination Stockton

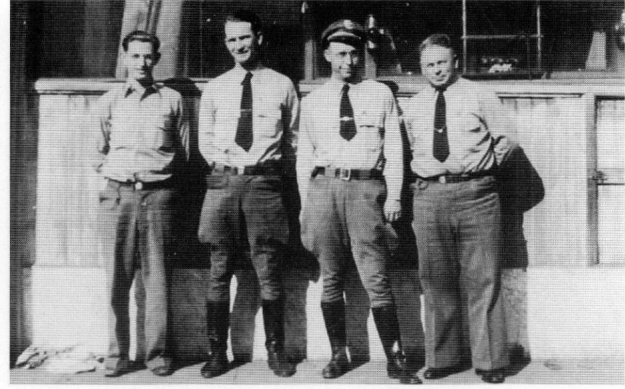
Buses converged from all directions in Stockton around mid-day. After unloading passengers, baggage, and freight the driver would take the mail to the main U. S. Post Office docks on the rear of the Federal Building at 400 North Hunter Street. Stockton's main post office had moved from California and Market Streets in 1934. The rear truck loading dock with its overhang is still the same today.

Most drivers would have their lunch at the Avenue Inn on the corner of Hunter and Miner Street. The Avenue Inn is the only business that still exists today that once served the bus industry employees in the 1920s and 1930s. All the buildings across the street from the Avenue Inn on the even numbered side of the block have all been leveled to accommodate parking lots and now a new theater complex.

In the morning after receiving mail at the post office docks, Calaveras Transit buses would load passengers, baggage, and freight in the depot at 227 North Hunter and then pull out onto the street to await any late connections. Stockton bus depots were to outgrow themselves several times. The Greyhound Depot served all the previous bus lines that had merged as well as a few independents. It was so crowded that many buses had to park on the street after loading in the depot building. Some independents did not have permission to load inside the depot and had to load all their passengers and baggage on the streets around the depot.



Transit Driver Adolph "Dufu" Gualdoni in front of the Greyhound depot in Stockton at Channel and Hunter, 1936.



Calaveras Transit drivers Ray Lillie (far left) and Jack Vettorazzi (far right) flanking two Greyhound drivers. Note that the two Greyhound drivers were wearing jodhpurs and high boots, the required uniform from 1931 to 1946. When high leather boots became too expensive and hard to obtain in the war, the uniform was changed to military "leggings", similar to spats.

A lot of people rode buses in the 1930s. Almost every family would have some reason to put someone on a bus for somewhere. Ferryboats still ran from Stockton to San Francisco. If a bus passenger to Stockton did not catch a connecting bus, he or she could take a ferry or train.

There's Freight and There's Freight

Passengers and mail were not the only things that the buses carried. Operating rights allowed bus companies to transport freight up to 100 pounds. Small companies without a local agent to collect packages for them would have to make unscheduled stops to pick up such things as laundry, car parts, flowers, and medical supplies to be transported to any destination served by the schedule.

After the repeal of prohibition in 1933, whiskey was picked up at a bar in the Stockton Hotel to be delivered to bars and other businesses in Calaveras County. Some of the more unusual cargo included ladybugs in burlap sacks, crickets in boxes, and live chicks.

Then there is the story of the bear... a story greatly exaggerated in the sporting clubs of Stockton. One version states that one of Turner Lillie's buses arrived with a bear tied to each front fender, or an even more preposterous version was that a bear was riding next to the driver. A bear was indeed kept at the Angels Camp

New Passenger and Express Schedules
EFFECTIVE JUNE 1, 1940

DAILY

Leave MURPHYS	8:15 A.M.	4:35 P.M.
Leave DOUGLAS FLAT	8:25 A.M.	4:45 P.M.
Leave VALLECITO	8:30 A.M.	4:50 P.M.
Leave ANGELS CAMP	8:45 A.M.	5:00 P.M.
Leave SAN ANDREAS	9:15 A.M.	5:30 P.M.
Leave VALLEY SPRINGS	9:45 A.M.	6:00 P.M.
Leave BELLOTA	10:20 A.M.	6:35 P.M.
Leave LINDEN	10:30 A.M.	6:45 P.M.
Arrive STOCKTON	10:45 A.M.	7:00 P.M.
Leave STOCKTON	1:30 P.M.	7:30 P.M.
Leave LINDEN	1:50 P.M.	7:50 P.M.
Leave BELLOTA	1:55 P.M.	7:55 P.M.
Leave VALLEY SPRINGS	2:30 P.M.	8:30 P.M.
Leave SAN ANDREAS	3:00 P.M.	9:00 P.M.
Leave ANGELS CAMP	3:30 P.M.	9:30 P.M.
Leave VALLECITO	3:45 P.M.	9:45 P.M.
Leave DOUGLAS FLAT	3:50 P.M.	9:50 P.M.
Arrive MURPHYS	4:00 P.M.	10:00 P.M.

SERVICE ON SATURDAYS ONLY

Read Down			Read Up
9:00 A.M.	Lv. ANGELS CAMP	Ar.	3:00 P.M.
9:15 A.M.	Lv. VALLECITO	Lv.	2:50 P.M.
9:20 A.M.	Lv. DOUGLAS FLAT	Lv.	2:45 P.M.
9:30 A.M.	Lv. MURPHYS	Lv.	2:40 P.M.
9:35 A.M.	Lv. AVERY	Lv.	2:20 P.M.
10:05 A.M.	Lv. ARNOLD	Lv.	2:10 P.M.
10:15 A.M.	Lv. CALAV. BIG TREES	Lv.	1:55 P.M.
10:25 A.M.	Lv. DORRINGTON	Lv.	1:50 P.M.
10:35 A.M.	Lv. CAMP CONNELL	Lv.	1:45 P.M.
11:00 A.M.	Lv. BIG MEADOWS	Lv.	1:15 P.M.
11:30 A.M.	Lv. TAMARACK	Lv.	12:45 P.M.
12:00 Noon	Ar. LAKE ALPINE	Lv.	12:10 P.M.

CALAVERAS TRANSIT COMPANY, Ltd.

STOCKTON DEPOT STOCKTON OFFICE
Pacific Greyhound 330 S. Aurora

Newspaper Ad - Calaveras Transit schedule from the Calaveras Californian, June 13, 1940.

Depot for a while. According to Tom Osborn, his father and uncle had brought an orphaned bear cub down from their mountain pastures and kept it at the Osborn Ranch near Altaville. When the bear grew too big and rough for the Osborn children to play with, Turner took the bear and tied it at the bus depot in Angels Camp to entertain passengers. There the bear became famous with people coming just to see it. Eventually a movie company came to the depot and bought the bear. Such things were possible in those days, but wildlife laws are more protective today.

**Turner Lillie...
The Man and His Legacy**

People, however, were the ones that made a bus company successful, and Turner Lillie was a very personable man. Lillie's grandchildren relate a number of stories about him. At the beginning of World War I, a young man named John Macintosh was riding the bus to Stockton to go in to the Army. Lillie allowed the young man an extra thirty minutes to visit with his sweetheart in Valley Springs. After the war, this young couple married and one of Lillie's daughters, Loretta, attended the wedding as a witness.

Another story describes Lillie's acrobatic abilities on a bicycle. Lillie, then a stalwart businessman in his fifties, noticed a young boy unsuccessfully attempting a difficult riding stunt on Main Street. Lillie took the bicycle and performed some amazing maneuvers. Lillie's son, Wilbur, observed the scene and was totally awed. None of his family knew he could ride like that and some members of his family refused to believe the story.

We don't know if Turner Lillie was a practical joker, but there is at least one story of his being literally on the receiving end of a joke. Shellacking a toilet seat was a common prank in those days. Retired Police Chief George Baratono tells of one of Lillie's employees, Spiro Bronzich, shellacking the toilet seat in the ladies room at the depot. The intended victim was a businessman from across the street who would not use the restroom in his own establishment, but preferred the ladies room at the depot as he was somewhat of a dandy. Unfortunately Lillie was the recipient of the shellacking. Eunice Thompson, the bookkeeper at the depot, was a very prim and proper lady. Can you imagine her embarrassment at being "privy" to this joke?

Turner Lillie was a very active businessman as well as active in his community. He once served a term on the Grand Jury. In 1925, he was called to a meeting with other business leaders to solve a gas war. The gas war problem was not solved, but out of that meeting came an organization known as the "Angels Boosters." Within a year, the Boosters came up with the idea of re-enacting the Frog Jump made famous by Mark Twain sixty years earlier. This made Turner Lillie a charter



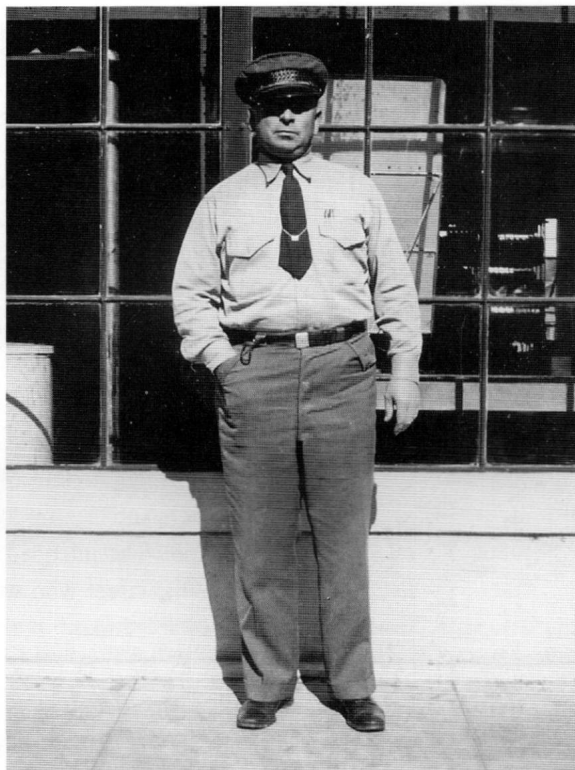
Jack Vettorazzi in the Fageol waiting on Channel Street in the late 1930s.

member in the organization that still exists today.

Although he did not drink, Lillie often went in bars at the end of the workday to discuss local news and to promote his business. At home, only a block or so away, dinner was always served at sundown. It was often the duty of his young daughter Loretta to knock on the door of the bar with a message. Of course, little girls were not allowed in bars, so she would tell whoever answered the door to "tell Daddy his supper is ready."

Turner Lillie suffered a stroke and for the last few years of his life he made the trip to town with the help of his trusted employee, Spiro Bronzich. He probably watched his son Wilbur and his daughter-in-law Arlene run the business he had built through most of his life. He died on January 15, 1935 at the age of 65. According to his grandson, Don Nielsen, it rained so hard on the day of his funeral that the hearse could not make it up the hill to the Double Springs cemetery. His casket had to be carried about a quarter mile from the road to the grave site which was reminiscent of this early days and an ironic ending to a man who had provided motor transportation his whole life.

The year 1935 was a milestone year for Calaveras Transit. Congress passed the "Motor Carrier Act of 1935," which greatly increased regulation. These federal laws are still in force today. California placed bus regulation under the "Public Utilities Commission," where it remains today. Calaveras Transit ordered two new Ford buses which were delivered in 1936. These buses were less expensive to operate and eventually replaced the Fageol and both the Garfords. The new Fords served well into World War II. Turner Lillie's bus line was sold in 1941 to Jean Vincent Fuzere, yet the legacy that Turner Lillie built lasted many more.



Jack Vettorazzi on the sidewalk outside of the Stockton Greyhound depot in 1936. Note the uniform is still used by current drivers. Behind him inside the depot you can see the buses with the railroad lanterns on them.

Turner Lillie was a man of "firsts." He was the first to have an ice-making machine in his butcher shop in Valley Springs. He was the first to have a telephone which he installed at the butcher shop. He was the first to buy an automobile in his town. His was the first bus line in Calaveras County which provided the best motorized transportation system to serve the residents for over three decades.

Turner Lillie created a bus system within the county and provided connections to Stockton that paralleled (though on a smaller scale) that of Carl Eric Wickman's building of a nation-wide system that in 1931 became the Greyhound system.

Both companies improved and expanded dramatically through the 1920s and 1930s. Turner Lillie's company served Stockton from Calaveras County and Wickman's served the nation. Calaveras County should not forget the stories of local transportation, and we are grateful for Turner Lillie's contribution to the local bus industry.



Bus depot in Angels Camp, the Stickle Building, taken May 30, 1941. Note the buses would park the wrong way, depending on which direction they were traveling.

Photo courtesy of Bob Burrowes.

FAREWELL TO A FINE LADY *Lillian Filippini, 1906 - 2003*

This Historical Society is sad to note the passing of one of our finest long-time members, Lillian Filippini. Mrs. Filippini graduated from Calaveras High School in 1924 and lived in Calaveras County for 81 of her 97 years. She married Charles Filippini and with him they worked cattle on the Filippini Ranch outside of San Andreas for most of her adult life.

Mrs. Filippini was involved in community interests as well, and was active for 75 years with the Angels-Azalea Chapter of the Eastern Star, Guardian of Job's Daughters Bethel No. 162. She was also involved with the Calaveras County Farm Bureau and the Native Daughters of the Golden West. For ten years, between 1979 and 1989 she served as the Membership Secretary for the Historical Society. When she declined another term opportunity, outgoing society president Bud Ponte acknowledged her as "one of the finest ladies I have ever had the pleasure to have known."

The October 1989 *Las Calaveras* had the following commentary about the event:

EDITORIAL, BY GEORGE HOEPER

When, at its July meeting, she stepped down as financial and membership secretary of the Calaveras County Historical Society - a post she had held for the past 10 years - Lillian Filippini was accorded a standing ovation.

And, it is not without due cause that Lillian received that warm round of applause. No one could have been more devoted or responsible in carrying out her duties for our historical society than Mrs. Filippini.

Always pleasant, helpful, filled with concern for the growth and welfare of the society and doing more than their share, Lillian and her husband, Charles, during those 10 years and at the present, are among the stalwarts of this organization.

Every member of the Calaveras County Historical Society owes Lillian Filippini a vote of thanks for a job well done.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This interesting story of the history of the Calaveras Transit and Turner Lillie came to *Las Calaveras* in a very round about way. The story was completely researched by C. R. Haynes, himself a professional bus driver of over fifty years, who lives in Angles Camp. This story was first produced by the San Joaquin County Historical Society & Museum in 1999. This article from the *San Joaquin Historian* is reprinted here as a courtesy of, and with the special permission of the San Joaquin County Historical Society & Museum. The San Joaquin County Historical Society & Museum invites comments and appreciates submission of further information related to its publications. You may contact them by phone at 209-331-2055 (fax 331-2057); P. O. Box 30, Lodi, California 95241-0030; or by email at info@sanjoaquinhistory.org. *Las Calaveras* is grateful for their permission to reproduce this article.

The story of Calaveras Transit developed truly as a labor of love. C. R. Haynes became fascinated with the Fageol bus and decided to research its history. He became so enthralled in the story that he realized

that he had several stories developing. Here we have the story of Calaveras Transit, a pioneering business which relied heavily on the Fageol bus, but therein lies another story about the buses themselves. Perhaps in the future we will receive more stories from Mr. Haynes about these old buses, or perhaps a more in depth story on the life of Turner Lillie or the history of the Stickle building. C. R. Haynes has discovered one of the joys of researching and writing about history: the side stories and tangents are just as fascinating as the original goal. We appreciate his contribution and hope to hear from him again. Mr. Haynes dedicates this article to his wife Jo Anne and her family, the Vettorazzis of Angles Camp.

All photos produced with this article were gathered and provided for our use by C. R. Haynes. This story as it appears in *Las Calaveras* in 2004 is slightly different than the original that appeared in the *San Joaquin Historian* in 1999. Full bibliographical information is available at the office of the Calaveras County Historical Society.

Calaveras County Historical Society

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The Calaveras County Historical Society is a non-profit corporation. It meets on the fourth Thursday of each month in various communities throughout the County. Locations and scheduled programs are announced in advance. Some meetings include a dinner program, and visitors are always welcome.

The Society operates the Calaveras County Museum which is open daily from 10:00 to 4:00 in the historic County courthouse located at 30 Main Street in San Andreas.

The Society's office is located in historic San Andreas, the Calaveras County seat. Visitors are always welcome to stop by the office for assistance with research, and are encouraged to visit the museum while in the area. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:00, and the telephone number is (209) 754-1058, or contact us at: CCHS@goldrush.com.

Donations

The Historical Society is grateful for the following donations:

September 2003

Portrait of Mary Dunphy Joy—Donald N. Joy Estate, Mokelumne Hill

October 2003

Book "Twenty-five Years of Building the West"
Calaveras Cement Company—Ruth Matson,
San Andreas

New Members

The Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

September 2003

Kirk W. Smith, Folsom
David G. Lei, Murphys
Lois Baldwin, Angels Camp
Janet Catlin, Mountain Ranch
Thomas A. Farr, Denair

October 2003

H. Stuart Manners, Altaville
Rita Hicks, San Andreas
Antoinette May, Mokelumne Hill
David & Julie Lei, Jr., Murphys
Don & Gretchen Warner, Fallon, NV
Frederick & Kathleen Dodge, Mountain Ranch
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Adrian Nestor, Angels Camp
George & Irene Segale, Valley Springs

November 2003

Albert Porter, Grass Valley
Kathleen Bennett, Arnold
Doug & Marilyn Hinsdale, Valley Springs
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Karen Hendrix, Mountain Ranch
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