



Quarterly Bulletin of the Calaveras County Historical Society
Volume XXI October 1972 Number 1

Wade Johnston Talks To His Daughter

By EFFIE ENFIELD JOHNSTON

Seventh Installment

We delve once more into the voluminous manuscript "books" so carefully filled by Effie Johnston with her father's "Talks" with her. We have met many of the people referred to below in earlier installments of Wade Johnston's reminiscences. He now tells about life in and about Yaqui Camp at the close of the Civil War and afterwards. That war was a particularly great tragedy for Johnston, a Southern sympathizer living in a region predominantly Unionist.

In this installment Johnston recalls mining with Cap Ferguson, later one of the discoverers and early operators of the rich Sheep Ranch mine. The tragic death of Horace Cottle is included, as well as Wade's marriage to Martha Cottle in 1867.

At the risk of unnecessary repetition, we wish again to point out to our readers that such personal first-hand accounts as the "Talks" of the San Andreas area are very rare, and Wade Johnston's memories of those far-away days are a most valuable record of that portion of our local history. Now we turn our readers over to Wade Johnston again as he describes how he found things upon his return from the copper boom in late '64.

I Return from the Copper Excitement

I was at the copper mines about a year and a half. Cap Ferguson had come up to Yaqui Camp and was in my cabin when I returned in 1864. Three good pairs of blankets and most of my dishes and books had been carried off before Cap came up.

Then I went to work at the "49" mine, between Valley Springs and Campo Seco. I was there only two months, working for wages at \$80.00 a month. Before two months were up, the mine shut down and didn't pay up. I stayed at the mine a while after the shutdown, living along on beans for a week. It was storming most of the time.

I don't know how many there were in the "49" company. Gideon Adams, who came west with our train in '54, had charge of the works. I remember voting, while there, at the general election in '64, at D.W. Bryant's hotel, the Spring Valley House. I met Tom



CHAVANNE MINE AT SHEEP RANCH

An interesting view of the then ramshackle hoisting works and surface plant of the Chavanne mine as they appeared in 1890.

Silver,* who was working for Gid Adams at the "49", too: John McQueen was there, also. He used to be in the merchandise business with Sullivan.

I also met my old friend, John C. Colehower, there. He was one of the first men I worked for in Placer County in '54 and '55. (See the April, 1969, issue of Las Calaveras. Ed.) He had stayed one night in my cabin at Yaqui Camp with Cap Ferguson before coming down to the "49" mine, after returning to California from Idaho. He came over to the "49" and got me to change about \$150.00 in gold dust for him at Campo Seco. I got about a dollar more an ounce for it than he could have gotten in Idaho. This was the last time I ever met him. He wanted me to go back to Idaho with him. He said, "I'll give you \$5 a day as long as you work for me." He and Billie Smith were mining partners in Placer County, '54-'55.

Colehower married a girl from Amador County. I remember she had one of my pictures I had taken at Stockton in 1863. Colehower was from Philadelphia and a well-educated man. Cap Ferguson thought he was a great letter writer. Colehower went to Santa Cruz where he was elected Justice of the Peace. The last I heard of him was when Jack Swank, of Washington Ranch, met him in Santa Cruz about 1900. He told Jack Swank to tell Billie Smith and Wade Johnston to write to him. I guess he died there. His only drawback was drink. But he wasn't bad while drinking.

Dave Bryant, who ran the Spring Valley House, moved with his family afterwards down to the lower country. Later, he killed a man for assaulting his wife. He shot him down and was acquitted for it.

Also I met old J. F. Cronk at Spring Valley House in 1864. (See Las Calaveras for October, 1969, page 9. Ed.) It was the last time I ever saw the old fellow. He said to me concerning the Civil War, "I am making my living off the public and I have to keep my mouth shut."

I think it was at some election boom, perhaps in '64, that Smallwood and Whitehead bursted the cannon in San Andreas. I think this was so because Brother Charles had gone over the mountains to Idaho and his blacksmith shop was still empty.

These fellows, Smallwood and Whitehead, had been shooting all night with an old cast iron cannon. They had the cannon mounted on the bank of the ditch that runs along between Casinelli's Store and the Bush House (a saloon).

They ran out of tamping for the cannon, and then used mud and sod out of the ditch instead. When they set it off, the breech of the cannon blew out, taking Smallwood's head off. It took off the top of the Bush House, crossed China (Court) Street, and went through the front door of Charles' blacksmith shop, where it landed by the

*Tom Silver, who later raised a family at San Andreas, was thrown from his horse and killed, while tending the Cap Pope ditch. W.H. Johnston then bought the ditch for \$1000, gave a mortgage on his mine, and lost it. E.E.J.

coal-house door. Another piece of the cannon went up through the door of the Metropolitan Hotel. No one was hurt but Smallwood. Whitehead miraculously escaped injury.

Smallwood and Whitehead were "street drunks." Whitehead afterwards had considerable money left him by relatives. When he left here to go back and get this money, a friend had to go with him part of the way to get him started, as he couldn't trust himself. He was an Englishman and said to be of a good family. His real name was Tibbits.

Sharp and Armstrong were running the Metropolitan Hotel in 1865. There were interested in a store, there, in San Andreas, at one time and failed. Sharp had said, "I don't want any of the damn Copperheads' money!" (Sharp, who was known as an uncompromising Union man, had allowed Colonel Baker to deliver the speech from the balcony of the hotel, in 1859, that resulted in the fatal duel between Jeff Gatewood and Doctor Goodwin. Ed.).

Wade Johnston now returns to his memories of Yaqui Camp, with an anecdote about his neighbor, Jim Coogan. He described Coogan's first marriage, to Kate Quinn, in the April, 1970 issue of Las Calaveras.

When old Jim Coogan married his second wife, a widow with a little chicken ranch in the valley, she asked him if she should bring any of her furnishings up with her. Coogan said to her, "You needn't bring a thing! I'm supplied with everything. I have freight teams running over the mountains. I have cattle and hogs and all." He told her that he owned all the cattle that were roaming these hills.

She was up here only a short time when the "little billets" began coming in. When a bill was presented, she would say, "What is this?" Coogan would reply, "Oh, it's just a little billet," and she'd pay it. It wasn't long before she had paid out \$750 on Coogan's "little billets."

They had one son, Jimmie. He was one of the prettiest children ever seen around here. But Coogan's second wife left him, taking Jimmie with her. Coogan had his two sons, Sarsfield and Mike, by his first wife, living with him. His second wife had a grown daughter, Maggie, by her first husband. Maggie, who used to call Coogan "Old Scatter Brain".

Albert Guttinger now owns what was the old Platt Vail Ranch between here and Fourth Crossing. Platt Vail set out that orchard. We used to buy apples of him. Old Jake Brignola and Frank Bernasconi were partners there after Platt Vail sold out. They built that stone house with the chimney on the east side of it. Jake was a good old Swiss. His wife and Coogan's second wife were sisters. They were Pat Campbell's aunts and were Irish. Old Coogan used to say that he was commissioned to make the Brignola match. Pat Campbell and his sisters lived with the Brignolas, who, I think, had no children. Frank Bernasconi was a Swiss also, and a good man. He married and raised a large family on his ranch near Bear Mountain.

Cap Ferguson and I were living on the Mexican Trail in spring of '65 when Len Wilcox's cabin was robbed. Len was living then in Johnny Lynch's cabin on Paradise Gulch. This cabin was afterwards my blacksmith shop.

I had just come home from work, and had stepped out on the north side of the house to wash a towel. I noticed somebody moving around Wilcox's cabin. I thought maybe Len had come home. The second time I looked, I saw as the intruder came out the door that he had a breechclout on. I then kept my eye on him. He sneaked around the cabin and, in a crouching position, started to run up the gulch. I got my gun and followed him. Just as I came in sight of him, I stepped on a round stone, in the gulch, that tripped me. He heard me, and, running to a clump of bushes, he threw down a bundle, and his batea, bar and horn.

I lost sight of him for a little while. When I got to where I saw him throw down the bundle, I halted, gun ready, thinking he had hidden there in the brush. Then my dog, Yancy, struck out up the hill. I looked and saw the Mexican running up the hill towards Bannon's ranch, Yancy after him. He was about a hundred yards away.

When he got on top of the hill, he pointed his six-shooter up in the air and fired. I called Yancy back. That night I stood watch over his bundle, hoping to catch him. But he went over and cleaned up my sluice boxes.

I afterwards found out who he was. I was lucky that I did trip and fall. He had six shots to my one. He was a big Mexican living in Upper Calaveritas, where he had a woman. He told the negro Ferguson family in San Andreas that I came on him where he was panning, robbed him, and ran him off. He wanted them to get his bar and batea for him. I told the Fergusons to tell him to come to me and he could get it. He never came, and that was the last I heard of him. He was a bad actor. He had Wilcox's clothes in the bundle.* Ben Thorn advised me later, about sluice robbers, "Don't you ever let them come back on you. Shoot to kill."

The Civil War is Over

The Civil War came to a close in the spring of 1865, when Lee and Johnston surrendered. Jeff Davis was captured in May, 1865. F.O. McElhaney said his brother-in-law, Colonel Woods, was one of Jeff Davis captors. Colonel Woods' father, a banker, was out here about 1880. I was running my hydraulic mine at the time, and Frank brought him over to the mine.

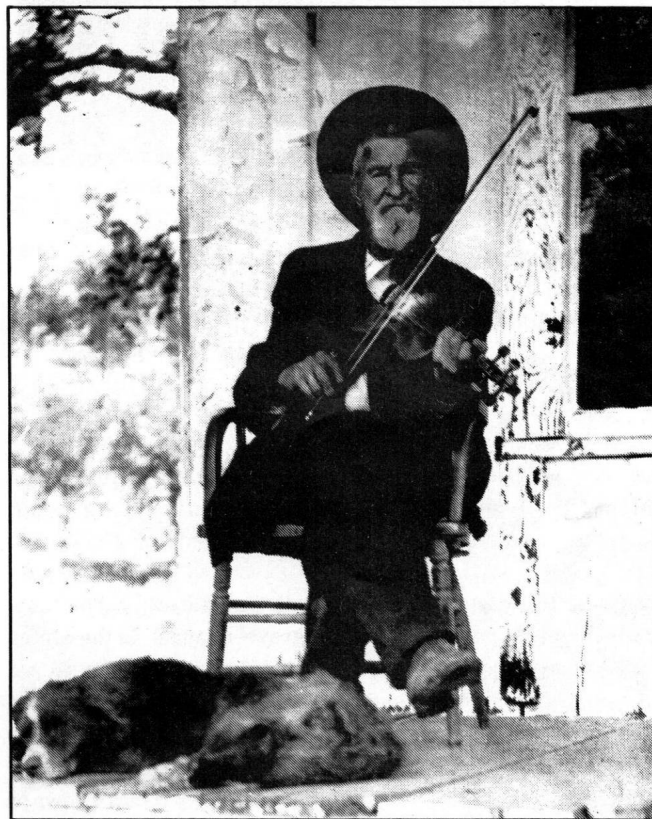
Cap Pope, one of the most prominent of the old pioneers, died twenty years before his time. He and Charley Whitlock started to sink a shaft in April, 1865. The ground was damp and Cap took cold from setting on it. His illness started with an earache. It got to his throat and smothered him. It cost us \$2.50 apiece to bury poor Cap Pope.

*This batea was used in our home as a mixing bowl for bread, duff, and so forth, until the house burned in 1892. It was a large wooden bowl, about two feet in diameter. E.E.J.

Although I helped to bury Cap Pope and was one of his pallbearers, I couldn't find his grave when Judge Ira H. Reed, just a few years before he died, came to me to find it. They were putting markers on the graves of the old pioneers. Another old pioneer who's grave was without a marker was John Q. Adams, who crossed the plains with me.

When Cap Pope died, Mrs. Jeff Gatewood gave me his violin. I used that same violin from that day on until our home burned in 1892. I had refused \$100 for it, just the week before it was burned, when young Todd Toon of San Andreas came out and wanted to buy it. Old Harry Marquering on Bear Mountain got the Cap Pope gun.

It poured down rain the day we buried Doctor Fort. And it cost us \$2.50 apiece to bury him, too. Doctor Fort had \$10,000 owing him in the county, but he couldn't collect it. This is from his fine



WADE HAMPTON JOHNSTON

Wade Johnston, as he appeared in later years, at his home in Dick Bartlett Gulch, Lower Calaveritas, with one of Yancy's successors at his feet. He was always an avid fiddler, and a popular player at dances in the surrounding communities. This picture originally appeared in our January, 1966, issue, to illustrate a biographical sketch of Johnston.

From Society Files



EFFIE E. JOHNSTON

Effie (on the right) and a friend pose on the famous tunnel tree in the Mariposa Grove, near Wawona, in 1915. The dog, incidentally, belonged to the photographer.

Loaned by Mrs. Ruth Lemue

obituary in the "San Andreas Register:"

"Dr. J. L. Fort - Died at El Dorado, Calaveras County, May 25, 1866, age 47 years. He was a native of North Carolina. He emigrated to Tennessee to practice his profession. He served in the Mexican War. He had kind mild blue eyes and a generous heart."

Early in 1865, Cap Ferguson came in with me as a partner in a new location on the south rim of the gravel channel. In the winter of '64-'65, we lived in my cabin on the Mexican Trail. In '65, we built a cabin on our new location. We lined and papered it and put in a board floor. Then we gave the boys a dance. We broke in two or three of the boys to dance here, and they called it the "Dance Hall". I had just bought a \$9 violin bow that night, I laid it down on the bed, and later, one of the boys, not knowing it was there, threw himself on the bed and broke the bow into three pieces. I glued it together again and it was just as good as ever. It was the same bow I sent to old man Cottle, about 1875.

Cap Ferguson liked pie. So one day he thought he'd make one. He got it together, baked it, and brought it on to the table. Then he took a piece on his plate, tried it, looked around and said, "I've et many a pie, but that's the damndest pie that ever I et!"

While Cap and I were partners, we got 500 pounds of apples one winter of Doll Young when they lived down here. Old Cap thought

Len Wilcox was very extravagant. Len would have a duff most every week or two. Cap had stomach trouble. He was always taking Seidlitz powders.

All of the old pioneers around here had a cat before they had a dog. When Bill Irvine came over here from Mokelumne Hill, he brought a cat with him. He told me he sold \$60 worth of kittens from this cat.

I think it was in 1861 that my brother Charles got Yancy as a puppy. He was one of a litter of eight, whose mother belonged to Mrs. Judge Badgley of Mokelumne Hill. All of this litter were given or sold to the miners around here. They were bird dogs and all made good dogs.

Charles had to whip Yancy for running chickens. He used to set tadpoles and run his nose clean down into the mud. When Charles went over to Nevada in '63 he left Yancy with me. Yancy was well trained. He wouldn't mash a quail and you could leave your game sack with him. One day I had been hunting and came to San Andreas. I had some quail and I lay down my game sack in the store. Pretty soon some Chinamen came around. They thought they'd take a look at the quail. One of them started to pick up the game sack when Yancy jumped for him and the Chinamen scattered, chattering, "Too mucha good tog - too mucha good tog him keep saba."

People around town used to like to take Yancy out hunting. One man took him out one day, fired three or four times, and Yancy couldn't find anything. Finally Yancy just sat down in front of him and commenced barking. So he threw his gun over his shoulder and came home. He said, "Yancy was just making fun of me. I couldn't stand that."

When we still had Yancy, Cap and I got a young dog, to have around when hunters were borrowing Yancy. This new dog was always packing off our clothes, boots and sox out onto the hillside. We couldn't break him of it and so we ran him off. The last I saw of him, he was out around the Constant Bund place.

Stephen Miles was a nice old negro who lived down on the river. He used to be up here around Binums' a good deal. He never forgot his politeness from slavery days.

If he was asked to have a drink with the boys, he would bow, remove his hat, place it under his arm, step back and say, "After you gentlemen". After the boys had drunk, he would step up and have his drink. It used to make the Republicans mad.

Stephen Miles was a Virginian. He was around here in 1865. I used to meet him down at Ed Livernash's place in Lower Calaveritas (Formerly Maurice Murphy's store). I always treated him when I met him.

Cap Ferguson had been out quail hunting one day and down at Ed Livernash's he stepped in for a drink. Stephen Miles was there. Cap asked him to have a drink. Miles, as usual, bowed, took off his hat, put it under his arm, and stood back. Old Cap, a Virginian, turned around and commenced laughing.

Miles was a good singer, and one of his songs was, "Sallie Am

De Gal For Me." Old Margaret Binum could sing, too. But you could hardly ever get her to. One time when she was at Upper Calaveritas, cooking a ball supper for Mrs. John Eaves, a fellow from our camp was up there. He and Margaret were out in the kitchen. He got Margaret to sing. Then he sang while she danced. Mrs. Eaves was taking it all in, from the next room.

We had our last big quail hunt in 1865. We had our quail supper at Fourth Crossing at Reddicks. Rod Terwilliger puts himself ahead in this contest. But I don't agree with him. (I did not get the particulars of this last organized quail hunt from Father. EEJ)

Cap and I Make a Rich Strike

Cap Ferguson and I struck a rich crevice on our new location on the south rim of the gravel channel in 1865. I got \$100 in one pan. A few days before, Platt Vail, who was a hired hand, panned out \$75 on the same crevice. That crevice was about a hundred feet long, and we hardly ever got less than half an ounce to the pan. From the time we started to work there in 1865 until Cap sold out in 1867, we had washed and panned out over \$15,000. We don't know how much was stolen.

We had robbers to contend with. We hired old Jim Dean to watch the mine one night. I wanted to do the watching that night but Cap said, "Old Dean needs a few dollars. Let him watch." So I loaded the gun with buckshot for Dean, and he went on guard. When the moon got about an hour high, two Mexicans came and were making a circle around the sluice boxes when Dean blazed away. I heard the shot and jumped out of bed. About the time I got my clothes on, old Dean came rushin in a 'puffing and a 'blowing. I said, "Did you get 'um, Dean?" He answered, "By G-d I don't know. When I fired, they jumped about four feet high, and run like h-l!"

I think Dean was scared worse than they were. He was afraid they were trying to flank him. He said that he fired at them at about fifty yards. But I don't think he fired at them at all.

If I had watched that night as I wanted to, I'd have gotten them all right. We were washing off the surface on this front part of the east rim of the gravel channel at the time we hired Dean to watch the flume. A man that knew who was robbing me told me that the only way we could catch the men that were robbing us was for us to go away from home, and get some one else to watch the mine. They were watching us all the time.

Old Jim Bean lived with the Binum family before he moved up on the Ravesa Hill. He used to teach the Binum children, I think.

A big Chinaman bought the tailings in this Dick Bartlett Gulch of old Jim Bean. This Chinaman ran off three men, Bogus Smith, Ed Livernash, and another man. After he worked up all the tailings, he started in to work the surface. I told him to stop it. He kept on working. I turned the water off on him. He ran up and started to turn it back. I raised my shovel to strike him. He got ready with his shovel.

When he saw some one else watching from a distance, he said,

"I sobby. go! Yo too mucha good man." I knew he would come back. So I went home and got my gun, returned and sat down at the head of his sluice boxes, with the gun cocked. I ordered his company to clean up their boxes and go. And they did.

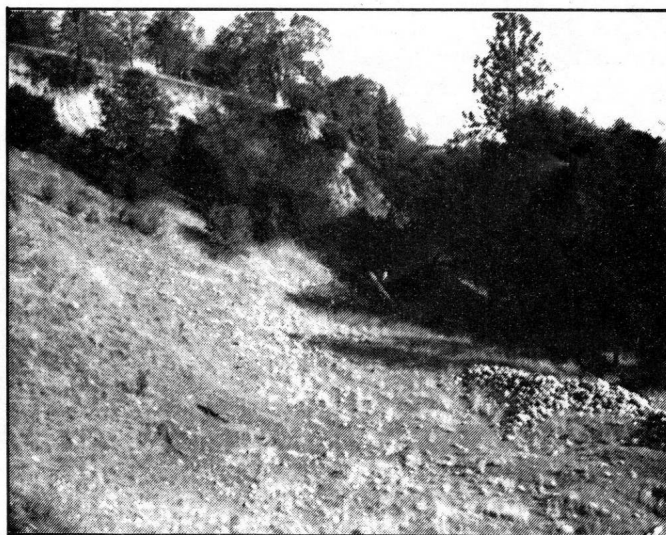
Before this gulch was mined, several \$20 nuggets were picked up, just lying on the ledge riffles, by the old timers. This old cart road up the east side of Dick Bartlett Gulch was made to cart dirt down to Willow Creek to wash it, before Dick Bartlett cut a ditch up here in 1852.

One time in 1865, when Edmington Binum was going to San Andreas on horseback, he saw something crawling in the brush on the high hill side, as he was going past what was afterwards George Eder's place.

He rode over to where he could see that it was a man, he thought a Mexican. He had a six-shooter and a knife or saber on him. Binum, who stuttered, said, "What-What-What you doin' here?" The fellow retorted, "None of your damn business. Get out of here!" Binum said that he thought he'd better had, for the fellow was a hard-looking character.

I was in San Andreas that night. When I started for home, I had two men with me, Gid Adams and Platt Vail. When we were in sight of the place where Binum saw this armed man in hiding, Platt Vail persuaded us to return to San Andreas and get our supper there.

We went back to town and ate and we didn't return until late. We didn't see anything and we didn't know about this fellow until afterwards. I didn't have much money with me at the time, but the



THE SOUTH RIM

Cap Ferguson and Wade Johnston struck the rich crevice in 1865, as described in the narrative, in this part of the hydraulic pit. The rims were more productive than the center of the channel at Poverty Hill, because a deeper, volcanic "gutter" channel had cut out the central part of the original deposit.

claim had a big name. Cap Ferguson had it published about me getting \$100 to the pan. Everyone thought we were packing money. And most of the time I did have gold dust with me. So we all concluded that this fellow was intending to waylay me.

In the summer of 1866, Cap Ferguson hired Billie Fowler to work in his place, while he went to the Sheep Ranch to prospect quartz. We were looking in a tunnel at the time. One evening Billie Fowler and I went to a birthday party out at Fourth Crossing. We left half a carload of rich gravel in the car in the tunnel, and nobody at home. It was after midnight when we returned.

When we got home, we could see the car, from our cabin, standing on the turntable. So we found that somebody had run the car out there, intending to steal the rich gravel that we had left in it. We don't know what they got. We supposed that they were frightened away by dogs barking as we passed Rathgebbs. Our cabin was right at our dump or I guess we wouldn't have had anything left.

Before we hired Bill Fowler, we were hiring Milt Stevens and Platt Vail. Bill Fowler worked there two or three months. Not long after that I bought Cap's share of the mine for \$100. Then he bought my share of the cabin and moved it to the Sheep Ranch. So I moved back to my cabin on the Mexican Trail.

Early Days at Sheep Ranch

Cap Ferguson and Tom Smith were prospecting together at the Sheep Ranch and Tom Smith discovered the first croppings of the vein before Cap moved up there.

When Cap Ferguson first became interested in the Sheep Ranch mine, Billie Smith was a partner and I understood that he put my name on a location there. Billie Smith and Cap had a falling out. One man was killed there (Darl Young) over mining troubles, also.*

After I was married, Cap Ferguson wanted me to come up there and work in the mine for them. I didn't go and I never owned an interest in the Sheep Ranch mine.

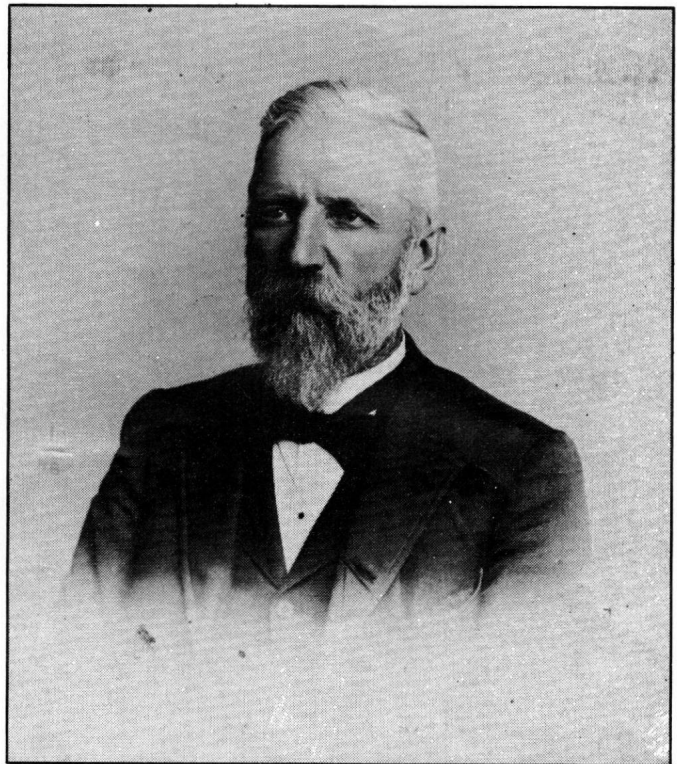
Cap worked there about eight or nine years before selling out. Judge Gottschalk told me Cap was assessed for \$11,000 cash on hand, when he sold out. At the time of the sale their estimate of the rock on the dump was \$60,000. But when it was crushed, the yield was \$100,000. The mine was sold in '74 or '75 to George Hearst, J. B. Haggin and Bill Clary, who became superintendent. Judge Gottschalk told me it was sold for \$110,000. The deal was made in his office.

*The early history of the Sheep Ranch mine has been recounted in more detail in "Las Calaveras", October, 1958. Bean and McNair owned the locations that became the Chavanne mine, and Ferguson and Smith that portion of the vein that became the main Sheep Ranch mine. Later, Hearst consolidated the two mines. In the January, 1959, issue of "Las Calaveras", Mrs. Rhoda Dunlap told of her memories of early days at Sheep Ranch, and of the various people involved in the development of the mine.

At the time of the sale, there were three partners in it, Bill Wallace, who bought out the Smiths, Cap Ferguson, and John Early, his nephew. Bill Wallace got one third of the sale price. It is said that John Early had one full share and was given half of Cap's share before Cap Ferguson married the widow Oliphant.

Cap Ferguson was stopping at the Metropolitan Hotel in San Andreas in 1875 when he married the widow Oliphant. They raised two daughters in Stockton, where he died of cancer of the stomach (1878). John Early married Mary Steel and spent the rest of his life in San Andreas where he raised two daughters. Bill Wallace died unmarried (1910) near Copperopolis where he lived the latter part of his life. He had lived for many years at the Metropolitan Hotel in San Andreas. He died well-to-do, but John Early and Cap Ferguson died in moderate circumstances.

Bill Clary, who was superintendent of the Sheep Ranch mine for so many years, raised a family at the Sheep Ranch. They all



WILLIAM A. WALLACE

In 1872, William Wallace bought out Tom Smith's interest in the Sheep Ranch mine, and thus became Cap Ferguson's partner. The next year, they took in Cap Ferguson's nephew, John Early, to the partnership, and two years later, they sold out to George Hearst and associates for some \$110,000. Subsequently, Wallace became the ranching partner of Irvin Burnham, near Copperopolis.

Loaned by Mrs. Frank S. Tower

moved to Stockton later. His obituary in the "Calaveras Prospect", in 1904, described him as follows:

"W. H. Clary was born in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He was a typical Southerner. He was a large man, of strong prejudices. He was open-hearted and generous".

He died in November, 1904, in Stockton, at the age of 82, where he left a widow and six children. Included were four sons, Harry, Dervitt, George, and Merrill, and two daughters, Mrs. S. Barquette of Charleston, and Miss Ethel of Stockton.

1886 - A Year of Tragedy

I spent the Fourth of July, 1886, at Copperopolis, where I heard about Frank Piper's death.

Frank, who was associated with me in Placer County in '54-'55, had just gotten a good job in the copper mines, when he died. He was working at the Live Oak mine, about a quarter of a mile north of Telegraph City. He was going home to dinner with the other hands, when a rattlesnake crossed the road before him. It went into a stone fence leaving a small portion of its tail hanging out.

Frank was going to show the boys how he could jerk its head off. That was one of his tricks. As he reached down to take hold of its tail, it struck him in the muscles of the back of the hand.

He turned and ran for Telegraph City. When he got there, he happened to meet Doctor Langdon of Stockton. The doctor made him drink two pints of whiskey right away. It had no effect and the doctor said he could do nothing more for him. He had run until his blood got warmed up and the poison had spread all through his system and he died in a few hours. He was buried there. He had no relatives here that I know of. He was from Baltimore, Maryland.

The Mexicans were run out of Amador County in 1866. For quite a while there was a regular stream of Mexicans passing my cabin along the Mexican trail, part of the route between Amador and Chinese Camp.*

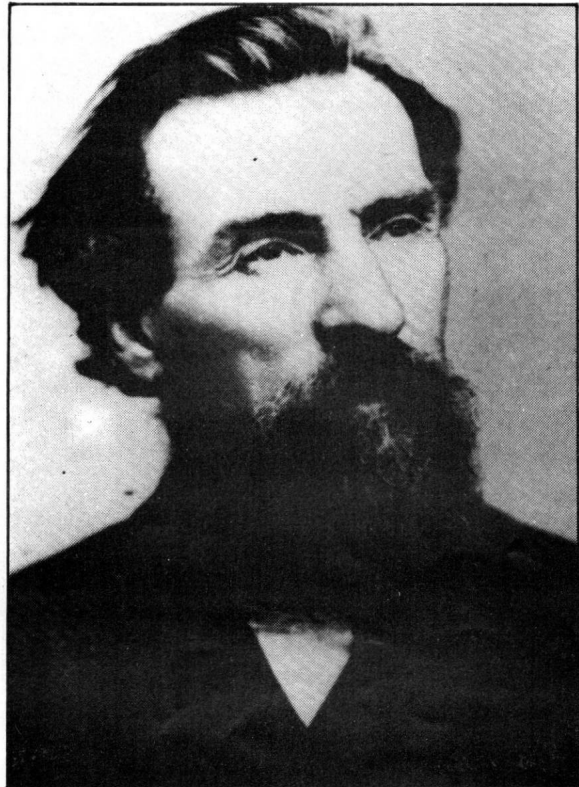
One night, I was alone in the camp and had just gone to bed when I heard somebody walking on the trail about fifty feet from my window. When he got opposite the window, he stopped. He must have stood there fifteen or twenty minutes.

This caused me to suspect something was wrong. I got up and reached for my rifle. Meanwhile, the intruder walked on down the hill and was gone about twenty minutes when he came back and stopped at about the same place. He went off again and came back the third time.

It was Saturday night. And about this time some of the boys that lived about Yaqui Camp came home. Then the mysterious visitor went off and didn't come back.

After Cap Ferguson went to the Sheep Ranch, Guss Cottle

*This old trail is hardly traveled at all now (1925). When I was a little girl in the '70's, I have seen strings of Indians traveling this trail to their Pow-wows at Murphys or Mok Hill. In the '70's also, it was a common daily occurrence to see five or six Chinamen traveling this trail one behind the other, going to and from town for supplies. EEJ.



CHARLES C. JOHNSTON

Brother Charles, as Wade generally referred to him, was the first Johnston to come "to see the elephant." In 1863, Charles left Calaveras County for Nevada and then settled in Idaho where he married and raised his family. He left his dog, Yancy, with his brother in California.

Loaned by Mrs. Ruth Lemue

bought Cap's share and worked with me.* We worked together in '66 and '67. We washed off some of the surface just above my cabin on the Mexican Trail. Guss and I were partners about one year.

Guss later worked for Henry Schroebe in '70 and '71. The elder Cottles lost two children while they lived here at the Crossing. A little girl, Cornelia, about 3, and Horace, who was accidentally shot by his father when he was about 14. They are buried at the Crossing on top of the hill this side of the old Reddick place, where there are about 42 graves.

Old Man Cottle thought a lot of Horace, and was nearly crazy over the accident which happened about September, 1866.

Here, in the original manuscript, Effie includes her uncle's (Franck Cottle) description, in 1929, of the accident that cost his brother's life so long ago. We have included the pertinent portions of Franck Cottle's description below.

*Guss Cottle was his last mining partner. I think after this the mine was known as the Johnston Gravel mine until the Harpers came in, in 1898. EEJ



MARTHA COTTLE JOHNSTON

From a portrait taken about 1873, when the Johnstons lived on Paradise Gulch. At that home, their three children, Effie, Martha, and Charles, were born.

Courtesy of Mrs. Ruth Lemue

I think Horace was about 14 when Father accidentally shot him. We had just moved into our new house. Martha was home and Mary Bryan was there. Florence was at San Jose with Ma. Old Man Wheeler was there, shaving, near the door, and the bullet went through the door close to his head.

Horace, Abe, and I were watching Pa who was changing a bullet in his Colt six-shooter. We were told to get away. We did, but Horace stepped back and looked over his father's shoulder, just as the revolver accidentally discharged. The bullet went over Pa's shoulder, hitting Horace. He said "Oh!", took three steps back, and fell in the door.

Pa ran and lifted him up, but he died in a few minutes in his arms. Then they went to Reddick's for help. Ma and Florence being at San Jose, could not get here in time for the funeral.

Effie then described how her mother, Martha Cottle, at sixteen, was a very popular young lady, at the new Cottle residence at Fourth Crossing, and how Wade Johnston became a suitor. Wade

and young Martha were married in June, 1867. Wade continues with his reminiscences.

After I was married, I lived at the Ike Bradley house on Paradise Gulch where all of you were born. When Ike Bradley and his Chilano wife lived there, it was a two-room house without a ceiling. I built on a 12-foot by 12-foot kitchen, put a wood ceiling in all three rooms and a porch on the east side of the house. I enclosed the house and yard with a low picket fence. I later built on an 8-foot by 12-foot storeroom and pantry north of the kitchen.

When we were married, Old Man Cottle gave your mother a milk cow and some pigs. I butchered only one or two of the hogs. When the sows had some pigs, they used to go off up to Harris'. The pigs would come home all chewed up by dogs. I had to shoot a lot of the little pigs that were hurt. This country was all open then.

At this point in the manuscript, Effie goes into some detail on her parent's early married life and her childhood at their Paradise Gulch home. A few excerpts of Effie's remarks are included below.

In my time, there were about a dozen beautiful tall water oaks along the gulch in front of the house. My father told me this grove was twice as large at one time. Half had been mined out before he came into possession of it.

When I was a child, we had two fish ponds in front of the house; and a spring that father was very proud of. He thought that it was a natural spring.

Every now and then Father would catch a fish of considerable size from ten to fifteen inches long, at the reservoir or at the mine. He would bring it home and put it in the pond. We didn't eat the fish, we kept them just to look at. They were mostly suckers, perhaps half a dozen trout, some small white fish and one catfish.

Father owned the lower Yaqui ditch from '66 until his property went into Mr. Fricot's hands. He kept the water in it as long as there was enough to run through the ditch, and the reservoir above the house was filled and the leakage kept up the springs below. But we didn't realize that this lower ditch was the source of all of this spring water until after (L.B.) Joses jumped the ditch and the spring finally went dry.

It is a deserted wilderness now. The jaybirds have replaced the songbirds since the place was deserted in 1912. In September, 1912, we moved from Paradise Gulch to the Abdullah mine on Dick Bartlett Gulch where Father died on December 30, 1927.

One of the incidents I remember was when Father picked me up and put me astride old Yancy's back. I held onto his long hair. Yancy walked out the kitchen door and the length of the porch (about 28 feet). In the meantime, Father followed to the kitchen door, and Mother, who was busy sewing in the middle room, also stepped to that door to see Yancy give me a ride.

All went well until he reached the end of the porch and turned around, when I lost my balance and gave a scream as I went over. Father flew across the porch and grabbed me before I could fall off the porch. As he picked me up, he said, "She isn't hurt, she's

just scared.”

When Yancy came home poisoned (about 1870 or '71), he had been to water. It was too late to save him. Father must have taken me along when he buried him, for I never forgot old Yancy's grave by the Mexican Trail. Father used to speak of it whenever we passed by it.

Wade Johnston then discusses in detail the events concerned with the “proving” up of the McElhaney ranch for an agricultural patent. Some of this was mentioned in our July, 1971 issue.

Old Jack McDonald had, at this time, just a little less than three ounces of gold dust. He wanted to keep it until he got the full three ounces. So he buried it under the hearth in front of the fireplace.

A few days later, Bogus Smith came up there and they got on a big spree. And in the meantime, Jack dug up his gold and buried it in another place, and forgot about doing it. After old Bogus had gone, Jack missed his gold dust. When I was going up to the reservoir, I noticed old Jack walking back and forth in front of his cabin, scratching his head and wringing his hands.

He kept this up for three or four days. He told me, “Johnston, if I'd come in and caught him taking that dust, I'd left his brains on the hearth.”

A few days later, when I was passing, old Jack was as quiet as a mouse. He had remembered where he had reburied the gold, and he had found it all right.

About the time that old Jack died, Frank McElhaney was getting a patent to the old Bannon Ranch. He was afraid someone else would come in there and interfere with his patent application, on the grounds that it was mineral land. So I bought in old Jack's mine for \$20. I bought it in to save the ranch. It is the same 20 acres that Paul Ratto jumped a few years ago. J. K. Raynor came in afterwards and caused me a lot of trouble over it. (He would not reimburse him for doing this-Ed.). Henry Joses would have given him \$100 for it, and he should have done so, as it turned out.

When Frank McElhaney* was applying for agricultural patent

*Old Grandpa McElhaney was around here and acquainted with Father long before Frank's family came up here from Stockton. He was a nice old man. He said to Father, “I don't think Frank can do much on a ranch, but his wife might make something raising poultry.” They came up here for Frank's health. Mrs. McElhaney made money weaving in Stockton. The old man and Mrs. McElhaney didn't get along. So after old Jack McDonald died, Frank moved his father over to Jack's cabin. He got sick and they took him to the county hospital, where he died, aged 62, but very feeble and gray (About 1880 or '81). When he left the cabin for the hospital, he made Father a present of his \$5 cane. A nice black one with a white ivory handle. It was lost in the fire.

F.O. McElhaney, his wife, and three children moved up here in the spring of '79. They sold out to the Raynors in '83. Then they lived on a new location north of Cloyd's ranch until they moved to San Andreas. Maud was born in the new home about '84 or '85. They were from Ohio and lived in Stockton six years before coming up here.

to the ranch, he asked me to be a witness for him. I told him I couldn't be a witness to that ground as agricultural land, as I knew miners had made three dollars a day right in front of his door, and that it was mineral ground. Old Buck Lewis was in the next room and heard the conversation. He came to me and said, “That's right, Wade. Don't you swear to a lie for any of them”.

The McElhaney's didn't like this, of course. So they got Cloyd for a witness. Cloyd brought up the idea that “what wouldn't pay three dollars a day to mine could not be considered mineral land.” I asked him how that would work with the ranchers. He laughed and said, “If I made fifty cents a day on my ranch, I'd do well”. I replied, “well, if a rancher is allowed to work for 50 cents a day, shouldn't a miner be allowed to work for the same amount too?” Cloyd responded, “Yes.”

J. K. Raynor and wife bought the ranch in 1883 for \$900. The Raynors came here from around El Dorado. He ran a gravel mine up there somewhere. They knew everyone at El Dorado and had lots of company. They had no children. Raynor was from New York. It was said that he had a wife and two children back there, and that he was a Civil War bounty jumper.

Old Bogus Smith got on a big spree in town one time, and they put him in jail. People passing the jail could hear him going on in there, “In the name of Patrick Henry, give me liberty or give me death!”



PARADISE GULCH

It was at this site that the Wade Johnstons set up housekeeping after their marriage in 1867. The foundations of the house may be seen in the central part of the picture. One of the fish ponds is clearly visible in the right foreground, as are two of the stumps of the large grove of water oaks that once grew in front of the house. The Mexican Trail crossed the Gulch just below this view (at the left.)

