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The Darbys of Red Apple

By
Bess Darby Anderson

Just two years ago, (January, 1975), we recorded the interesting story of the Tanner Ranch at Murphys, long known for its fine mountain apples. It is most appropriate now to bring to our readers that of the Darby family, whose Calaveras history may not be quite as long as the Tanners, but whose mountain apples are most certainly every bit as good.

It is always most interesting to us to inquire further into the origins of our pioneer families. As this article tells us, the elder Darbys came to the west from Ohio. Jay Anson Darby married

Virginia Firebaugh whose father, Andrew, of German-English ancestry, was born in Virginia, and fought in the Mexican war with Colonel Pulsifer F. Smith. He then moved to California and was prominent in the early development of the San Joaquin valley. The present town of Firebaugh commemorates his ferry across the San Joaquin river.

Today there are some sixty-seven descendents of Jay and Virginia Darby. In addition, there are forty-two more descendents of Virginia and her first husband, Frank R. Crocker. Mrs. Bess Darby Anderson has preserved much information about this interesting family and has most kindly donated copies of this material to the Society's files. We are most grateful to her, also, for the following story about the Darbys.

My parents, Jay Anson Darby, Sr., and his wife, Virginia Adina Firebaugh Darby, lived at or near the ranch now known as the "Red Apple" from 1893 to about 1913, and were frequent visitors to the ranch afterwards until into the '40s. This ranch is located five miles above Murphys on Highway "4", and is widely known for its excellent mountain apples.

Jay Darby's parents, Lloyd and Sarah Cooper Darby, were both born in Ohio, Lloyd in 1831, and his wife in 1834 (in Vermillion, Ohio), and were married in that state. In 1859, they and their two-year old son, William, joined the Stanford wagon train party and crossed the plains. When the party reached Elmira, California, it divided, and the Darbys settled at Elmira, while the Stanford party went on to San Jose.

Jay Anson was born at Elmira on September 30th, 1864. His sister, Eda, was also born at Elmira. After a number of years, the



OFF TO SCHOOL

Setting off to school, the Darby children were snapped as they left the ranch for Averys. Chub and Bessie are on "Jennie" (left) and Lloyd and Daisy on "Toby", and their lunches in the lard pails.

Darby family left Solano County, and moved to Tres Pinos, near Hollister, in San Benito County. The two children attended school there, and Jay Anson learned to speak Spanish from the other children there. About the time Jay was seventeen or eighteen, the Darbys left the Hollister area and moved to Fresno. He left school and, obtaining horses and a wagon, hauled freight and supplies to the mills and mines and the people living in the mountains above Fresno. One of the stops the teamsters made along the way to rest and feed their animals and to spend the night was at the town of Academy, about thirty-five miles east of Fresno. The way-stop and boarding house at the Academy was run by the widow of Andrew D. Firebaugh, Susan Burgess Firebaugh, and her daughter, Virginia Adina Firebaugh Crocker. Mrs. Crocker, who had been divorced, was helping her mother and raising her three children, Ray, Ernest and Estella Crocker. It was at the Academy that Jay Anson met Virginia, and in 1890, they were married in San Francisco, to where they moved. Their first child, Chub (Jay Anson, Jr.) was born in San Francisco on June 18th, 1892. I am not sure what work Jay had in San Francisco, but they moved to Stockton when Chub was still a young baby. They lived with some people, outside of Stockton, on one of the islands, where Virginia helped with the work there while Jay hauled freight. I remember my mother telling about this large two-story home, and about how they worried about the high water and floods.

From Stockton, the Darbys moved to Altaville where they at first lived in the Prince Hotel, in the building still standing and now the home of Nan Bartoo. Jay Anson engaged in hauling freight from Valley Springs to the mountains with his fourteen-horse and mule team.

In October, 1893, he bought the Dan Hart property, and they

moved up there from Altaville. In 1891, this property had been sold to the State for delinquent taxes. At that time it was assessed to Charles Russell. My father redeemed the property and then bought the 160-acre parcel from Russell. Additional land, the Henry McCormick parcel, was bought for taxes in 1902. At one time, Jay Anson's father, Lloyd Darby, also owned some land here, and this land passed to Jay when his father died in 1904. At one time Jay owned land to the top of Hanford Hill, but as the years passed, part of his holdings had to be sold to keep up with the expenses of a large family. As an idea of what taxes were in those days, in 1897, the house, shed, and fence and the original 160-acre purchase at the "Red Apple" was assessed \$10.07 (probably the semiannual amount. Ed.).

The original house where Lloyd, Daisy and I were born was just a few yards west of the "Red Apple". The old apple tree still stands near the Red Apple stand; it has been grafted many times and still bears fruit. The original house was moved over a short distance below where the old Darby home is now located, but due to the toll of time and snow, was torn down some years ago. The old blacksmith shop, below the house, has also been torn down. Lester was born in the old family home, still standing.

Life wasn't easy in those days. My mother carried water from a well a distance equal to several blocks, from in back of where the "Red Apple" is, pumped from a well by hand. They also had to pump the water used in the vegetable garden. They had another garden over by the "Old Spring", and when my mother took care of that, she had to carry baby Lloyd over with her. This spring was down the mountain from where Lloyd Junior's house is located. My mother, in some of her letters to her mother, told how hard it was for her to carry Lloyd over there and back. Water for bathing,



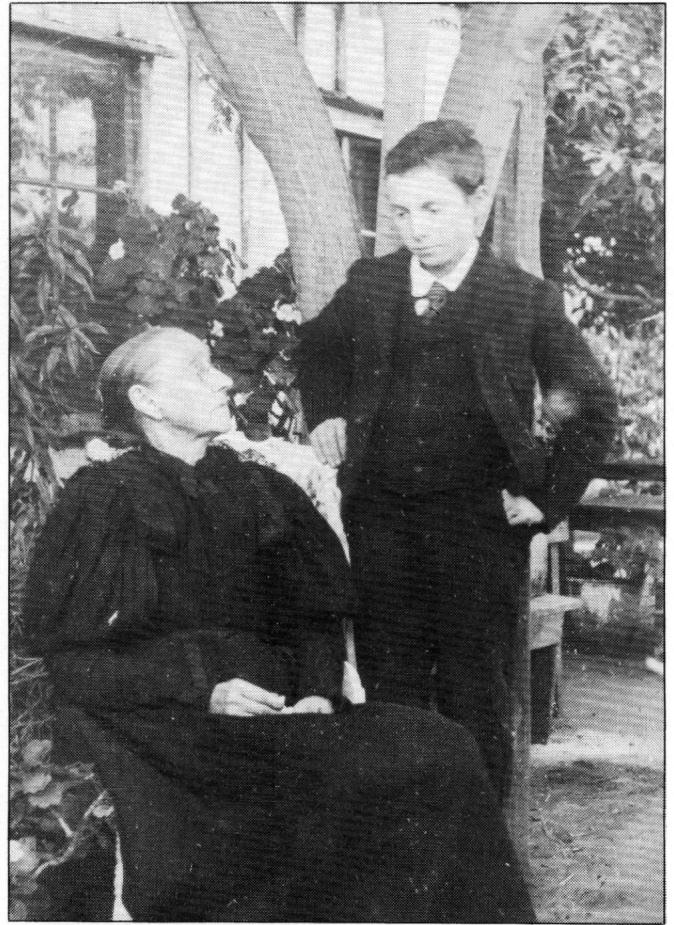
A DARBY OUTING

This is how we went camping before the days of automobiles. Aunt Eda ahead, and Chub and Lloyd following.



ANDREW D. FIREBAUGH
1823 - 1875

Prominent pioneer in the San Joaquin Valley, he was the father of Virginia Firebaugh Darby.



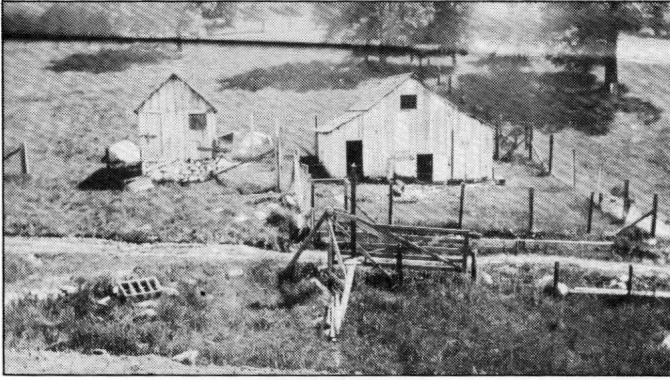
GRANDMA FIREBAUGH

Here at the Academy, Susan Burgess Firebaugh poses with her grandson, Ray Crocker, in the 90's.



DARBY BROTHERS - PROSPECTORS

Jay's father, Lloyd (at right) and his uncle, William, also came to Calaveras and both were inveterate prospectors. The camera caught up with them one day in 1897 near Angels Camp. This was the year following the unsuccessful trip to Alaska.



DARBY CHICKEN HOUSES

Here, Virginia Darby raised her chickens, many years ago, to help out the expense of raising a large family. These outbuildings have long since disappeared.

washing and everything else at the house had to be heated on the wood stove. The house was heated by wood stoves, and coal oil lamps were used for lights. There was no electricity, telephones or easy ways of doing things in those days.

My mother raised chickens and sold eggs. We also had cows, horses, sheep, hogs, goats and geese. The corral, where Chub and Lloyd milked the cows, was where the Anderson cabin is now, on the highway. In those days, our only neighbors were Russell, Jones and Javeaux families, all living within a mile or two.

My brother, Lloyd, was the first child born at the ranch, on May 8th, 1894. Daisy was born on January 1st, 1898, I was born on November 3rd, 1900, and Lester on November 8th 1902. There were few doctors in the county then, the nearest being at Angels or San Andreas. And it took them a long time to go over the bad roads with horse and buggy to reach their patients. My mother didn't have a doctor when we were born. Our neighbor, Mrs. Russell, was a midwife and was with her. Mrs. Nuland, from San Andreas, took care of Mother after I was born. Effie Javeaux, another neighbor, came and helped Mother when Lloyd was born. She was sixteen at the time, and she passed away in San Francisco just a few years ago at the age of ninety. Her sister, May Miller, helped when Lester was born.

In 1896, Jay Anson went to Alaska with his Uncle William. My mother liked Uncle William and said that he was always very good to her and to all of us. He had the money to go to Alaska and asked Father to go with him, as he didn't want to go alone. They left San Francisco on April 14th, on the steamer "Umetilla". After stopping at Port Townsend, Washington, they reembarked for Sitka, and then on to 800 miles northwest of Cook's Inlet, to where they heard there were rich gold mines. They thought they would strike it rich, but they soon came home broke. This was just one year before the big Klondike strike.

Chub, Lloyd and half-brother Ernest Crocker were just little fellows then, and stayed on the ranch with Mother while Father was gone. She said that she did not feel afraid, for she kept a loaded rifle beside the bed. She told about hearing a mountain lion scream one night - it was wild country then, and lots of wild

animals around. She raised chickens and sold eggs and thought she could make from \$150 to \$200 that summer and then move to Waterford (California), where my father's brother, William, lived, if Father and his uncle William did not return before winter. Eggs sold for twenty-five cents a dozen then. But the travelers arrived home from Alaska before winter, so we didn't have to go.

Schools started in April in those days and daily mail was delivered by horse and cart or horseback, from May First to November First. The winters seemed more severe in those days, the snow much deeper, and the weather colder. And I think there were lots more rain and thunder storms in the summertime. The year 1901 was a very wet one and the roads were unusually muddy and it was often impossible to travel over them with horse and buggy or cart. It usually took four days to go to Valley Springs and back for freight when it was not storming.

After my father returned from Alaska, he worked for Tom Moran, hauling logs and freight with his team. The year I was born, 1900, he went to work for the Utica Company as ditch tender. Mr. Terry, who had been tender, was drowned in the ditch the night I was born, and his body was picked up several miles downstream where the tank was located. This was on top of the mountain above the old Utica electric plant. After Mr. Terry's death, my father got the job, and we moved down to the house where Mr. Terry had lived, and added on to the home to make more room for us all.

Ditch tending in those days was a dangerous job, walking flumes at night in all sorts of weather, in snow and in icy rains. Lots of flumes were washed out and many times they must work in the wet and cold nights repairing them. My father worked on that job for many years, and in 1912, he, Chub and Lloyd planted the apple orchard that is still bearing at Red Apple.

William Jenkins, of Murphys, was my father's boss when he worked on the ditch job. The Utica Company put in a telephone for us. It was mounted on the wall, and we got our party by ringing for

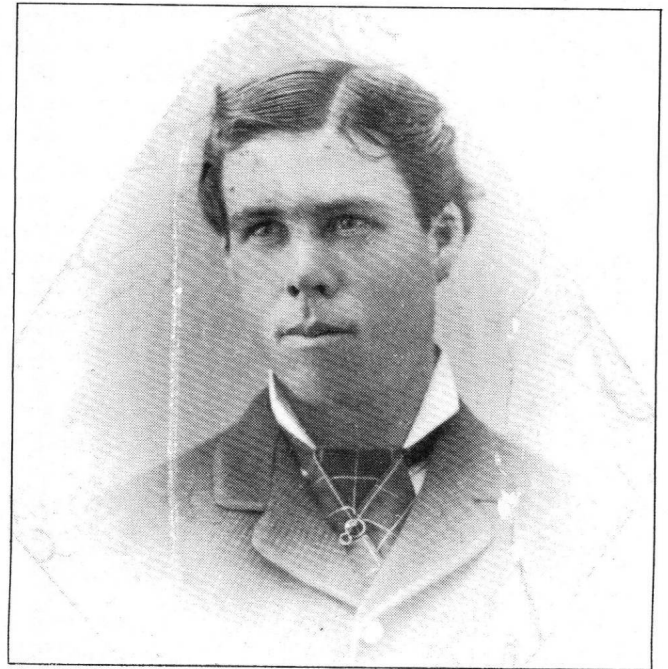


UTICA FLUME NEAR MURPHYS

Jay Darby, and after him, Chub Darby spent many years patrolling and maintaining these flumes and ditches for the Utica Company.



VIRGINIA FIREBAUGH



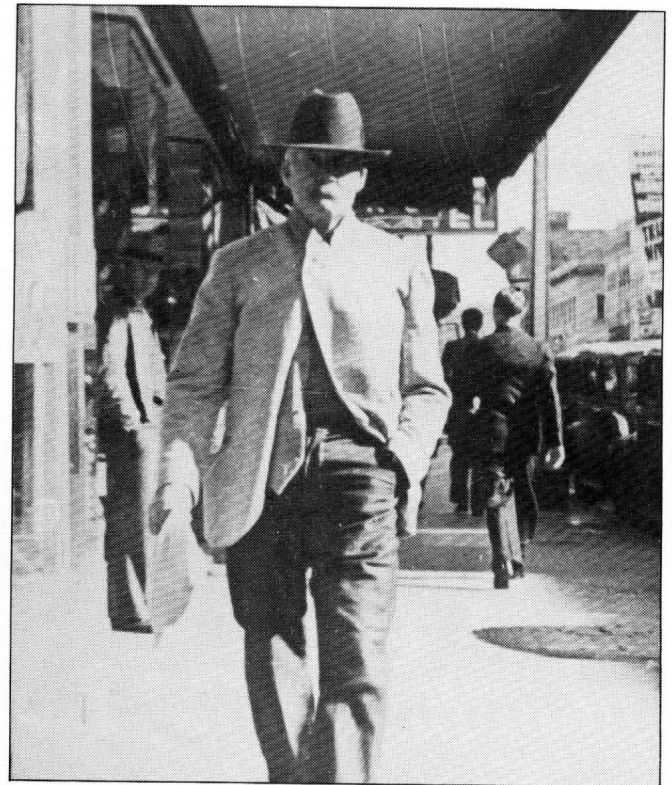
JAY ANSON DARBY



VIRGINIA ADINA FIREBAUGH

1862 - 1945

Virginia married Frank R. Crocker in 1882, and their children were Ray, Anna Estelle, and Ernest Fabian. After her divorce, Virginia married Jay Anson Darby in 1890, and they had five children. Ray and Estelle lived with Grandmother Firebaugh, and little Ernest grew up with the Darby children.



JAY ANSON DARBY

1864 - 1946

Snapped in Stockton in 1939

PEPPERMINT
PUBLIC SCHOOL
Murphy's Twp., Calaveras Co., Cal.

FLORENCE ADAMS, Teacher


PUPILS

Agnes Martell	Lloyd Darby
Henry Raggio	George Martell
Daisy Darby	Jack Javeaux
Bessie Darby	Lester Darby

Dick Raggio

School Board

Mrs. Clara Martell Mr. Richard Raggio
Mr Pearl McCullom



COPPEROPOLIS
PUBLIC SCHOOL
Copperopolis, Calaveras Co., Calif.

1914—1915

CLARENCE N. WARRINGTON, Teacher

PUPILS

Dahl Burnham	Eugene Lewis
Fred Burnham	Elsie Burnham
Frank Biedinger	Daisy Darby
James Clothier	Harold Biedinger
Carl Biedinger	Bessie Darby
Verta Lewis	Lizzie Biedinger
Evalyn Baker	Thelma Stanley
Henry Thompson	Margaret Follettie
Lester Darby	George McGinty
Orion Clothier	Frankie Burnham
Bennie Fox	Lola Read
Pearl Biedinger	Verona Rouse
Hazel McGinty	Etta McCormick
Dorothy Corum	Jennie Follettie
Willie James	Milfred Rouse
Evelyn Hadley	Isabelle Trask
Albert James	Vergie Burnham
Louise Hadley	Joseph Read
Gladys James	Cleo Box

Joseph Rouse

Trustees

J. G. Hadley, Clerk F. C. Burnham
J. P. Boggiano



COPPEROPOLIS SCHOOL
1913 - 1914



AT THE RANCH - 1918-1919

Florence, holding Olive, and Husband Chub. Mother and Father on the right.

them by hand with their number. Our number was three rings. Everyone could hear the numbers and knew who was being called. There was lots of listening in, which we called "rubbering". People weren't supposed to do it, but I think everyone did it at that time, to know what was going on.

We attended school at Avery and also went to Peppermint School. Florence Adams (later Chub's wife) was our teacher. The Peppermint School was located just in back of Brice Station (now Youngstons) in a group of pines and cedars. It was one room with benches that we see only in museums today. It has been gone for years. Some cabins and homes are located there now. Lloyd, Daisy, Lester and I all went to school to Florence and walked from the ranch and back over dusty roads every day. Lena Adams Jones, Florence's sister, was also our teacher at the Avery School. Henry Russell was my first teacher at Averys. He "papoosed" me to school the first day, and I cried that whole day.

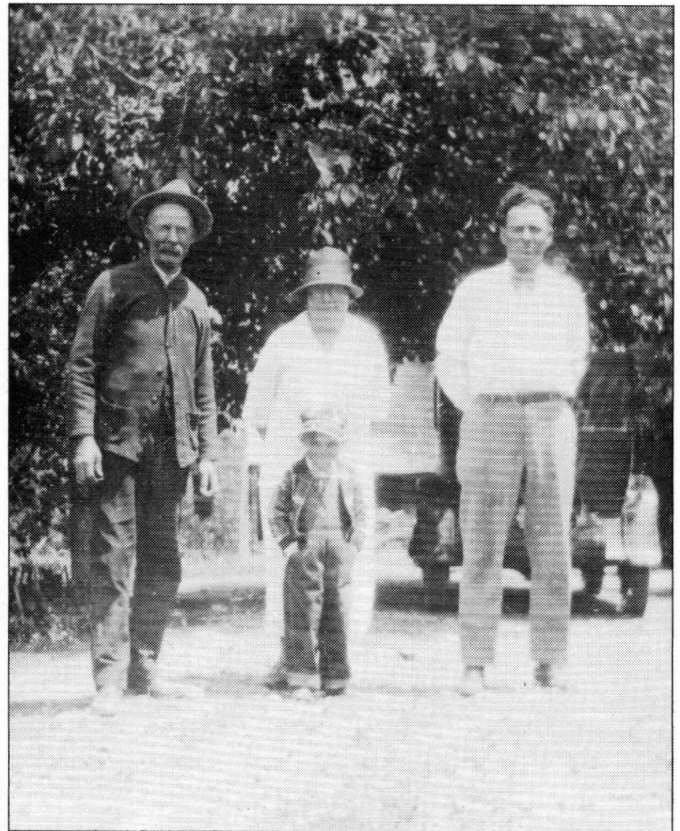
We had two donkeys, Toby and Jennie. Chub and I rode Jennie, and Lloyd and Daisy on Toby. We took our lunches in lard pails, and rode the donkeys to Averys to school over foot-deep dusty roads. The traction engines hauled timber and lumber down these roads which made them so dusty. After Lester was old enough to go to school, we walked most of the time. Mat Manuel of the lumber company would give us rides in his two-horse surrey, and we really thought that was something. He always had beautiful horses. All horses were frightened when the traction engine came down from Manuel's mill near Big Trees, hauling lumber.

We moved from the Ranch to Copperopolis in May, 1914. My father bought the old Lewis ranch down there and we raised grain, cattle, hogs, and chickens and grew all our vegetables. Most of the time, we drove a horse and cart to school in Copperopolis, but sometimes we hiked over the hill to school, and that was quite a hike up and down, twice a day. I graduated from the eighth grade at Copperopolis school, from the one that burned down a few years ago. Now they have a new one.

After we left the Darby Ranch on Highway "4", Chub took over the ditch job for a number of years, then built a home on his own property below the ditch not too far from the Russell home. Chub and Florence were married at the old Adams ranch near Milton, on May 23rd, 1915. Lloyd and Daisy stood up with Chub and Florence at the wedding. Florence had been born there, June 16, 1889. Now there's nothing left there but a few old bricks and one pear tree which still blossoms each spring. Most of the Adams family are buried at the old cemetery at Milton.

In 1915, we moved from Copperopolis to Stockton. We traded the Copperopolis ranch for a home in that city, the William Comfort home. I went to high school there. Each year, Mother and Father would drive the old Model "T" to the ranch and take care of the apples, and then return to Stockton for the winter.

My father was a tall man and very strong. He always worked very hard, and didn't have an easy life. He passed away at 82, following an operation, at Dameron Hospital from pneumonia, on December 16th, 1946. My mother also had a hard life. She also lived to be 82, and passed away at her home in Stockton on October 8th, 1945. They are both buried in the family plot at Murphys, beside their sons Lloyd (deceased October 27th, 1954) and Lester (March 14th, 1952).



AT THE RANCH - 1930's

Jay and Virginia visit the ranch and pose with son Lloyd and grandson Lloyd Junior, with their dependable "Tin Lizzie" in the background.

Chronicles of Calaveras

By
Cornelius Blauvelt Demarest

Second Installment

In our last issue, we began the Cornelius Demarest memoirs, telling of the arduous trip of his elder brother, David, to California in 1849. David and his friends, Dr. William Jones and George Griffiths, eventually reached Calaveras County and became deeply involved in the frenetic activities of that time.

David returned for a visit to his family's seat in New Jersey in 1856, and his stories of gold rush Calaveras County so intrigued his younger brothers, Abraham and Cornelius, that they both joined him on his return to California, leaving early in December, 1856. We pick up the story of their travels as they leave New York in midwinter.

The advent of the writer into Calaveras was in midwinter, or to be more exact, December thirty-first. He left New York Harbor on December third, during one of the ordinary winter days of the East, with decks covered with snow, sleet and ice, and with a bitter wind blowing across the harbor, cold enough to freeze the marrow in the bones. In three days we were in fair weather, and in six more were in the Harbor of Havana, where decks were all sheltered by awnings as protection against the heat of the almost tropical sun. Bumboats immediately surrounded the steamer, and lines were thrown up, to which small baskets were attached. Sending down five cents it bought up three enormous oranges such as we never saw in the States.

It appeared that every one on board must have laid in a stock of oranges sufficient to last the rest of the voyage to San Francisco. Certainly the all-pervading sight and smell of oranges from that day until San Francisco was reached gave the writer such a nausea for the fruit that he never tasted one for the next ten years afterwards.

Another six days brought us to Aspinwall, as Colon was then called, landing there at seven in the morning. We had breakfast and dinner under new, and to us, most strange surroundings. Leaving there at two in the afternoon we took the train for Panama, over a road forty-seven miles long, which was said to have exacted a toll of a human life for every tie that was laid.

The sight of the native population was rather a shock to many of the prim and correct notions of the north in the way of dress, or rather undress. They certainly lived as near to Nature as Mother Eve and also were not ashamed. At midnight we were transferred to the large steamer of the Pacific Line, much larger and finer than those on the Atlantic side, and after twelve days we reached San Francisco, after having stopped on the way at Acapulco, considered by many the most beautiful harbor in the world.

December twenty-ninth, the writer, with a party made up on the steamer, viewed the magnificent panorama from Nob Hill and Telegraph Hill, extending from the Golden Gate on the west through which we had just passed the day before, to Alcatraz

Island on which were the government fortifications, to the magnificent bay on the east, and in the background the towering cone of Mount Diablo. Going to Woodward's Gardens, visiting the old Spanish Mission Dolores and other points of interest, occupied the remainder of the day.

The writer took the overnight steamer for Stockton at 6 p.m. and arrived there at 6 a.m. Upon going to the stage office, he found the bookings to Calaveras for the day were all filled. To pass the day he went to the nearest hotel on the levee, and after getting breakfast, his trunk and himself were ushered to his room upstairs. This proved to be a great loft as large as the building itself, and fitted up with a series of bunks all around the sides and across and down the middle, generally three above each other. The prospect of passing the night in what appeared more like a cattle corral than a hotel was a little too much for the olfactory and fastidiousness of an eastern tenderfoot. On looking around, he found the Weber House, a hotel conducted on a somewhat less primitive fashion, and soon bag and baggage were transferred to that place.

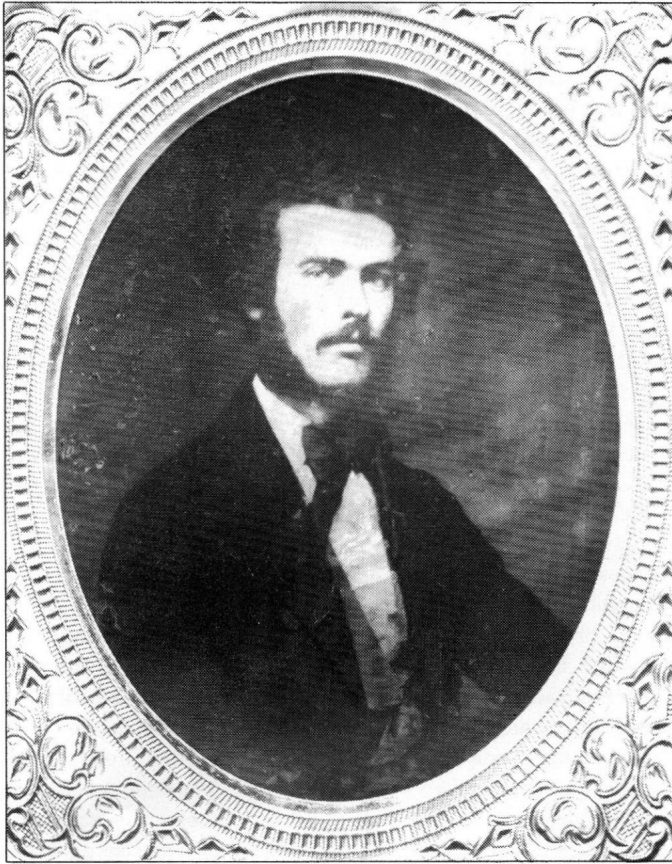
Like the greenhorn in a new place, he started to do the town, not so much of a job if the size of the town only was considered, and the quality of the soil was not taken into account. But the latter was sure to overcome the disposition to wander very far, for a more villainous compound could hardly be imagined than that of which the streets were composed, and in the crossing of them care had to be exercised lest one or both of his boots should be found sticking in the subsoil, and the pedestrian emerge in his stocking feet.

His attention was first attracted to the great freight wagons, generally drawn by eight to fourteen mules. They were equipped with, or what appeared to be, solid wheels. Investigation showed that the solid wheel was nothing but mud. Nothing like the ordinary eastern mud he had been accustomed to wade through bare legged in his youthful days, but the fat, unctious, sticky, tenacious compound such as made up the country surrounding Stockton as far as the foothills twenty miles away. The mud would get in between the spokes of the wheel, and as they frequently went down to the hub in the mire the wheel at last became in appearance a solid disk.

Stockton, at that time, like many other places, had great ambitions as to its future possibilities, but just then it had to sing small. The ground on which it was built was a slight elevation near the eastern bank of the San Joaquin River at the head of a slough branching off from the main river. To the west were the Tules, barely level with the water of the river, stretching away as far as the straights at Benicia, and to the east was this vast sea of mud, as it was in the rainy season, extending to the foothills. It was like a lone island in a great ocean of mud.

The following day, December 31st, the writer obtained a seat in the stage for Angels, 60 miles away. After floundering through the sea of mud for twenty miles the foothills were reached, but before going five miles on that part of the road we suffered shipwreck.

We were in one of what were called mud wagons for want of a more elegant name. Ours seemed to be able to navigate the seas of mud, but failed dismally when we struck dry land. On going over a sidelong piece of road the rear wheel on the lower side



CORNELIUS B. DEMAREST

This daguerreotype was taken either shortly before Cornelius came to California, or shortly after his arrival.

collapsed and the wagon and all went over to starboard in a squirming, wriggling, indiscriminate mass, a fine performance for a moving picture show. Eight men and four women, including nine people inside and three outside, were spilled out.

On taking stock of the injured it was found that none were seriously hurt and that it was principally mud that felt so moist on body and clothes, not blood. The stage, with nothing but a canvas cover, received no special damage except to the wheel and top hamper.

The writer realized after walking around awhile that in his case it was somewhat a case of blood and not all mud, for he found blood oozing from his boot where it had been cut. He had not felt the pain of his injuries during the past excitement, but it had now become a very present sense.

However, there was no object to indulge in useless lamentation, so after a long delay we obtained from neighboring farmers two wagons in which the passengers were taken to the next station, about ten miles farther up the road, where we arrived about six hours late. Fresh stage and horses were procured and after

dinner we again took the road, now up the mountains, and reached our destination, Angels Camp, after midnight.

The last ride on the grade from Altaville down to Angels will linger in the memory of the writer as long as life itself lasts. It appeared like the descent into Dante's Inferno. The quartz mills at this time were all running full blast. First came the Fritz Mill, next in order the Winter Mill, the Doctor Hill Mill, the Lightner Mill, the Foster Mill, the Jim Fair Mill, and two or three others whose names are not now remembered, and last near the end the Great Crystal Mill with its forty stamps.

During this ride it was easy to realize Tennyson's description of the "Charge of the Six Hundred". There were thunderings in front of us, thunderings on the right of us, thunderings on the left of us, and thunderings in the rear of us. It appeared even as if there were thunderings above us and below us. The earth itself appeared to tremble and shake under the terrible impact of the hundreds of stamps, and the thunderous roar arising from them was simply deafening. And after plunging down this ravine in the pitch darkness of a December night over a most villainously rough and rocky road, the writer considered himself more dead than alive when the stage brought up before Scribner's Store. Immediately on leaving the stage he was accosted by a little sawed-off Irishman, Tommy O'Neill, who asked him if his name was Demarest. He answered in the affirmative and was told that his brothers had waited until nearly midnight in hopes of meeting him, but as there were no telephones or telegraphs in those days, it was impossible to obtain advance information of the coming of the stage. Tommy, whose devotion to the Demarest family was like to that of a faithful dog, promised to stay until the stage should arrive, even if it should require him to be there all night.

He said the place at which they lived, French Camp, was only a couple of miles away and he would act as guide, as he lived there also. The writer learned afterward that it was nearly four miles. It might have been only a couple of miles as the birds fly, but unfortunately we were not birds and for those whose feet were on "terra firma" the trouble was that so much of that same terra firma stood up on edge, which immensely magnified the distance both as to time and effort.*

The first thing to do was to climb the side of a hill in the pitch darkness, and it seemed to the tired and lame voyager as if he was ascending the tower in the plains of Shinar that was to reach into the Heavens. Going up in the rear of the great Crystal Mill, the roar from it effectually made complaint, explanation, or expressed desire to halt impossible until the summit was reached, and descent made on the other side.

After traveling what appeared to be ten miles, instead of two, and all the time suffering the most excruciating pain from the injured foot, we landed at the house in French Camp near the hour of three o'clock in the morning. The writer, of course, received a most hearty and generous welcome, but very quickly, like Sir Joseph Porter, sought the seclusion that the cabin granted, having been on foot and in a cramped-up stage for nearly twenty-two

*French Camp, now only a forgotten site, was west of Angels, two miles "as the birds fly".

hours. He arose late the next morning, January 1st, to greet the glorious Calaveras winter day and was there ever or anywhere a day like unto it? New Year's Day brought its feasting and pleasures there as well as in the East. We sat down at dinner to as fine a roast turkey as could be conceived of, with all the side dishes, all prepared and cooked by the Elder Brother, who had served an apprenticeship since his advent in '49. With all of us with good appetites, and with the writer a voracious one, waiting upon a toast to good health, ample justice was then done to the viands and the evil day of reckoning with an injured foot was put off until a future time. The net results of the injury was a confinement to the house for nearly three months.

Poor Tommy O'Neill, the guide over the hills, was one of those confirmed inebriates who never, or hardly ever by any possibility came home sober from his daily visits to town, if there was any means by which he could come home drunk. A very ludicrous accident happened to Tommy just before the advent of the writer. Tommy and his partner lived in one of several cabins by the Elder Brother and situated only a few yards away. The cabin was fitted up in the typical miner's cabin fashion, the door at one end, and a large open stone fireplace at the other end. In one corner were two sleeping bunks, built one above the other, the lower one being built a short distance above the floor, leaving a most convenient place for the accumulation of all kinds of debris. Here our miners deposited picks, shovels, and boots, whenever they took them off on going to bed, which was not often. They also found this a good place to keep their whiskey and quicksilver bottles. These last two were to be poor Tommy's undoing, as we shall soon tell.

Any surface miner always has to use quicksilver in working his claim to recover the gold, and for convenience it was generally kept in small quantities in a soda water bottle to avoid the necessity of carrying around a large iron flask. Unfortunately, whiskey was also usually carried in the same sort of bottle, and both were stowed under the bunk at night. Tommy on this particular day had been in town, and after stowing himself full he also had his soda water bottle filled with whiskey, and arriving in his cabin he just placed his bottle under the bunk and turned in like the cavalryman's horse, with all the harness on. During the night Tommy awoke with a very great thirst and thought he would quench it with a drink. Reaching down under the bunk, his hand came in contact with the quicksilver bottle, and as the whiskey bottle was full and the other contained only a couple of pounds, in his drunken stupor Tommy could not distinguish the difference. Up went the quicksilver bottle to his mouth, and in a flash its entire contents went down his throat. With a roar that shook the cabin and woke his partner and even others in the nearby cabins, he bounded out of bed and, wild with excitement and dread of death, he executed a series of gymnastics that would have done credit to a circus performer or a whirling dervish. With the greatest difficulty he was brought under control. He certainly thought his last had come with that amount of liquid metal in his stomach.

We have often heard of the speed with which a dose of salts would traverse the human anatomy, but the speed of that dose

would be as that of an ox train beside the 20th Century Limited, compared to the record time made by that dose of quicksilver. It was said that in a very few minutes he recovered the whole amount from his boots! He loudly congratulated himself on the fact that it was as good as ever and we would return it to the bottle for future use. It left no ill effects on his system, but the awful scare he had undergone was too much for Tommy, and from that day forward he rode on the water wagon.

COPPEROPOLIS

One of the most curious series of events illustrating how simple luck, without any ability or brains on the part of the recipient, can befall a man and make him wealthy occurred in connection with the discovery of copper in Calaveras. A man named Tom Hardy, an Englishman from the copper region in Cornwall, kept a hog ranch in what was called Salt Spring Valley. And when we say he was a hog rancher, we say at once that he was in the lowest possible social scale, in short a mud sill. At that time in California, nearly all cattle were grazed on public lands and every owner was supposed to brand his animals so that they could be easily recognized and claimed by him wherever found. Tom Hardy never branded his animals, so consequently, all animals not branded, he said, belonged to him; surely a very broad claim for ownership and which opened a very wide door for endless disputes regarding ownership and occasionally some gun practice.

Upon this ranch was employed a man named John Reed. At the time these events began, Reed had neither money nor credit enough to even buy himself a pair of bluejean overalls. One day as he was walking over the ranch he stubbed his toes against a small piece of rock that projected above the surface of the ground, and looking down, something about its appearance attracted his attention. He picked it up and upon close examination he thought it looked like copper ore with which he was somewhat familiar. Taking it home, he consulted Hardy, and together they tested it and found that it was rich in copper.* They immediately examined the locality and found a well-defined vein some mile or more in length which they at once determined to claim under the district mining laws. In these early days all the mining laws were local to the district in which they were situated, and usually contained provision for taking title to such a vein. A company could be formed, each member of which could claim one hundred feet on the length of the vein with one hundred feet extra to the original discoverer, by virtue of his discovery. The usual way to take up a claim was to write a notice containing all the names of those associated together and worded as follows: -

*Another rancher in the area, Thomas McCarty, is generally cited as co-discoverer with Reed of the Copperopolis vein. Why Demarest didn't mention his name also is not understood. Actually, the first copper discovered in this vicinity was by Hiram Hughes at Quail Hill and Hog Hill, just a short time before the Reed and McCarty strike. It was Hughes' discovery that alerted everyone to the presence of copper in the area.



CORNELIUS BLAUVELT DEMAREST

1836 - 1911

From a portrait taken in 1910, about the time Cornelius was writing the "Chronicles."

"We, the undersigned, claim 1300 feet from this notice to another notice on an oak tree in a northwesterly direction, 200 feet wide with all its dips and angles, and intend to work the same according to the laws of Angels Camp."

The names on the notice were partly as follows:

John Reed, discover	200 feet
Thomas Hardy	100 feet
Thomas Rafferty.....	100 feet
Mrs. Thomas Rafferty.....	100 feet
John Doe.....	100 feet
Richard Roe.....	100 feet

and so on up to twelve names. They could choose any of their friends and place their names on the list. This would then make a legal claim on which no one would be allowed to infringe if the proper amount of work was done upon it as required by the laws of the district. Although no one could take up more than one share, he could buy as many of them as he wished and hold proper title to them. So as soon as the claim was located, Hardy and Reed

proceeded to put out the other parties whose names they had used to make up the list. The procedure would be about as follows: - "Mr. Doe, I have placed your name on a copper claim. Do you want to hold it?" Mr. Doe, having had some experience in former claims in the way of assessments, and having the fear of the same in the present case, should say, "No". "Well, if you don't want it I will buy it from you. Here is a bill of sale and one dollar. Please sign it." In this way share after share was bought until they struck Mr. and Mrs. Rafferty. These people having no fear of assessments before their eyes, said "Yes, we will hold on to it." The Raffertys did not intend to pay assessments even if they were levied as none could be collected from them. In that case all that could be done would be to sell them out. Rafferty and his wife kept a sort of low-down road house for teamsters on the inside road on the way to Stockton.* Children were more plentiful than money, clothes scarcer than either, while dirt and squalor reigned supreme at the Rafferty establishment.

A contract was made by the company as finally organized to sink a shaft fifty feet deep, payment to be made when that depth was reached. Before the shaft was that deep they had sold enough ore to pay all expenses for the entire contract; consequently, no assessments were levied and no cash invested. The hole in the ground had paid for everything. The stock never cost one dime in cash. One year after discovery, Mr. Rafferty, having no faith in the permanence of the prospect, decided to sell his share and received \$25,000 for it; Mrs. Rafferty still refused to part with her share. The following year a dividend was declared and Mrs. Rafferty received \$25,000 as the dividend on her one share. Two years after Reed had stubbed his toe against the stone he sold his two shares for \$65,000, besides having received \$50,000 in dividends. Five years later, Tom Hardy, who had in the meantime bought up all the others, sold the entire plant to Meader, Solon & Company, of Stockton, who were the selling and forwarding agents for the mine, for \$1,250,000.

In the meantime, a large town had grown up about the mine and which was called Copperopolis, consisting of the typical population of an ordinary mining town, good, bad and indifferent, with the former far in the minority. During this time, Tom Hardy, as he had been known, had built a splendid mansion near the town, was elected to the State Legislature, and had blossomed out as the Honorable Thomas F. Hardy.

DOCTOR HILL

Doctor Hill was typical of many that drifted to California in the early days. He received his title from the fact or alleged fact that he was a dentist or tooth doctor, as it was called in Texas. What his

*This was before Reed and McCarty built the turnpike that was the predecessor of Highway "4". Most of the traffic between Stockton and the Salt Springs Valley region came up Rock Creek past the "White House" (Tower & Bixby Ranch) or by the "Red House Ranch" (Captain Wright's). Possibly Demarest is referring to the "White House" route here.

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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.

name was in Texas or before he went there is probably unknown. It was often a case of pistol practice in Texas to ask a man what his name was before he came there. Californians were too polite or too busy to ask such impertinent, embarrassing, and sometimes dangerous questions. Dr. Hill possessed all the sharp angles of the natural man before they got rounded off, like stones in the streams, by long continued contact and friction with civilized and polite society.

He landed in Calaveras somewhere about the year '54 or '55, during the early development of the quartz mining. He acquired a mine and built a mill to crush the quartz.* This was a mill of the old style, built with a minimum of ironwork in it, for little of that was to be had in those days. It had a thirty-foot overshot waterwheel mounted on one end of a long shaft formed from the trunk of a great pine tree. In the other part of the shaft were

*Mark Twain Road, as it leaves Highway '49', crosses over the Dr. Hill mine. The claim was staked by James M. Hill and associates in January, 1855. In later years, the claim was consolidated with the Angels mine. See "Las Calaveras" for October, 1968.

inserted in rows the cams for lifting the stamps. In the revolution of the shaft, the cams would lift the stamps up about twelve or fourteen inches to where they would slip off and fall on the quartz in the mortar. This continuing with a row of five or ten stamps, each one dropping about sixty times per minute, would finally crush the rock to a powder. In the process of crushing it was necessary to use a considerable amount of quicksilver to amalgamate the gold liberated from the crushed rock. This had to be sprinkled in the battery at intervals by the man who fed the battery with the quartz rock.

A brilliant idea struck the doctor. Why depend upon the judgement and memory of mere man to feed the battery with quicksilver? Why not make an automatic device that would do the business systematically? So the doctor constructed a narrow trough the length of the battery, with a fine screen for the bottom. It is a peculiarity of quicksilver that it would stay in such a trough as that so long as it was at rest. Then the jarring of the stamps as they fell would vibrate the trough enough to induce a part of the quicksilver to trickle through the bottom. But the devices of the smartest men sometimes go astray. When the mill was started after adjusting the thing carefully, the very first stamp that fell so effectively jarred the trough that every atom of quicksilver disappeared through the bottom down into the battery and shortly thereafter into the gulch below the mill. There, the Chinamen had good quicksilver mining for many months afterwards.

"Chronicles of Calaveras" will be continued in a forthcoming issue of "Las Calaveras."

CORRECTION

Walter Huberty, a longtime resident of the San Andreas area points out two discrepancies in the July, 1976, issue on the Smith Family of West Point.

Mr. Huberty says, "If you will check the records, I am sure you will find that he (J.A. Smith) was Deputy Clerk, but never County Clerk, as he had quit school-teaching for this job, because he was studying law. This position would put him in direct contact with the practice of law.

Here is the way I remember the judgeship changes: A.I. McSorley (Superior Court Judge) died suddenly, and John Hancock, who was District Attorney, was appointed. He served for quite some time, but resigned to enter a law firm in Stockton. This put the judgeship up for grabs. Will A. Dower, James Keith and A.J. Smith each tried for the office. It's quite a story, but Smith was appointed by the Governor - with some reluctance as Mr. Smith was rather limited in the years of practice and had never been District Attorney. It is true that Judge Smith served for forty years without opposition."

Back Issues

A list of our back issues is available for the asking. Out of print issues will be supplied as "xerox" copies. Price to members is 60 cents a copy, and a discount is given for orders over \$10.

IN MEMORIAM

Alice Moffitt Eldridge, December 7, 1976
Hattie Dietz Hertzig, November 27, 1976