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## MORE CALAVERAS DOCTORS

“Las Calaveras” for July 1973, and October, 1974, were devoted to Calaveras doctors, including some of the early medical practitioners, many of the Angels Camp physicians, and some of those like the well-known Dr. March in the lower part of the county. Much of this material was compiled and written up for presentation at several meetings of the Society in 1974. Additional information on Mokelumne Hill and San Andreas doctors has been accumulated and is included in this issue. We hope that we have covered most of the early physicians of the county, if only by mention of

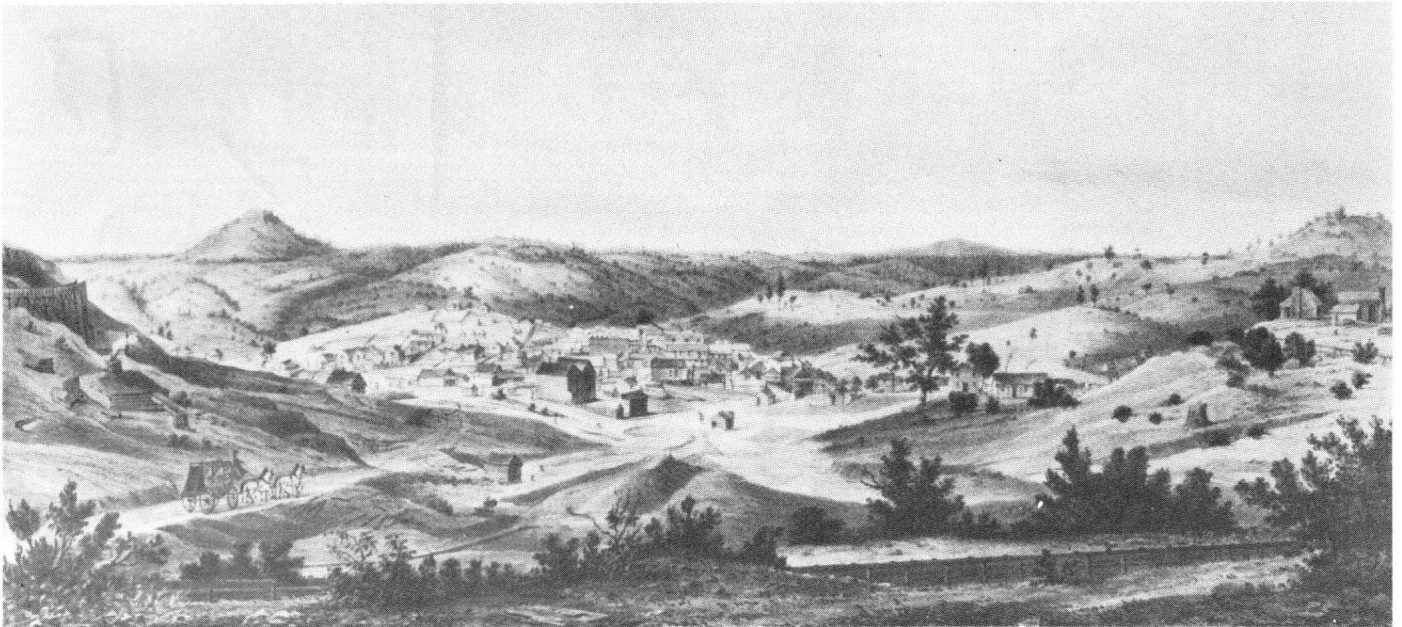
their names, in this and the former issues on the subject.

Las Calaveras in January, 1972, carried pictures of Dr. E. B. Robertson (and his family), mentioned in Mrs. Altmeyer’s article on the County’s hospitals in our January issue. He came across the plains in 1850, prepared for college in his miner’s cabin at Mokelumne Hill, graduated from the University of the Pacific Medical School in San Francisco (later the Cooper Medical College) in 1864, and practiced in Calaveras County until 1881, where he lived at San Andreas. He was County Physician for much of that time. In 1882 he moved to Jackson.

Another Calaveras practitioner, Asa Weston Collins, published a book in 1941 entitled “Doctor Asa” in which he recorded some of his experiences in the West Point area. He was the grandson of Nathan Weston Spaulding, a gold rush miner who went into lumbering at West Point.

In Copperopolis were William W. McCoy (“Las Calaveras,” January 1967), Charles Reese Harry, who served as company doctor for the Union Copper mine from 1892 to 1897, and Charles Shipley, doctor for the Royal mine in 1903 and later at the Union Mine in Copperopolis (“Las Calaveras”, July 1968). Dr. William L. Buckley practiced at Milton, and was Coroner and Public Administrator in 1898.

We hope to record some of our more recent doctors in future issues of “Las Calaveras” and we will welcome further information from our readers on this subject.



MOKELUMNE HILL – 1855

From a lithograph by Kuchel and Dresel and published by Britton & Rey.

*Courtesy of Bancroft Library*

## DR. LEWIS SOHER

by Emmett Joy

Lewis Soher came from Vienna, Austria, to New Orleans. Later, he studied medicine and became an M.D. In 1849, he arrived in San Francisco and shortly thereafter, settled at Mokelumne Hill. He started his office in a tenthouse when the town was a "tent and brush hut mining camp." He was an eye witness to many of the activities of the gold rush. According to Dr. Soher, during these flush times, "For seventeen weeks a man was killed between Saturday night and Sunday morning." Five men were killed in one week.

Soher was an enterprising pioneer doctor. He acquired a ferry at Big Bar on the Mokelumne River in 1850. The ferry was merely a dug-out. Dr. Soher gave the ferry to a man by the name of John Hasley who sold it in 1850 to Pope & Burns. A bridge was later built in 1853 by Dr. Soher, the Goodwins, and A. J. Houghtaling, the first bridge at Big Bar. In 1859, it was reported that Dr. Soher and Mr. Goodwyn, proprietors of the Big Bar bridge, were making a new road from the quartz mill on the Amador side of the river to Butte City, known as the Butte Canyon Road.

According to the Calaveras Chronicle of January 11, 1862, "At half past twelve yesterday the center of the Big Bar bridge, owned by Dr. Soher, was carried away." This was the great flood that destroyed almost all of the bridges and ferries in the Sierras.

In the Chronicle of March 18, 1862, it was stated that Dr. Soher had built a new ferry boat, one of the largest and most substantial in the country. He spared no expense to make it perfectly secure against the action of the water.

In 1855, Dr. Soher was operating a drugstore in connection with his medical practice, and was engaged in other projects. In 1858, when San Andreas was laid in ashes by fire, he bought and shipped all the bread that he could find to the populace of that town.

When the Odd Fellows Lodge was founded in Mokelumne Hill as Lodge No. 10, in 1856, Dr. Soher was one of its founders and officers. He later became a member of the Grand Lodge of Odd Fellows in California.

Dr. Soher moved to San Francisco in 1868. His grandson Hubert has given me a picture of his house (two-story) which stood on Bush Street between Hyde and Larkin. This building was destroyed in the San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906.

In San Francisco, Dr. Soher pursued his enterprising activities. He became a high-ranking officer in several companies, including the Firemans Fund Insurance Company. He remained the rest of his life in that city, where he has descendants living today. His son married a daughter of Sheriff Ben Thorn, of San Andreas.



**MOKELUMNE DRUG STORE**  
Dr. Soher, Proprietor

## DR. A. H. HOERCHNER

by Emmett Joy

Born in Eisnach, Saxony, a former state of Germany, A. H. Hoerchner came to California during the early fifties. He was an authentic gold rush doctor who settled in Mokelumne Hill and at Pleasant Spring. He acquired a large ranch at Upper Rich Gulch and developed it, also building a hospital there to care for some of his patients.

In 1858, the Calaveras Board of Supervisors entered into a contract with Dr. Hoerchner to keep the indigent sick in his hospital at Pleasant Spring. This arrangement remained in effect for nine years.

In 1860, Dr. Hoerchner put an "ad" in the Calaveras Chronicle stating that his main office was in Mokelumne Hill. To illustrate the progress he made on his ranch at Pleasant Spring, an advertisement offered in the Chronicle on July 18, 1861:

"For Sale - The Pleasant Spring Ranch. 240 acres, 1000 fruit trees, 5000 grape vines, and several buildings . . ."

Hoerchner opened up a new drug store in Mokelumne Hill in January, 1861, called the "Miners' Drug Store," where physicians prescriptions were "carefully put up day and night." He spent his time in Mokelumne Hill practicing medicine there and at times performing operations at the French Hospital, located on the west side of Stockton Hill. The Calaveras Chronicle of November 28, 1868, contains an article describing an operation called Perineal lithotomy, at that time a very difficult and dan-

gerous one, which was performed by Drs. Hoerchner and Robertson, assisted by Dr. Austin, at Mokelumne Hill. At that time, the Chronicle states, these two doctors were considered to "have no superiors outside of San Francisco."

Dr. Hoerchner, unfortunately, died at the relatively young age of forty-seven, on September 23rd, 1870, and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery at Mokelumne Hill.

## DR. FRANK E. BLAISDELL

*by Winifred Peek*

Frank Ellsworth Blaisdell was born at Pittsfield, New Hampshire, on March 13, 1862. His father was a sergeant in the New Hampshire Volunteers during the Civil War. He was of the saddler's and harness-maker's trade.

In 1870, the Blaisdell family journeyed to San Francisco with their three children, of whom Frank was the eldest. In 1871, the children became ill with scarlet fever and the two younger boys died. Frank was in poor health, so his parents decided to move to San Diego where the climate would be better for him.

Mr. Blaisdell opened a saddlery and harness shop, and then bought a farm twenty-six miles northeast of San Diego. There he developed an orchard and raised grain. This farm became the showplace of Poway Valley.

In 1886, Frank Blaisdell decided to study medicine, so he moved to San Diego, where he worked in a stationery store. He studied medicine under the direction of Dr. P. C. Remondine and Dr. C. C. Valle. His parents mean-

while had moved to Coronado and started a plant nursery there. The following year, Frank went to San Francisco and entered Cooper Medical College, graduating with a degree in medicine in November, 1889.

Dr. Blaisdell then returned to San Diego, but found it difficult to establish a practice. It was at this time in his life that he became much interested in entomology, which was to become his second life interest. He returned to San Francisco, and at the Medical College learned of a vacancy in Mokelumne Hill. He immediately proceeded to that place by train and stage. There, he introduced himself to Mr. Thomas Peters, the proprietor of the town drug store on Main Street. He opened up an office, and gradually built up a large practice.

On February 18, 1894, Dr. Blaisdell married Miss Katherine Peek of Mokelumne Hill. In 1896, their son, Frank Ellsworth Blaisdell, Jr. was born.

In 1900, Dr. Blaisdell was offered the position of Instructor of Anatomy at Cooper Medical College in San Francisco. He decided to give up his practice in Mokelumne Hill and take this offer. Before starting his teaching career, he went on a trip to Nome, Alaska, with his brothers-in-law, who were engaged in mining there.

After a distinguished career as a teacher at Cooper (which became Stanford Medical School), Professor Blaisdell retired in 1927. Although he continued medical work at the Lane building for another 12 years, he devoted much of his time in entomological research. He was the author of a book and over 100 papers of subjects relating to entomology. He died at Watsonville in 1946 at the age of 84.

### DR. BLAISDELL AND TOM PETERS

The Mokelumne Hill Drugstore served as Dr. Blaisdell's office.

From a glass plate in the Frank Peek Collection.







**DR. ELISHA BRYANT ROBERTSON**  
1826-1899  
From San Andreas Museum

## **DR. SIMON FILLMORE STUCKEY**

*by Emmett Joy*

Dr. S. F. Stuckey graduated from the Cooper Medical College in San Francisco in 1898. Shortly afterward, he moved to Mokelumne Hill where mining was the mainstay of the economy. Injuries in the mines lured many young doctors to this area. Although most of these remained but a short time, Dr. Stuckey stayed in Mokelumne Hill for his full professional life.

Dr. Stuckey married a Mokelumne Hill girl, Mary Champion, and they had one son, Marion, who was born in 1909, but who lived for only seven years. Dr. Stuckey died in 1924, and his wife, Mary, passed away in 1937.

## **LOUIS MADDOCK, M.D.**

*by Emmett Joy*

Dr. Louis Maddock was an outstanding physician prominently known in San Joaquin and Calaveras Counties for more than forty years. He was a native of Oregon where he received his AB from the University of Oregon.

He then studied law at the University of Virginia. After reading Darwin's book on the theory of evolution, he became interested in science. He turned to the study of medicine and graduated from the Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia.

Dr. Maddock came to Stockton in 1893, and opened an office. He did extensive microscopic examinations in a joint practice with Dr. Hammond, and became the first doctor in Stockton to make use of the microscope in a medical practice.

For the last thirty years of his life, Dr. Maddock resided in Calaveras County, becoming a true "country doctor." He maintained no office but attended the sick and afflicted in their homes. On many occasions he remained at the home of his patient until the latter was out of immediate danger. He traveled widely on dusty roads in summer and muddy ones in winter, usually in a horse-drawn cart. There were times, though, when he rode on horseback.

At the time of Dr. Maddock's death, a Calaveras paper stated, "There were few telephones in outlying Calaveras County during his day and emergency calls were brought by messenger. He always answered the call of duty whether day or night . . . Dr. Maddock was a kindly man. His patients were fond of him and had confidence in his ability.

"For the last ten years of his life, he had practically retired from practice, and resided at Fourth Crossing and Dry Creek. His death occurred on March 25, 1936, in Stockton of a heart ailment induced by injuries from a fall downstairs at a hotel there. At the time of his death, he left one sister, Mrs. J. W. Jordan."

## **JUDSON ARTHUR HOLLAND, M.D.**

Judson Holland was born on his father's ranch a mile and a half south of San Andreas (now on the cement plant property). He was the son of William and Theresa Holland, natives of Berlin, Germany, but of English ancestry. William came to California in 1852, and took up mining. His wife, Theresa, joined him three years later. There were four children in the family, Emma, Hattie, Jerome and Judson.

Judson was educated in the public schools of San Andreas and at the State Normal School in San Jose. He then taught in Calaveras County schools for sixteen years, at Willow Creek and Sheep Ranch. He then decided to go into medicine, and graduated in 1894 from Cooper Medical School. Returning to San Andreas, he soon built up a large practice. For many years he was the only doctor living in San Andreas.

In 1884, Dr. Holland married Miss Agnes Mercer and they had three children, Sumner R. and Eloise P. (twins) and Agnes P. (Eloise is now [1974] Mrs. Seeley, and lives in San Andreas). Mrs. Judson Holland died in 1889,





**JUDSON ARTHUR HOLLAND, M.D.**  
*Gift of Eva Soracco*

when the children were very small. In 1897, Dr. Holland married Marietta Godfrey, a native of New Jersey. She was very active in the Congregational Church in San Andreas, especially in the Sunday School. Mrs. Hattie Hertzig remembers Mrs. Holland as tiny and frail appearing, but very energetic.

The Hollands' first home was about where Winkler's Store is today. Later he built the large home where now Mrs. Seeley lives, on old Highway "49." Both a physician and surgeon, Dr. Holland generally prepared the medicines he prescribed for his patients, although there was a drugstore in the telegraph office near the present site of Blewetts Cafe. He was a kind and understanding man, and the moral support and encouragement he gave his patients was very important to their recovery. As Mrs. Hertzig says, the instruction book never came with a new baby, so the doctor's sympathy and the advice to the mothers, along with a reassuring pat on the shoulder and 25¢ worth of medicine, changed the day for them when they consulted him about their children.

Dr. Holland was very successful in his profession and popular and active in the community. He served as Health Officer, Coroner, and Public Administrator of

the county. He was a Mason and Master of the Lodge here for two terms. He was a member of the Odd Fellows and past Grand of the San Andreas Lodge. He was also a member of the Native Sons of the Golden West, the Ancient Order of United Workmen, of the Elks Lodge, and the Knights Templar. Mrs. Holland was an Eastern Star and a Rebecca.

Dr. Holland passed away in 1934. His brother Jerome lived to 1940. They and their parents are buried in the Peoples Cemetery in San Andreas.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I read with great interest the article that dealt with the Whittle family in the October 1981 issue of *Las Calaveras*. There are three cabinet-size photographs of members of the Whittle family in my collection of 19th Century images. I am enclosing them with this letter; perhaps you would like to copy them for publication in *Las Calaveras*.

The first photograph depicts the Whittle triplets, who were a seven-day wonder in Calaveras County when they were born on August 21, 1885, to Joseph and Mary Ann Whittle. Mary was 36 years old and already had six children. Unfortunately the three babies lived for only one week, and the photograph is a posthumous one for the baby in the middle, since the small hands are folded as was the custom after death.

The other two photographs are likenesses of Katie and Lizzie Whittle, who were the 2nd and 3rd-born children of Joseph and Mary Whittle. The one of Katie was taken



**THE WHITTLE TRIPLETS**  
**Born on August 21st, 1885.**

