



Quarterly Bulletin of the Calaveras County Historical Society
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RECOLLECTIONS OF CALAVERAS COUNTY'S FIRST FAIR

PART II

By **ELSIE FLOWER**

(These recollections were first used thirteen years ago in a series of broadcasts on the Peffer station, KGDM, Stockton. The following is from the script of that broadcast, telling the story just as Fred Burnham and Frank Tower gave it.)

Frank Tower recalls that the quarter horse, "Buck Horn," owned by I. N. Neely and raced on Flower Ranch track, was one of the fastest quarter horses in history. Fred Burnham tells of the victories won by Rant McCarty's mare, "Susie Hooker." Following her victory at the first Calaveras County Fair, Rant McCarty entered her in the San Joaquin County Fair races, where she ran a mile and won over Washington Trahern's fastest horse. Everyone in Calaveras County came to Stockton to see Rant McCarty's "Susie Hooker" win, and incidentally to bet on her.

In recalling this event, Fred Burnham relates that "Wash" Trahern was terribly put out. Trahern, a Southerner and former captain in the Mexican War, had grown up on horseback. Fred recalls that Trahern could not understand how his fastest horse could have been outdistanced by Rant McCarty's "Susie Hooker," an obscure little mare from the hill country. Nathan Flower, with all the rest of Calaveras County, was present at the race. Fred Burnham quotes him, anent "Susie Hooker's" victory: "Our horses are accustomed to the handicap of chaparral and rocks—put them on a clear stretch and they let go for all that's in them."

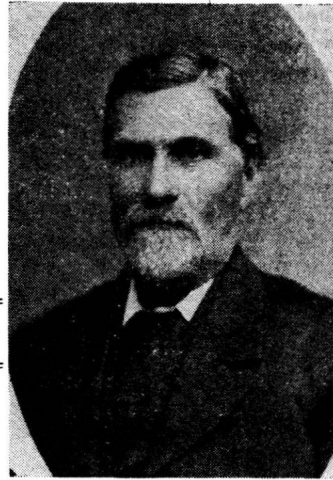
Fred Burnham says that all the horses raced in that day in Calaveras County were ridden daily on the range to look after cattle and fences. They were cow horses for six days of the week, but on Sunday they were assembled on Flower Ranch track and worked out for speed and trained for racing.

Rant McCarty (Ransom Thomas McCarty), Andrew and John Davis are among those who contributed richly to the first County Fair held in Calaveras County.

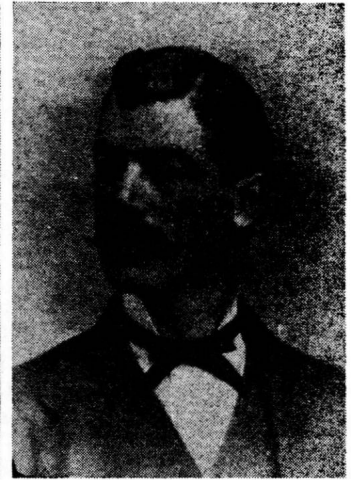
From this point on, these recollections of Rant McCarty and the Davis boys with their horses, are as Fred Burnham has given them.

"Susie Hooker" was not the only star of Rant McCarty's string of quarter horses. "Peg Leg," so called because of a crippled knee, had terrific speed despite a knee that might be regarded as a handicap. Rant McCarty raced her at the first Calaveras County Fair, and

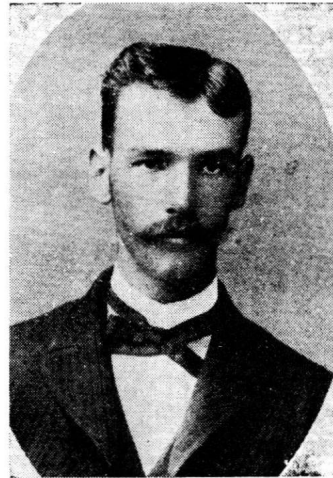
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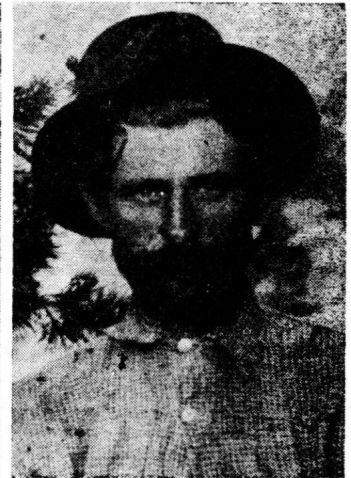
NATHAN M. FLOWER
1828 - 1919



RANSOM THOMAS McCARTY
1856 - 1909



FRED CLOYD BURNHAM
1865 - 1951



FRANK STODDARD TOWER
1877 - 1952

These are the men who had an active part in the first Calaveras County Fair held in 1894 on Flower Ranch near Copperopolis. The photos of Burnham, Flower and McCarty date from that era and are very good likenesses of the men at that time. Frank Tower never had a formal photograph taken. The one featured here was "snapped" while Frank was washing dishes at the Tower cattle range in Stanislaus Big Meadows in the summer of 1803.

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD GULCH

By **MRS. IDELL SMITH**

My first school was the Washington Ranch School which I taught for two terms, 1907-1908, 1908-1909.

Old Gulch is a tributary of Calaveritas Creek and Washington Ranch is further up Old Gulch than where the old town was located. This location is just about the center of Calaveras County.

When I was there in 1907, the old town of Old Gulch was completely gone except for the ruins of the old Agostini store, an old stone building located on the brow of the hill that sloped easterly toward Old Gulch and westerly toward Calaveritas.

In 1907 the Agostini family, where I roomed and

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OLD GULCH

As Told by COLUMBO CADEMARTORI
To JUDGE J. A. SMITH

Thompson had the first store in the town of Old Gulch dated about 1850. A. Agostini had a store at Dogtown and closed it out about 1859 and moved to Old Gulch. The Thompson store was located where the Frank Agostini home stood, on the right side of the road going northward. The Agostini store was a stone building and stood on the west side of the road near the top of the hill. The old Dower home was originally just across the road from the store. Later Dower bought the old Bowlin place, a short distance below the old home and on the same side of the road, and moved into it.

Pellaton had a livery stable at Washington Ranch and it was afterwards used as the barn on the McLaughlin or Keith place.

Just below the Keith place and on the left side of the road leading to Old Gulch stood a large saloon and eating place. This was afterwards known as the Dixon place, and now belongs to Freccero. A little farther down the road and just at the turn and on the left side was the Vallie place. This consisted of 20 acres, and a family of six or seven girls lived here. The old man Vallie was a brother of the Vallie who was located at San Andreas, and sold great quantities of gold dust that he mined. It is claimed that he burried in excess of twenty thousand dollars across the road and up in the chaparral and it has never been found.

The Grant place was the next place toward Old Gulch and it was here that the Nulands, James and Charley and their sister, lived. This place afterwards was purchased by a man named William Jack who built a modern home on the place. It was afterwards torn down. Just below the Grant place and on the west side of the road is the McDermott Reservoir. Water came in through the Table Mountain Ditch or McDermott Ditch. This ditch went through several hands and was finally sold to Nelson, who operated the large gravel mine at Calaveritas.

The Rocchi family, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Rocchi, lived on the east side of Old Gulch below the reservoir after going down the hill below the reservoir.

The school house was located above the Keith place on the east side of the road going up from the Keith or McLaughlin place.

Frank Agostini built a home on the site of the old Thompson store and reared a large family here. The place was sold to a man named Rose. The place was destroyed by fire. Solomon Rose, the owner of the place, was tried and convicted of burning insured property to defraud an insurance company and was sent to prison by the Superior Court of Calaveras County.

The principal mine in the district was the Calaveras Tunnel commencing near the Freccero place and running almost to the Foster place. Much of this ground was breasted out and the gravel washed. The Foster place belonged to Hughie Gillen.

The Foster place originally belonged to a Captain Frazier who owned the Javeaux place close to Mountain Ranch. He sold it to Clark.

At the junction of the Old Gulch and San Andreas-Calaveritas Road is an old fireplace. This marks the location of a cabin owned by a man named John Peirano, who was a mining partner of the father of Colombo Cademartori when they mined Richie Hill, just northwest of the cabin. This hill was originally worked by the Hat-

My Recollections

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boarded, had a home just about where the old town had been located.

It was approximately two miles to the school, which was just at the foot of the hill leading from Old Gulch to Mountain Ranch, and across the road from the old McLaughlin place, now Gibson's. Accompanied by the Agostini children we walked to school each day.

A partial list of the children came from the following families: Agostini, Mauna, Keith Freccero, Jensen, Rich and Pillon. Most of them had long walks to school.

There was an old man by the name of Dixon who still lived in a small house along the road. He had been a miner along the Gulch in the early days.

My only means of transportation was by horseback so I kept my horse at Agostini's for my week-end trips home. The Agostinis depended on a horse and cart for their trips to town for supplies.

I taught all grades from the first to the ninth. In my last year my two ninth-graders stood first and second in the county examinations, but my poor little ones just learned by the grace of God as I seemed to have no knack in starting them.

While teaching at Washington Flat our social life consisted mostly of attending dances given at San Andreas, Fourth Crossing, Calaveritas, Hengen's and Huberty's.

The old school house has long been gone. We carried water from a shallow well just above the school house.

I have since learned that the Old Gulch school was first included in the San Andreas School District but later annexed to the Calaveritas District.

In 1866 the Washington Ranch School District was established and in 1912 was added to Calaveritas and Cave City districts. There was a private school built there by Agostini and Zavalla before a public school was established.

The Agostini home is now gone and the children scattered. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Rocchi lived just up the Gulch.

The following list includes some of the well known early teachers at Old Gulch: Mary Gallagher, Mary Dower, Tessie Wesson Goodell, Mrs. C. Pillon, Miss Lottie Jackson, Will Dower, Elvira Salcido Snyder, Lizzie Schilling, Idell Parsons (Smith), Miss Webb (last teacher).

field brothers.

Going farther up the road after crossing Isabella Gulch and on the left side of the road just at the edge of a large pile of tailings is the remains of the John McLaughlin cabin. He lived here with his young wife who died when she was very young and is buried at San Andreas.

The Chas. Cochrane place was down Old Gulch and now belongs to the Calaveras Cement Company. The building was on the west side of Old Gulch and it was formerly known as the Old Smith Place. Smith was a minister and planted on this place the first orchard in this section of the country.

Across the Gulch from the Cochrane place there was a limestone cave. This was open and large enough to permit persons to go several hundred feet in it. The cave afterwards became the property of the Calaveras Cement Company. Old Gulch is now one of the Ghost Towns of Calaveras County.

FOURTH CROSSING

By JUDGE J. A. SMITH

Fourth Crossing is one of the early mining camps in Calaveras County. It is located on San Antone Creek between San Andreas and Angels Camp.

Its unique name was applied to the fourth crossing of the Calaveras River between Stockton and Murphys Diggings.

Foreman was an enterprising early citizen of the community and had a store, saloon, stage depot and repair shop at the place. The mining district is called Foreman's Mining District in honor of this early settler. A toll bridge was established at an early date across the San Antone Branch of the Calaveras River.

The stages from Sonora to Stockton and Sacramento changed horses at Fourth Crossing. Mr. Foreman had another place in San Joaquin County near the present town of Linden. His San Joaquin place was called Foreman's Lower Ranch and the Calaveras place was called Foreman's Upper Ranch.

After the placers were exhausted the miners turned to quartz mining. The ledges around Fourth Crossing were well defined on the surface and known by names.

The Bachman Mine was on the Ross and Bordwell Ledge. The Thorpe Mine was on the Van Buren and Kneeder Ledge. Other leads were called Comstock and Paul, French Ranch Lead and Pluto Ledge.

The first Justice's Court in Calaveras County was at Fourth Crossing and Judge Bachman was the first Justice of the Peace.

The following names were of early residents of Fourth Crossing: The Alex Bertzhoff family, John Bund family, Walker family, Toon family, the Hill family, Moses Thorpe family, Darnell family, Cottle family, Reddick family, Wells family, William Wallace, Mr. Foreman, Mr. Douglas and Judge Bachman.

Fourth Crossing had an early school. A post office was first established on June 2, 1855, and discontinued May 8, 1888. A second post office was established on February 15, 1892, and discontinued November 30, 1925.

Alex C. Bertzhoff was the first postmaster and served from June 2, 1855, to December 31, 1858. He was followed by:

John Hill—31 Dec., 1858

Charles P. Dudley—18 April, 1860

William Reddick—3 May, 1860

Frank M. Reddick—29 July, 1884

Discontinued May 8, 1888, and moved to San Andreas.

Joseph H. Wells—15 Feb., 1902

Charles R. Wells—18 Mar., 1913

Discontinued November 30, 1925, and moved to San Andreas.

In the small cemetery at Fourth Crossing is buried Judge Bachman, a member of the Audubon Party that left New York February 8, 1849, for the California gold mines, under the leadership of Col. Henry L. Webb. They were to take the Mexican route. When near the Rio Grande City they were stricken with cholera and ten men died within a short time. Then twenty men turned back discouraged and Col. Webb deserted the party. Most of the remaining men asked John W. Audubon to take leadership and agreed to go on under him.

They finally arrived at San Diego, California. At that place they divided, part going by land and driving

Violence in Calaveras County

CARVING KNIFE FATAL

In the Metropolitan Hotel in San Andreas on the night of February 22, 1864, an unknown Negro was killed by a carving knife thrown at him by one Joseph King. The knife struck him in the breast.

SHOT AND KILLED AT JESUS MARIA

Estebein Pena was shot and killed by one J. R. Catatelo at Jesus Maria on June 18, 1859.

KILLED WITH A PISTOL

Lawson Hill, a native of Tennessee, a miner, was killed at Camanche by one Tate with a pistol on May 12, 1861.

KILLED WITH A STICK

Joshua Anderson, a Negro, was killed at San Antone Camp by a blow on the head from a stick in the hands of Chas. Keany.

the mules and part coming by water to Stockton, where they reunited and decided to go to the Southern Mines. Quite a few of the party came to Calaveras County and made it their home.

The road between San Andreas and Fourth Crossing has been changed several times. Originally the road left San Andreas and went south past the Catholic Church to Third Crossing—now Kentucky House and site of the Calaveras Cement Plant. It then proceeded southerly for a mile or two, then turned easterly and came out directly in front of the hotel at Fourth Crossing. This road passed "Moonlight Flat," the locale of the duel between Attorney Gatewood and Dr. Goodwin in 1859.

State Highway 49 has been changed in recent years and now crosses San Antone Creek a short distance above the old crossing.

Alexander Bertzhoff was the first person to make a land claim at Fourth Crossing. This he did in October, 1852.

The bridge across the San Antone was a toll bridge for many years and first conducted by Bertzhoff. Later it went to Dudley and thereafter to Reddick and Hill in 1858. Reddick later became the sole owner and the Reddick family resided there for many years. One of the sons, John B. Reddick, an attorney at San Andreas, became Lieutenant Governor of the State of California.

John Cottle had a store at Fourth Crossing which with its contents was destroyed by fire in 1859.

The County of Calaveras purchased the toll bridge from Reddick in 1888 and made it a free bridge.

After Reddick's death the J. H. Wells family resided at Fourth Crossing. Mrs. Wells was a daughter of Mr. Reddick.

Thereafter the property passed to a mining company. It was later conveyed to the Ponte family who use it for stock raising purposes.

Fourth Crossing is a pleasant location and, after contributing its share of gold to the miners, it is now the grazing area for cattle and sheep. Most of its buildings are long gone. The dance hall was the gathering place for dances and is gone, also.

Water was brought into Fourth Crossing for mining purposes from the so-called Georgia Ditch which headed just below old San Antone Camp.

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San Andreas, California

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The Calaveras County Historical Society meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Courthouse in San Andreas. Dinner meetings are held each quarter at different places in the county.

EDITORIAL

The Calaveras County Historical Society has suffered the loss of three of our grand old members during the last few months. Your editor, feeling a great personal loss, feels impelled to call this loss to the attention of our members. These loyal and beloved members were V. Covert Martin, Mrs. Ida Wimer, and Mrs. Rhoda Dunlap. All of these members were of pioneer California families. All were charter members of our historical society and contributed a great deal to its success.

"Covie" Martin was never happier than when driving up to Calaveras County for a meeting. He enthusiastically helped organize the society back in 1952.

Mrs. Wimer contributed articles to LAS CALAVERAS and could always add interesting historical items to any discussion about Calaveras County. She enjoyed attending the meetings with her daughter and our loyal secretary, Mrs. Sadie Hunt.

Mrs. Rhoda Dunlap contributed articles to LAS CALAVERAS, served as a director of the society for several years, and was never happier than when she was driving over from Sonora with her husband Fred to the Calaveras meetings.

We miss their physical presence and their inspiring enthusiasm for the fine work the society is doing, but we are so grateful we had the great good fortune to have had them as our friends.

All members of the society join in extending congratulations and best wishes to our "Mr. Mother Lode" and loyal charter member, Archie Stevenot, on his eightieth birthday, which was September 25.

Another of our grand old members, Dr. Rockwell D. Hunt, "Mr. California," is appropriately celebrating his

First Fair

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at the regular Sunday gatherings held on Flower Track and "Peg Leg" was always in the dough. She was the mother of "Stormy," named by reason of having made his advent into the world in a snow storm, and also of "Syndicate," named by Rant's wife, Nettie, from the newspaper headlines of the period when syndicates were in the spotlight of public interest. These two colts had "Peg Leg's" speed but they did not possess her "surprise quality."

Rant McCarty often used "Peg Leg" as a pack horse when out on sheep shearing jobs or when he took his flocks into the mountains. Horses were always a topic of conversation in those days and it was easy to veer the talk of any crowd in that direction. When someone began to brag about the speed of his quarter horse, as invariably happened, Rant McCarty would smile and say, "I'll bet my old pack mare can beat your horse."

And then the race was on!

Rant McCarty could depend upon "Peg Leg" to give a surprise performance and she rarely failed to add consistently to his pocket money in these impromptu races.

Fred recalls that the Davis horses had a history as interesting as that of the McCarty string. One of their speediest horses, like "Peg Leg," had a blemish. The horse was "Jack Brady," a colt bred in a herd of horses owned by M. F. Tarpey, whose ranch comprised that vast stretch of land known in early days as "The Grant" and which extended from Knight's Ferry to within ten miles or so of Copperopolis. The colt had a lump on its thigh and Tarpey thought he'd be of no account. John and Andrew Davis bought him, named him "Jack Brady" and, in the course of breaking him to ride the range, discovered that he had the speed of the wind. They bred him to "Dolly Varden," a mustang mare who had great speed. The colt was named "Emma D" and ran true to the record of her sire and dam. All three horses made records so outstanding on Flower track that John and Andrew Davis raced "Jack Brady" and "Emma D" at the Sacramento State Fair races, on the Emeryville track at Oakland, and toured the racing circuits of Montana and Wyoming with them.

CORONER'S JURY'S VERDICT

A coroner's Jury in the 7th Township returned the following verdict: "That the said Levi Ward did on the 10th day of January, 1861, in the 7th Township of Calaveras County, voluntarily and of his own malice aforethought inflict a mortal wound in and upon the body of him, the said Levi Ward of which said mortal wound the said Levi Ward then there died, and so the jurors upon their oaths aforesaid say that the said Levi Ward died there and then in the manner aforesaid, voluntarily and of his own malice aforethought kill and murder himself the said Levi Ward, against the Peace of this State and their dignity.

95th year by publishing his 20th book. The title is "PERSONAL SKETCHES OF CALIFORNIANS I HAVE KNOWN. It is a limited edition of 500 copies and sells for \$7.50. If interested, write your editor at the University of the Pacific. Dr. Hunt will be ninety-five on February 3.