



## **PALOMA**

By **JUDGE J. A. SMITH**

The history of Paloma is almost identical with the history of the Gwin Mine. It is situated at the head of Lower Rich Gulch, a gulch running northerly and emptying into the main Mokelumne River at a place called James Bar.

The town is located about midway between Mokelumne Hill and Valley Springs. Lower Rich Gulch as its name implies was very rich, and a great deal of placer mining was carried on there in the early days of placer mining in the county. However, the town grew principally from quartz mining, carried on at the famous Gwin Mine. This mine is located just north of the town in Rich Gulch and was one of the early quartz locations in Calaveras County.

It was first located on January 27, 1851. In 1867 the control of the mine passed to Senator Gwin and it was worked as a consolidated property until closed in 1882. The Alexander Mine on the north was purchased in 1871, and became part of the Gwin. They are both on the so-called Paloma Ledge.

The mine remained closed until 1894 when it was reopened by the Gwin Mine Development Company, and continued in operation until 1908. It was worked to a depth of 2850 feet. The town of Paloma is located on a hill above the mine and grew very rapidly when the mine was being operated. The land on which Paloma stands was patented to Richard Green and the title later passed to B. F. Foster and Arey A. Dudley, who had the property surveyed into a Townsite called Paloma. The map was filed in the fall of 1897.

Originally the post office was called Gwin Mine, and the voting precinct was known as the Gwin Mine Precinct. Later and after the town was laid out the post office was changed to Fosteria, and the voting precinct is now called Paloma.

Senator Gwin built a fine home near the mine, which house was later moved to Campo Seco and became the

Borger home at that place. It is now in ruins.

R. H. Redmond, a former Calaveras County Clerk, conducted a store and a saloon near the mine, on what is now the Ludwig place. There was a race track used in connection with the property, and it was the scene of much excitement during the days that horse racing was a past time in the county.

At one time Paloma had three stores, one conducted by Ira Late, one by Mrs. Goodall, and one by Samuel Sommers; two hotels, run by Cergneux and Lampson; a livery stable, operated by Mr. Coplay; a butcher shop; two churches, and a number of saloons.

The major portion of the town was destroyed by fire on August 10, 1905.

## **L. M. AND SUSAN B. SCHRACK**

L. M. Schrack and Susan B. Schrack were married on May 6, 1849, in Texas. They left Texas on March 1, 1853, for California by the Nicaragua Route and in April of that same year arrived at the Golden Gate Ranch near Paloma. Their first dwelling was a canvas tent with a dirt floor and for three years after their arrival, Susan Schrack did not see a white woman. Mrs. William Wells, then of Mokelumne Hill, was the first white lady to call on her. Their next home was built of logs cut from the timber on the side of Golden Gate Peak and shaped and smoothed by axes in the hands of unskilled builders. They lived there for 20 years when the house was destroyed by fire in 1878. A new and more modern house was built which has since been destroyed by fire. They had nine children, all of which were born on the Golden Gate Ranch, except the one which came with the parents from Texas. She later became Mrs. Julius Toda. Mr. Schrack was at one time editor of the Advertiser, published in San Andreas, and a contributor to the Calaveras Citizen, from its start. He was also a member of the Assembly from Calaveras County in 1874.

## PALOMA

By OSCAR R. GALE

In the early days of the 1870's when the original Gwin Mine was operating, Paloma was known as "Paloma Station." This station was owned by Richard Green who received a patent to this land in 1880. It was a stopping place for travelers who wanted to feed and water their horses and get food and lodging for themselves.

In 1882, after Green had passed away, his heirs sold the land to John P. Thorpe of Lockeford, who held it for a couple of years and in 1884 sold it to Benjamin F. Foster. Foster was still the owner when the Gwin Mine opened for the second time about 1895.

In 1897, Foster deeded sufficient land to A. A. Dudley to lay out a townsite consisting of nine blocks. The names of the streets were Thomas, Gwin, Hill, Church, and one avenue called Paloma. These were north of Main Street which is now the highway. On the south of Main were Spring and Alder Streets. Foster Street ran east and west across Main and ended at the Protestant Church.

The location of this church has always been where it is now. The Catholic Church was built near the site of the present schoolhouse. When the church was nearing completion a terrific wind storm completely moved the building from its foundation. It was restored shortly after and remained there until the mine closed and most of the people moved away. The building was then torn down.

In the course of having land surveyed, Dudley decided the old schoolhouse, which was built sometime before 1870, stood in the way of progress. He wanted to trade the lot for one on the slope back of the Protestant Church.

The residents of the community, including the ranchers whose children attended school there, were against such a plan and informed Dudley that the schoolhouse would stand where it was unless he traded land for its location at the site where it now stands. There were about 40 children attending school in the one-room building. The time was around 1900.

Paloma Station had no post office at this time. The mail came up from Valley Springs via the stage coach, which was driven by Dave Berry. It came in a good sized bag and was put in a box 3½ feet by 2 feet located at the side of the road opposite the Paloma Station. The box was open at one end, had a roof over it, and looked a little like the dog houses of today.

Each family looked over the letters and papers taking what belonged to them. The San Francisco Chronicle was a weekly and the Farm and Fireside, a popular monthly. There was a weekly county paper, the Calaveras Chronicle, which was published in Mokelumne Hill.

After the Gwin Mine started up again they established a post office at the mine with Captain Hiram Messenger as postmaster. Messenger carried the title of "Captain" because he had organized a company of volunteers to help fight the Indians in the Modoc Indian War of 1872-73 at the Lava Beds, which is now a National Monument in northeastern Siskiyou County.

The first buildings in Paloma, with the exception of the Greens' home, were the Protestant Church and Mrs. Goodell's Store. While operating her store, Mrs. Goodell distributed the mail which eliminated the roadside box. Mrs. Goodell

was one of the Herbert family who lived at Sandy Gulch.

After Paloma began to grow into a good-sized town the people wanted a post office located in the townsite. Mrs. Maude Schrack Washburn and B. F. Foster competed for the job as postmaster. Mrs. Washburn received the appointment. The Postal Department could not designate the post office as "Paloma" since there was a town in the southern part of the State by the name of "Paloma." They named it "Fosteria" in honor of Mr. Foster. The post office was located at the southeast corner of Main and Foster Streets.

At the time the mine was running full blast with a lot of business and Paloma was a fast-growing community, a telephone system with a switchboard was installed with a Mrs. Young as operator. The line came from Valley Springs, and the line is still in use today.

The business section of the town consisted of: one drug store, owned by Sirbough; two physicians, Drs. Chaffee and Priestly; one meat market; three grocery stores; three boarding houses; one town hall; two barber shops; one livery stable, operated by Copley; one shoe shop, run by Rasmusen; one blacksmith shop, owned by Bowland; one roller skating rink in the town hall; about ten saloons and one pest house where small-pox patients were isolated, located beyond the Ludwig place.

When the Squellatis came to Paloma they bought some of the Foster land, including the old Paloma Station where some of the family resided until recent years.

In the later part of Paloma's business cycle a disastrous fire wiped out many of the old buildings.

When the mine closed down and the population decreased the post office was discontinued. Again the mail came in a bag, but instead of having the small community box, it was distributed by the Squellati family.

The people who owned ranches in the early days in the neighborhood of Paloma were: Folsom, Gallagher, Markwood, Toda, Schrack, Chuma, Ludwig, Vencke, Megaw, Gabbert, and Gale. Most of them are owned and operated by the second generation of the original families.

My mother, who came to Calaveras in 1870, told me several interesting incidents about life in Paloma in those early days.

When the original Gwin Mine was running in the 1870's the people used the hall owned by the Redmond family for a gathering place for dances, parties, and any other kind of social activity. The Ludwig ranch house is on the site where the hall was located. In the early 1890's, the Redmond Hall was used as the first voting precinct. Previous to using this hall the people had to go to Mokelumne Hill to vote.

The favorite sport was horse racing and crowds of people came from all the nearby towns. An interesting bit of history deals with the stage robbers who flourished in the Mother Lode counties. A tale is told of a gang of outlaws who rode into the Schrack ranch, which was about a mile from the Paloma Station, and demanded that a meal be cooked for them. Mrs. Schrack provided the meal which the men paid for and left. They rode away just before Sheriff Ben Thorne and his posse arrived. Later on, however, Sheriff Thorne captured the outlaws. The outlaws had a hide-out on the Schrack ranch, near the summit of Golden Gate Mountain (as it was then called) and was a cave in which many parts of saddles and equipment were found after the stage robbers had passed away.



**EASTER SUNDAY, 1914** — At the Bacigalupi home on Easter Sunday, 1914, a home dance sprang into life with Mr. Bacigalupi at the accordion, his son, Earnest, at the harmonica, and a friend, Mr. W. H. Johnston at the violin. Mr. Johnston was 82 the 31st of August, 1914. Pictured from left to right are: first row, Earnest Stegman and Dolph Genochio (on horseback); second row, John Terwilliger and Edward Bacigalupi; third row, Charles Hatch, Charles Dietz, Charles Johnston and Jim Trengove, Jr.; fourth row, Antone Costa, Amelia Bacigalupi, Eva Bacigalupi and Mrs. Bacigalupi; fifth row, Mr. John Bacigalupi, Earnest Bacigalupi and W. H. Johnston. — Submitted by Effie E. Johnston.

## GLENCOE

By RUBY E. TAYLOR

Glencoe, a small town of around 100 voters with a school, a post office, and store is situated about nine miles east of Mokelumne Hill.

In the early days it was known as Mosquito Gulch. The early settlers mined the gulch and on account of the marshland and so many water holes the mosquitos flourished and there seemed to be more mosquitos here than anywhere around. There were steep hills all around running down to the gulch. The first locations were taken up and the houses built right along the creek.

George W. Berry operated a store on the south side of Mosquito Gulch in 1879.

Jerome Burt and son, Bill, operated a store on the north side of the Mosquito Gulch about the same time and on, until after the turn of the century. Burt's General Store was a two-story wood structure with a post office and store room on the ground floor and a dance hall upstairs. The stairs leading up to the dance hall were on the outside of the building.

At one time the Mosquito Gulch School in the 7th District took in all the land to the east, including Rail Road Flat and Independence. This District No. 7 was divided on November 7, 1866, under Dr. F. D. Borston, and the eastern half was called Eureka School District, which later became Rail Road Flat School District.

The gravel was very rich along Mosquito Gulch and many thousands of dollars were taken out with the crude hand mining of that day.

After the placer mining, came the hard rock mines—Norwich, Valentine, Banner, San Pedro, Mexican, Poor Man, Wolverine, Mondani, Fannie Marie, Stonewall Jackson were developed.

Frank Matson worked a mine with an arasta in Wet Gulch at the junction of Pennsylvania Gulch, about three miles from Glencoe on the Independence Road. An old Mexican by the name of Breeto had a mill and mined near the Alfred Porteous home of today. Mr. Gillespi was an early day superintendent of the Valentine Mine.

On Three-Cent Flat, about two miles from the main town, there were coal pits where coal was made by burning oak wood under the ground for several weeks. The coal was used by blacksmiths for sharpening mining tools.

A man by the name of Benj. Franklin Woodford, nicknamed "Old Jerd," had several coal pits on the Orion Ames ranch. After the mining had slowed up many people homesteaded small farms and ranches. This was about 1880. These names of ranchers are familiar to all old-timers: Wm. Woodcock, Bartolo Malaspino, Orion Ames, Paul Kenner, Butcher John Etcheverry, John Ames, Francis Fairchild, Swen Danielson, Pete Albers, Stodzer, Richard McNamara, Henry Prackel and the Green Meadow Farm, now owned by the Wilcox family. All these ranches raised an abundance of fruit, especially pears, apples, quinces, plums, cherries, peaches, grapes, berries and walnuts. These thrifty farmers raised almost entirely everything they ate. All of them raised cattle. It behooved them to do so as the families were very large. The Danielsons had 13 children, the Orion Ames' 11 children, the Francis Fairchilds 5, the John Ames' 8 and the Geo. W. Berrys 8. Joe Woodcock entered the lumbering and sawmill business and used oxen to do the logging.

Numerous Indians roamed the hills at this time and in the fall and spring of the year bands of 300 to 500 Indians, men, women and children, would camp on the Orion Ames ranch near what they called "cold spring." They gathered acorns for winter. There are still the big ledges of slate rock on the old Orion Ames ranch upon a high hill where the Indians left round deep holes in which they ground the acorns to make acorn bread. The pestles are all packed away but the holes in the big rocks are still there as mute evidence of Indian camping grounds. Just down on another side hill on the Green Meadow Farm was the Indian burying grounds. When my father would plough these side hills the children would find loads of Indian beads, arrowheads, and other Indian relics. Old Emma, Old Indian Susie, Indian Dick and some others were more civilized in later years and would come to the white man's house to beg food which was always given to them.

Bachelors Humbug Henry, Jim Trainer, who was deaf but recited poetry, Andrew Willets, George Harker, Dick Chapman, Pete Leyden, Bartolo Malaspino, George Monroe, Ed Locasse, Jim Morrison, Alex Wright, Lorenzo Giles, who stabled the stage horses. He hauled mail to Rail Road Flat and West Point one time.

Another mineral in this section was soapstone. A long mountain of soapstone is on the old Orion Ames ranch about two miles southeast of Glencoe on the Rail Road Flat Road. This soapstone was sawed into blocks and sold to miners and sawmills to encase the boilers. Many ranchers used it to make fireplaces in the early homes.

Francis Fairchild's wife, Helen, began teaching a Sun-

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# OFFICERS OF CALAVERAS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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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

Again the essay contest on local Calaveras County history by the Society was a big success. Thanks to Mrs. Hattie Hertzig for taking over and putting the contest across in the absence of the committee chairman, Ed Leonard. Not as many essays were entered as last year, but the five best ones were read at the Mountain Ranch meeting in April and provided an interesting program for the Society. Dan Gibson, a senior at Calaveras High School, was awarded the first prize in high school competition for his essay "The Story of Grey Gold." Susan Watson, a seventh grade student at San Andreas, won the first prize in the elementary division with the essay, "Tales of Old Calaveritas."

The Society at the June meeting voted to again publish the essays and make a copy available to every member of the Calaveras County Historical Society.

—oOo—

Mrs. Ouida Woodworth calls our attention to an error in the article on Valley Springs in the April issue of Las Calaveras. It was not Frank but Lee Pattee who had a butcher shop in Valley Springs for many years.

—oOo—

The Calaveras County Historical Society can be proud of giving impetus to a growing demand that more California state and local history be taught in our schools. The resolution passed in May by the Society, petitioning the Conference of California Historical Societies to go on record favoring a requirement for the study of California history for one semester before graduation from the twelfth grade was enthusiastically approved by the Conference at the annual meeting at Hobergs, Lake County, on June 28. This resolution was presented at both Grand Parlors of the Native

Daughters and Native Sons but because they were late being presented the resolution was held over for another year.

The resolution reads as follows:

"WHEREAS, the State of California does not require that a course for the study of California history be taught in the public high schools, and,

"WHEREAS, the Calaveras County Historical Society feels this is a gross neglect of our State's wonderful heritage, and,

"WHEREAS, many other States in the Union require the study of their state's history for at least one semester;

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Calaveras County Historical Society at the regular meeting held in San Andreas, May 21, 1958, petition the Conference of California Historical Societies to urge the California Legislature at the next General Session to pass such legislation that would require all students to have studied California state and local history and government for one semester before graduating from the twelfth grade."

—oOo—

Dr. Rockwell Hunt participated in the annual meeting of the Conference as the official delegate of the Calaveras Society. He reports the following staff officers were chosen for 1958-59: President, Clyde Arbuckle, San Jose; President Emeritus, Dr. Rockwell Hunt, Stockton; Vice-President, Dr. Frank Stanger, San Mateo; Treasurer, Miss Ivy Loeber, St. Helena; Executive Secretary, Dr. R. Coke Wood, Murphys; Regional Vice-President for Region 9, Mrs. Tillie Sheatsley, Sonora, replaced Mrs. Sadie Hunt, who resigned.

The next annual meeting of the Conference of California Historical Societies will be held at San Mateo on June 25-26-27, 1959.

## GEORGE W. FOLSOM

George W. Folsom was born in New Hampshire in 1836 and came West in 1853. He walked across the Isthmus of Panama enroute to California. His first job was carrying mail from Stockton to the Mother Lode. Finally he took up a homestead and started ranching near Paloma. He married Ellen Maley, who was born in New Jersey, and came by covered wagon to the West when she was three years old. They had seven children. Mr. Folsom passed away on February 23, 1923, and Mrs. Folsom on February 14, 1932.

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day School in Glencoe about 1887 and kept it going faithfully as long as she was able. The trustees of the school gave her the use of the school house for her Sunday School and she was always very grateful. She was a very remarkable woman and would walk the 3½ miles to and from church every Sunday, rain or shine. Her influence on the boys and girls in that community was felt all through their lifetime.

A history of Glencoe would not be complete if I didn't mention the home of the late Abe Bayles. (the old Stoezer ranch). Mr. Bayles was a plasterer and after he retired he decorated his house with colored plaster. One bed room has a ceiling like a birthday cake. Other rooms have birds and scenes of many colors, all made out of plaster. This place is called "Flowers of Gold" and the house is well-worth visiting to see what this artist had accomplished. It is really unique.