



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

SUMMER 2005 • ISSUE 89

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society

Guardian's Sale.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, }
In Probate Court, Sonoma County. } ss.
By VIRTUE OF AN ORDER AND DE-
cree of this Court, made on the 5th day of
February, A. D. 1856, I. Josefa Carrillo de Fitch,
guardian of Joseph Fitch, Josaphine Fitch, John
Fitch, Isabel Fitch, Charles Fitch and Anna Fitch,
shall proceed to sell all the right, title and inter-
est of said Joseph Fitch, Josaphine Fitch, John
Fitch, Isabel Fitch, Charles Fitch and Anna
Fitch, in and to the remaining and unsold portion
of the Rancho and Lands called Sotoyome, con-
taining about nine square leagues of land, situated
in the counties of Sonoma and Mendocino, in said
state of California. The said sale will take place
at the Court House door, in the town of Santa
Rosa, on Monday the 25th day of August,
A. D. 1856, commencing at 11 o'clock in the
forenoon of that day. The said Rancho and Lands
will be subdivided into small tracts of convenient
size for farming purposes, and sold in separate sub-
divisions. The terms of sale will be, one third
cash, and the balance on a credit not exceeding
three years, secured by bond and mortgage on the
land, at an interest of one per cent. per month,
payable semi-annually.

JOSEFA CARRILLO DE FITCH,
51-3w Guardian, &c.

Sonoma County Journal. Petaluma, August 23, 1856

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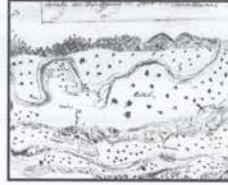
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RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

*The Official Publication of the Healdsburg
Museum and Historical Society*

221 Matheson Street
P. O. Box 952
Healdsburg, CA 95448
(707) 431-3325

The Russian River Recorder staff, for this summer issue, has researched and written about a number of interesting and special topics - from paintings by local artists to celebrations featuring knighthood tournaments and 4th of July celebrations to the unusual community of Preston, to the squatters role in the settlement, by various peoples, of Northern Sonoma County.

Whitney Hopkins introduces us to a well known Healdsburg artist, Jane Raabe, whose paintings are part of the Museum's vast collection of artifacts. Whitney points out that although the Healdsburg Museum is not an art museum, "it is fortunate to hold a surprising number of fine paintings in its collection."

Our research curator Holly Hoods shares with us the history of the unusual community of Preston, founded in 1885 east of Cloverdale by Emily Preston described as a charismatic religious leader. The community flourished until the early 1920's and remains of Preston are still visible today. A fascinating story told with affection by Holly.

Who owns the past? Who owns the land? Who makes the law? These are questions asked by Healdsburg Museum curator Daniel Murley in his well written and researched article, *The Squatters Role in the History of the Healdsburg Area*. He traces the settlement of Sonoma County and focuses on the large land holdings held by individuals in the 1800's and the subsequent taking of these lands by squatters.

In her extensively researched article on the history of the Knighthood tournaments and July 4th celebrations, Charlotte Anderson vividly brings to life the festivals and fun filled 4th of July celebrations of the 1800's and early 1900's.

Have a wonderful and fun filled summer.

Arnold Santucci
Editor

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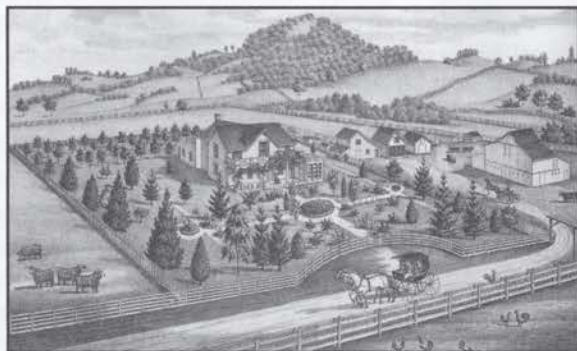
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ARTIFACTS: THE PAINTINGS OF EARLY HEALDSBURG ARTIST JANE RAABE

by Whitney Hopkins

Although the Healdsburg Museum is not commonly thought of as an art museum, it holds a surprising number of fine paintings in its collection. Local artists have long been inspired by the tremendous natural beauty of northern Sonoma County's tall redwoods, meandering Russian River, and stunning oak groves. One early artist whose work is held by the Healdsburg Museum is Jane F. Raabe, a Healdsburg resident from 1874 until her death in 1926.

The daughter of Thomas and Mary Crabtree, Jane Crabtree was born in Linn County, Iowa, on February 16, 1850. She was the third child, in what would eventually grow to be a family of ten children. When Jane was ten years old, her father, a farmer, decided to try his fortunes in California. Thomas Crabtree traded in over 500 acres of rich Iowa farmland in order to outfit his family for the strenuous cross-country wagon journey. The family arrived by late 1860 in Suisun City, the hub of agricultural Solano County. In the following decade the Crabtrees moved first to the Santa Rosa area, and then to Lake County. When Jane was only fourteen her mother passed away. As the eldest daughter, she had the responsibility of caring for all her siblings.

In 1874 the Crabtree family moved to Healdsburg. There Jane met Mr. Mathias Raabe, whom she married the following year. Matt Raabe (1847-1934), as he was commonly known, had come to the United States from Germany as a young man, and resided in Healdsburg since about 1870. He owned a successful hardware store in Healdsburg for almost 50 years. The couple did not have children, and so Jane devoted herself to leadership of various community organizations, including Presidency of the Women's Improvement Club, and Grand Matron and Grand Treasurer of the Organization of the Eastern Star.

Jane was also a skilled artist and, when not involved in various clubs, devoted considerable time to the artistic works for which she was well known. At the time of her death, her Center Street home was filled with her own creations, including paintings on canvas, china, and other materials. Whenever she hosted a party, the place cards, score cards, and prizes were her own artistic work. Always interested in new art forms, Jane was said to be one of the first to bring sealing wax decorating to Healdsburg.

The exact period when Jane Raabe began painting is unknown, but she is thought to have done most of her work from 1890 to 1915. She



was a student of well-known California painter Lorenzo Palmer Latimer, who flourished as a leading watercolor painter in California between 1880 and 1940. One of California's first native-born painters, Latimer studied at the California School of Design from 1879 to 1881. Upon graduating, he supplemented the income derived from his art by teaching classes of students.

Latimer was a believer in studying nature firsthand, and his students spent much time in the field sketching alongside their teacher. While Latimer mainly lived in the Bay Area, he enjoyed spending summers in the Healdsburg area. His uncle, Hugh Latimer, had a farm in Windsor. "Woodland scenes, the trees, the shaded nooks and quiet waters" were his specialty. Aspiring artists came from as far away as Napa and Alameda to paint with Latimer in Healdsburg. In December, 1906, an exhibition of Latimer's summer work was held in the Kruse building on the Healdsburg Plaza.

L.P. Latimer's influence can be seen in Jane Raabe's four scenic oil paintings which were donated to the Healdsburg Museum by Helen Hannan in 1992. The paintings, circa 1895, include a redwood grove, a field of oaks, and a tree-lined creek (possibly Mill Creek). Raabe's respect for her instructor was evidenced by the reception she held at her Healdsburg home in September, 1912, honoring Latimer and his wife and son. At the reception, a group of Latimer's local students attended, and his paintings were displayed in the Raabe home. Today Jane Raabe's paintings hang in the Healdsburg Museum's Research Room where they are enjoyed by many.

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L.P. Latimer Biography: <<http://www.northpointgallery.com/browse/lpl/>>

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U.S. Federal Census; 1850, 1860, 1880, 1910

AN UNUSUAL COMMUNITY

**“AN EXTRAORDINARY RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY SETTLEMENT:
A WOMEN OWNS ALL THE PROPERTY; IS DIRECTOR, TEACHER,
PREACHER AND RULER”**

by Holly Hoods

From 1885-1910, the unusual community of Preston flourished in northern Sonoma County east of Cloverdale, south of the Mendocino County line. Founded by a charismatic woman religious leader who treated patients and dispensed her own proprietary medicines, Preston was the only successful “utopian” or alternative community of the four that existed in this area in the late 19th century. The Healdsburg Museum curates a sizable collection of primary documents and photographs from Preston as part of its mission to document and preserve the history of Healdsburg and the larger northern Sonoma County area. Research Curator Holly Hoods researched and wrote about Preston in her Master’s thesis in 2000 and used the following 1898 newspaper article as a reference. This feature article originally appeared as a full-page spread with etchings in the San Francisco Chronicle, Sunday, 25 September 1898. It has not been reprinted in over 100 years, but shows that, even then, northern Sonoma County attracted the positive interest of the San Francisco Bay Area.

In July 2005 the Preston Church, built in 1886, was re-roofed (funded through donations of concerned history lovers). This article is a valentine to the people whose donations, large and small, have contributed to the restoration and repair of the historic church. Holly will be offering a tour of the church and other surviving Preston buildings in the fall.



Emily Preston, circa 1885

Is there any one who will credit that somewhere in the world there is a woman who not only owns a townsite, but runs every enterprise of importance in it; who is Mayor and Council and School Board and preacher, who owns the water supply and provides work and wages for the inhabitants, who is their medical advisor and cemetery association and their spiritual guide; who develops their mental resources and directs their aesthetic tastes; who superintends the designs and construction of houses and plans all their amusements and recreations? She has been found in California. As a matter of course, she could scarcely exist elsewhere.

On the line of the San Francisco and North Pacific Railway, in the vicinity of

Cloverdale, there is a lovely and fertile country, made up of vales and rolling hills and streams that gurgle with laughter at this dry season. In the midst of this picturesque country there is a village, made up of a depot and post office, which are at the same time a telephone station and a general supply store. Nearby there is a shop or two, and there are cozy cottages embowered in vines. Following a series of pleasant winding roads one comes upon some pretty villas. This is the station of Preston, and Mrs. Preston is the woman who has signalized herself by the above schedule of accomplishments.

Mrs. Preston’s house is on the heights that overlook the demesne of her marvelous achievements. It is a roomy structure, with a square front and broad piazzas and a dignified entrance, but investigation proves it to be matter of growth and evolution, for following it along toward the rear one comes to a gables portion and a lowlier cottage beginning. Outside it is as white as marble. Within there is the immaculate housekeeping comfort and coziness, and a skilled housewife’s perfect system. Tall trees shade it on these warm days, and a neat iron fence gives it a distinctively metropolitan air. Everything else about it is white—the stone walks; even the great snow white turkeys that strut upon the nicely trimmed lawn. Mrs. Preston herself, a lady in whose hair the white threads are gathering, was clad in immaculate white, although on the day when visited she was taking the place of an absent

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cook in her kitchen, and well served, delicious meals her men have by reason of this substitution.

All remarkable conditions have their histories and their beginnings. This one began in quite an ordinary way. Twenty-nine years ago H.L. Preston, a lawyer, a native of West Virginia, and later practicing on the raw frontier of Dakota, having come to this state with his wife, took a fancy to invest in a quarter section of land where the settlement of Preston now stands. It was not until four years later that he went there to make his home upon the tract. From time to time, he bought other lands in the vicinity which were offered for sale, and the estate grew and grew until now his widow, upon being asked to supply some rough estimate of how many thousands of acres it comprises, that she "has never counted them up."

Land was cleared and planted, water piped for purposes of household use and of irrigation, orchard trees planted, roads constructed, and the pretty home grew to its present proportions. Seven years ago Mr. Preston died, leaving his widow alone in the world, with the exception of a son, Wellington Appleton, born of a former marriage. Up to this time, there had been no town, no settlement, nothing in the world on the premises but a nicely cultivated fruit farm and a prosperous little family, engrossed in its own concerns.

Mrs. Preston, whose maiden name was Emily Lathrop, is a native of Connecticut, that land of Yankee pluck and enterprise, and the fact that she had spent most of her early life in Michigan had abated not one whit of her inheritance of Yankee energy. She was not the woman to meekly fold her hands and sit down and inertly enjoy the proceeds of her husband's labors. Occupation she needed for mind and body, and she provided it. Somehow or other, without being a physician of any



Preston Mansion, circa 1886

school, regular or irregular, she had won quite a reputation as a healer. She saw people who were ill or ailing, and forthwith provided remedies for their infirmities. Agreeable people came to her for help of this sort, and she was loath to part with them and they with her. So she bestirred herself to make life agreeable for them up here, and they stayed on.

She organized no colony. Colonies have been organized before and they have failed. Keeping all of her material interests separate, she began to supply one by one, the needs of a civilized community. First of all, there were educational opportunities needed for the children and the young people. She built one of the prettiest little country schoolhouses, shining white like her home, and bowered in green foliage, with green blinds to shut out the sunshine when it grows too strong, as it has a fashion of doing in the

Russian River valley, and as there was no recognized school district, and the state would assign no teacher, for six years she constituted herself the patient instructor of the little ones. Of equal importance was a church, to meet the spiritual needs of the settlement. Mrs. Preston could not conscientiously subscribe to any of the established creeds, and she gave her people a new church and a religion as brand new as the pretty white structure which she set on the brow of the hill overlooking the beautiful valley, with a great clock on the front of its tower, keeping her people mindful of the passage of time.

The services regularly conducted each Sunday are as original as the creed. In conversation Mrs. Preston calls her religion the Religion of Inspiration and she

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herself preaches the sermons, reading what she says she "sees written." She desires to sharply discriminate between her own form of inspiration and spiritualism, explaining that the demonstrations of the latter religion are worked by earthly parts of souls that have left this earth but cannot rise to heaven. By which it will be seen that a bit of Swedenborg's philosophy has crept unawares into this new doctrine. To live so that one may not be afraid to die is her ideal of spiritual life here on earth.

The music of this church is provided by a string band, furnished with horns, cornets, violins and trombones. Traveling along a quiet vale on almost every day of the week and at every hour, one may hear the patient notes of some member of this band practicing for the coming Sabbath. There are some good singers in the church, but these belong to the older generation. Music is a popular accomplishment at Preston, and is regularly taught by a gentleman who comes up three times a week from Healdsburg, a neighboring village.

On the summit of a hill overlooking her home, Mrs. Preston has a sightly cemetery, where a handsome white marble mausoleum contains her husband's remains. Another tomb and a dozen little gravestones already keep it company.

The Preston settlement is the most independent one ever conceived. It asks no odds from the outside world or even from the government, to which it is presumed it pays taxes. There are children enough to justify its claiming a regular State appropriation, but instead, the teacher of the public school, still housed in the building contributed by this good lady, is hired by the private subscription of parents. Mrs. Preston constructs bridges and keeps the roads in order as

well as lays out new ones. The land is still in her name, and she disposes of no little jot or tittle of it. Instead, those who find it agreeable to live up there are given a life tenancy free, secured to themselves and their children, after which the land again reverts to the estate.

No liquor is permitted to be sold in the settlement. To absolutely prevent any saloons gaining a foothold, young Appleton has in his own right all of the land on which the station house and neighboring buildings stand. Intoxication is never seen up there-one very effective way of carrying into practice the principle proclaimed in the religious creed of "teaching the children to know the good before they know the bad."

Most of the people live in pretty villa homes, some of which would compare favorably in beauty with those of fashionable resorts. The majority lives on their own incomes, and does no work, except what they choose to perform by way of exercise or pleasure. The only enterpris-

es conducted for the purpose of profit, aside from the little store, seem to be connected with the productive fruit orchards of the Preston estate, but as the profits are so generously applied toward the advancement of the common interests, no one looks upon them with any but a friendly eye. Mrs. Preston has never counted the number of acres she has in fruit. She knows she has 1,800 prune trees in one place and 300 in another, that she has about eight acres in grapes and that she has a good many apricot trees and plums and apples and some oranges and lemons; and the products of these seem to be free for the personal use of such of the settlement as do not have fruit in abundance and variety on their own grounds. The estate extends into Mendocino County, and it has many charming features about it. Nowhere in California are there such giant manzanita trees, and it is rich in white and black oaks. In the mountains there is a lovely lake, covering an area of ten acres, and stocked with fish. It has no visible outlet, although this fact may account for the



Preston Church, circa 1886

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abundance of fine springs in this locality, which is one of the best watered within a like distance of San Francisco. There is a boat on the lake, and it forms a most attractive resort. Wise woman that she is, Mrs. Preston comprehends the universal desire for change at least once a year from one's customary surroundings, and so she has arranged a summer camp on a place on the road to this lake, where exist some spring waters of a peculiarly bitter taste and of medicinal value. Here she has built a church and there is also accommodation for the school and the public baths, and for two months in the year all of her people betake themselves thither to drink and bathe in the waters while education and worship go on uninterrupted. A nice garden and miscellaneous orchard supply the wants of the summer guests, and everything is as free as air to members of the settlement.

Mrs. Preston has never counted her people, any more than her acres. Among them there is Warren Green, who owns



Preston Orchestra, circa 1895

property in Sacramento and Marysville yielding a considerable income. Mr. Green came up to her as an invalid. Being restored to health, he married and now has a family of several children, all except one having been born in the Preston settlement.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hubbard, owning income producing property in San Jose, are also members of the community, and there is a Mr. [Fred] Clark, a single gentleman having interests in the state of Washington, who is also a respected member. Mr. [Nathan] and Miss [Amy] Bowers, brother and sister, are accomplished musicians and members of the string band.

Preston seems to be an entirely new type of local organization. It partakes of a plutocracy and a monocracy, and an absolute despotism, with the most agreeable features of each preserved and their disagreeable features eliminated.



Preston Store and Railroad Department, circa 1895

THE SQUATTERS ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF THE HEALDSBURG AREA

WHO OWNS THE PAST? WHO OWNS THE LAND? WHO MAKES THE LAW?

by Daniel Murley

Remarkably and notably, it was the consequence of timeless, potent geologic forces which ultimately formed the basis for the human history of Sonoma County. The normally imperceptible movement of grand tectonic plates on the earth's molten mantle and the subsequent effects on the land surface had formed a topographic configuration that continues to draw people to this area. When combined with the climatological patterns, the striking hills and dramatic river valley acted as a magnet for the earliest settlers. These original inhabitants probably followed ice-free corridors during the receding phases of an ice age of 12 to 15 thousand years ago. These first inhabitants were the ancestors of the Pomo and Wappo people. In a relatively peaceful social aggregate of family-based villages, they lived for hundreds of generations. Soon this land became the object of settlement of many other different, yet similar families. In order to provide farmland for crops and feed fields for livestock, the early Spanish settlers came. In a geo-political drama, which included the Spanish, the Russians, the British and the burgeoning United States, the land became the main plot point.

It was, however, only 150 to 200 years ago that the rumblings always present beneath the land's surface erupted to the shape of conflict on a human scale. A major player in the drama was Mariano Vallejo. It was his influence in matters north of San Francisco bay that set the stage for the scenarios to follow. If we consider that in the patronage-based Rancho system of the mid 1800's, large tracts of land were, in some cases, indiscriminately drawn on paper and vast regions of what was to become Sonoma County became awarded to individuals, mostly for cattle ranching. By providing a *diseño* (a rough descriptive map) and occupying the land either personally or through a representative, a politically influential, well-connected or worthy military man could be granted a rancho. The Sotoyome Rancho, an expanse of about 48,800 acres, was granted in 1841, to the husband of Vallejo's sister-in-law Henry Delano Fitch. Fitch, a New England-born seaman and husband of Josepha Carrillo, sent Cyrus Alexander from San Diego where Fitch was established, to watch over his new land. Fitch became the absentee landlord of a prime piece of Northern California real estate. Alexander performed his duties well and was also well rewarded for his service, the payment being acreage now named after him, the present-day Alexander Valley.

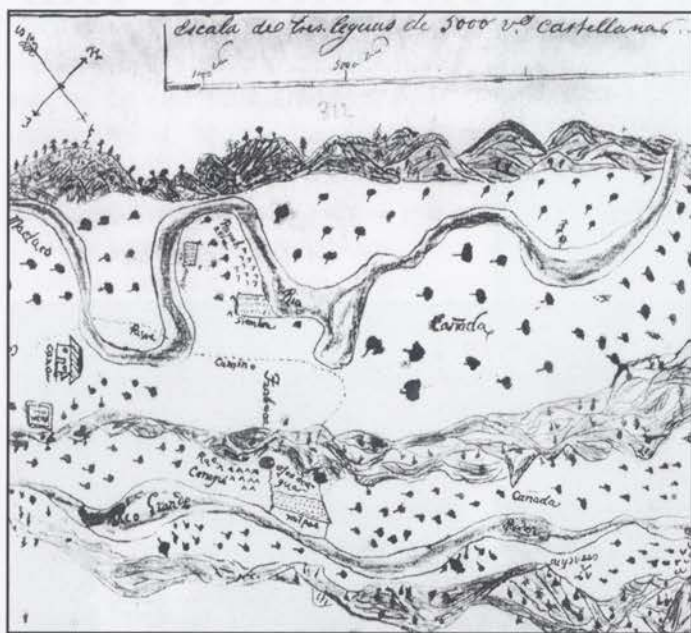


John and Josephine Bailbache

Another grant was given in 1843, to the 14-year-old son of Lazaro Piña, a loyal soldier in Vallejo's Mexican command who was a Native neophyte in the missions. Jose German Piña had chosen the Dry Creek Valley and either built or occupied an existing adobe structure and began his ill-fated Tzabaco Rancho operation. Piña and his family were to lose almost all to the changing tide of settlers and the "Americanization" of California.

The 1840's were passed in the raising and slaughtering of cattle for the infamous "hide and tallow trade". The hides of the cattle were dried and sold for leather goods and the tallow was ren-

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Tzabaco Deseño Pinas 1843 Rancho Bequest

dered in large metal pots and bagged in leather pouches and sold to make lard, soap and candles. Both Ranchos used native labor and Californio vaqueros to help in the herding and processing of the ubiquitous beasts. Into this arcane arrangement came the many men and women who had been introduced to California by the increasing open trade of the Mexican government. Many Yankees who arrived in San Francisco decided to stay in paradise and spread to the fertile lands north of the Bay. They were followed by the those who, once afflicted with the fever for gold, had now been cured and somewhat sobered by the experience, and who wanted to settle in their new-found and newly founded state of California. The fertile valleys of the Russian River and Dry Creek beckoned to many unsuccessful displaced miners and the families of those successful wagon train arrivals across the Sierra or down from Oregon.

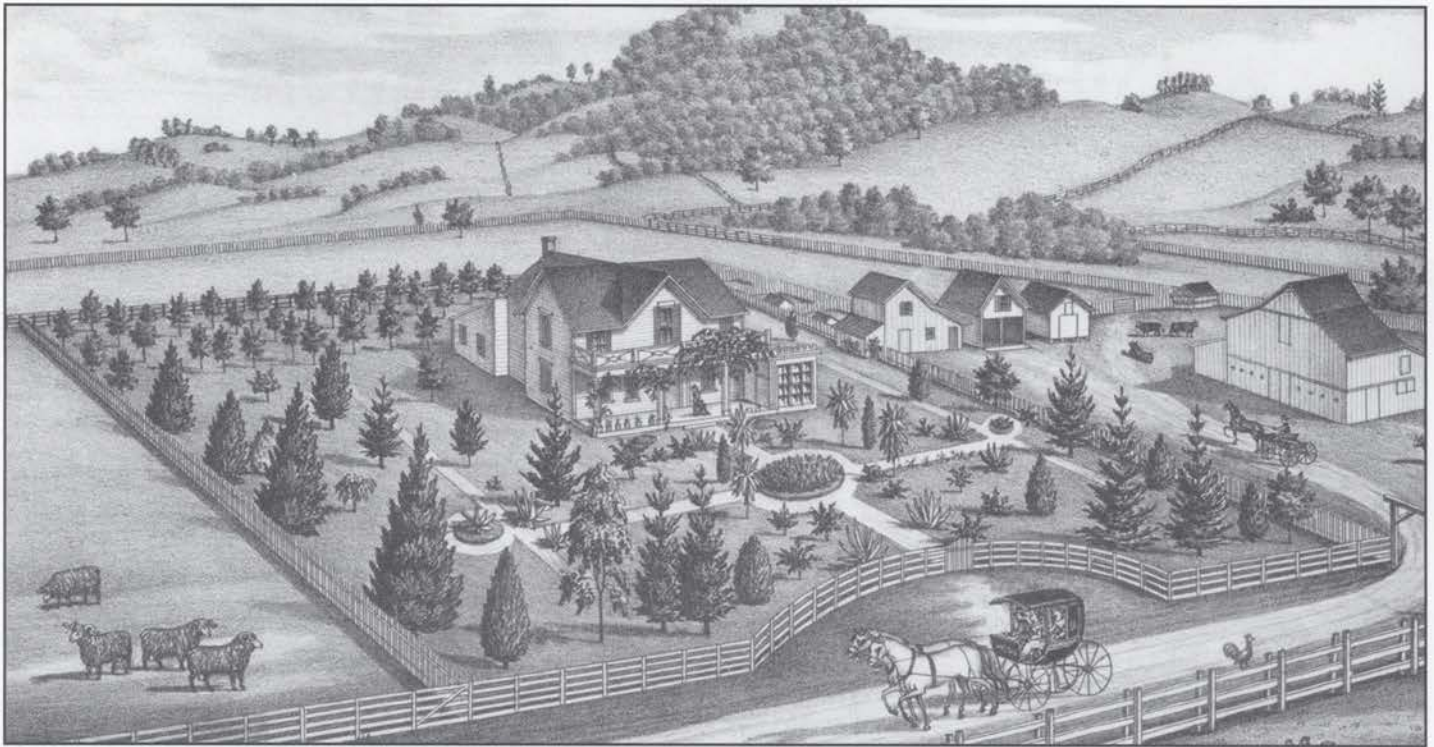
The civility and calm soon devolved into crisis and calamity. Yes, there was plenty of land but great tracts of the most desirable flat and fertile valley land was in the possession of just a few. They had acquired the land in questionable means from an overlord who showed little respect for the longtime Native residents and in the final analysis cared little for the documents giving title to the new owners. Piña and Fitch were beset by misfortune and misrepresentation. The once powerful Don of the Rancho system was made to prove the right to ownership of his property to the United States Land Commission. California, now a state of the United

States of America, was also in a quite different state of mind. No longer did the Hispanic cultural traditions apply and “manifest destiny” and American laws such as the Land Act of 1851 spelled an end to what so many considered the “romantic” Rancho period. The noble and somewhat liberal land concessions to Californios, (generally Hispanics born in California before statehood in 1850) in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo became so many English words on American documents. The cultural conflicts among the Native people, the Hispanics and the Euro-Americans have repercussions and prejudices which persist in the Golden State today.

Jose German Piña died in debt in 1857 and his brothers and sister who were the heirs to Tzabaco would see mostly treachery and betrayed confidences in administering the Rancho. While many “squatters,” among them notable names like Elisha Ely, Archibald Godwin and Alexander Skaggs occupied the land illegally, and land agents like John B. Frisbie maneuvered and manipulated the land claims in the courts, some settlers actually purchased a piece in the valley of Dry Creek. According to Sonoma County Land Deeds records, partners Samuel O. Heaton and Duvall Drake Phillips purchased 137 acres from Jesus Piña, one of the surviving brothers of Jose German Piña.

Meanwhile to the south of Tzabaco, the heirs of Henry Fitch were experiencing their own problems with the burgeoning population of Sonoma County. Henry died in San Diego in 1849 and was buried honorably beneath the chapel above “Old Town” where he was a prominent resident. His lovely wife, Josepha Carrillo de Fitch, and her nine children took up residence on the Sotoyome Rancho. The open land of the sprawling Rancho was beset by illegal settlers who cut timber, built houses and even grew crops on the Fitch property. Soon the number debts and expenses of court battles for property ownership rights, forced or convinced Josepha to sell off portions of the remaining unsold part of Sotoyome Rancho in “small tracts of convenient size for farming purposes”. Cyrus Alexander was granted the land and cattle he had been promised and his adobe and descendents still occupy the property he was given by Fitch. Josephine Fitch Bailhache, the daughter of Henry and Josepha Fitch and owner of 1,400 acres of the Rancho, brought a “suit in ejectment against the parties of the premises claimed by her...” There were back rent payments and questionable sales documents enough to warrant court action by the Fitch and Bailhache families. In October 1859, they obtained a “judgment for the restitution of the premises” against a few of the “offending” parties. Three of the defen-

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Las Floresitas, residence of John N. Bailhache.

dants, Cornelius Bice, James Miller and Robert Neely, who were residents on Bailhache's claim in the area west of Dry Creek, were ordered to sell or lease the properties they inhabited and pay "rents and profits" on the lands held by them. On July 15th 1862, under the direction of Sonoma County Sheriff J. M. Bowles, a posse comitatus was duly sworn, consisting of 250 men, to apprehend the three. The posse proceeded to Cornelius Bice's residence where they were met by a gathering of armed men who refused the Sheriff's orders to obey the orders of the District Court of Sonoma County, and forbade the posse and Sheriff from entering Bice's front gate. Sheriff Bowles wisely decided not to press the issues with the assembled locals but literally "called out the militia". The Emmet Rifles under the command of Captain Baylis and the Petaluma Guards under Captain Hewlett returned months later and justice was served. The rebellious squatters were tried for contempt and were each sentenced five days in the county jail and fined five hundred dollars apiece. In the aftermath Bice and his family were removed from their premises but strangely enough that night February 9, 1863, that same residence was burned by arsons unknown. The next evening, the hapless Robert Ferguson was shot while removing split rails from the fire ravaged location. He pitifully died of his wounds on February 15, 1863, an apparent casualty to frontier justice.

Who does own the land, who makes the law and who, ultimately, owns the past?

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KNIGHTHOOD TOURNAMENTS AND 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS

by Charlotte Anderson

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS

RULES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

CONCERNING GRAND

Knighthood -:- Tournament

TO BE HELD IN HEALDSBURG MAY 1, 1888.

King Arthur of the Table Round and Knight-Errantry associate with his times will be represented.

The King will have his attendants of courtiers, pages, etc.

There will be 28 Knights, divided in two teams of 14 Knights each.

One team will be composed of Healdsburg riders, the other riders from abroad.

The winning Knight will crown the May Queen.

The next four highest in order will crown the 1st, 2d, 3d and 4th Maids of Honor.

Also \$1000 CASH PRIZES will be awarded the winning Knight as follows: First Prize, \$50; Second Prize, \$30; Third Prize, \$20.

Distance to be ridden, 100 yards: 20 yards from start to first arch and 40 yards between the arches. Time, 30 seconds or less.

The rings will be 1 1/2 inches in diameter, in the clear, and will be suspended from the arches in such manner that they may be picked up with the lance.

The lances will be 7 feet long and will weigh about 2 pounds.

Each Knight who enters must pay \$1.50 entrance fee, and deposit \$5 for helmet, armor, etc. Part or all of the \$5 deposit will be returned if the finances of the Healdsburg Tournament Club will afford it. [Already its financial success is assured, as the business men of Healdsburg have subscribed liberally; so entering Knights may confidently count upon the return of the \$5 deposit. An advance of \$6.50 may be made, however, before the rider's name is listed, as a guarantee of good faith.]

Each Knight, in his order, will have in all five rides, making the highest number of rings possible to take. Ties to be decided

Gala Day."

"At 9 a.m. the trump is heard, and the brave knights assembled in front of the Theatre, their noble king Godfrey (L.A. Norton), clad in crown and ermine, passes the sword over them, and they are invested with the rare order of knighthood." Then the Grand Marshall (Ransom Powell) called for a procession to form to march to the "tilting grounds." The procession was made up of the band, the king, the mounted knights, the "sedate judges, bland orators, honorary guests, the Grangers, the lady Grangers, the school children "looking at every corner for the Calithumpians," footmen, horsemen and about 120 wagons. (*"Calithumpians" or "Horribles" were men dressed in ridiculous or horrible costumes. According to William Shipley, these "grotesque pageants" used to come at the end of Independence Day celebrations as far back as the 1880's. Actually the "Calithumpians" were well known earlier in the eastern U.S., particularly in Elgin, Illinois, where in 1878, the Calithumpians with their King Rex made the 4th of July celebration so unforgettable that it was talked about for years.*)

Upon reaching the grounds and disbanding, the crowd heard an address to the knights given by Barclay Henley who reminded all that Chivalry, while having gone through changes over the years, was not dead! Immediately after the address, the trial rides began. "King Godfrey called his Knights, one herald sounded the bugle and the other announcing that Prince so-and-so would now ride! Then came the charger with lightning speed, from the dense thickets in the background, down through the arch into the lists, and with spear poised rushed upon the rings, the marshals clearing the way and the judges noting the rings taken."

At about 5 o'clock, the Ancient Order of Calithumpians made an appearance, "marching with solemn visages, grotesque costumes, and very peculiar music." The group included local notables such as Charles Fitch, Ed Hendricks, W.H. Dunleavy, Ed Beeson, and George Mitchell. Their "knights" bore such names as Prince Tanbark, Prince Post Hole, Prince End-over-end, Prince Highwayman, Duke de Guerneville, and Prince Castor Oil, Cradled on a snag in the slough! After their "programme" of music and lengthy oratory, the "procession returned to Powell's Theatre and disbanded."

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Knighthood Tournneys

"In '58 or '59 Healdsburg held an agricultural fair in the neighborhood of where the Northwestern Pacific depot is now located. Fruits of all kinds and in great quantities were in exhibition. We also had in those days, say from 1857 to 1860, a May party and tournament on the first day of May each year. Miss Mary Jane Mulgrew, the eldest daughter of our village blacksmith, was the first queen of the May ever elected for the occasion and she was a success. The grounds for the occasion were where the Oak Mound Cemetery is now located. R.K. Truitt was among us in the tournament and took an active part. Rev. E.B. Ware was also there." (from PIONEER RECOLLECTIONS by John S. Williams)

There was not another mention of a "tournament" until 1877 when the May 3, 1877, Russian River Flag had a huge write up about the "Gala May Day," with headlines "Five Thousand Enjoy a

KNIGHTHOOD
TOURNAMENT,
— — — — —
MAY DAY, 1877.
— — — — —
PROGRAMME OF THE GRAND MARSHAL.

At 7:30 p.m. a "dense throng assembled in front of the Plaza Church, where a throne had been erected, and everything made ready for the crowning of the Queen. King Godfrey was on the throne and proclaimed that since the Knights had once more faced the challenges of the present times and bested them, the "affairs of the Realm should be administered by softer hands." This introduced the coronation: Charlie Brumfield, the champion knight crowned Miss Jennie Johnson Queen of May. The next successful knights, Geo. Sewell, Harry Truitt, Ed Haigh and Wm. Carpenter "with becoming gallantry and grace, bound the chaplets on the Maids of Honor," Misses Ellen Truitt, Emma Mulgrew, May Howard, and Cassie Cook.

The May 8, 1879, Healdsburg Enterprise claimed there were nearly 5,000 people in Healdsburg for the May Day festivities which began as usual with a parade of knights and onlookers which ended in Matheson Park. The usual oration was followed by the tournament presided over by King Arthur (H.H. Pyne). His 22 "Knights of the Round Table," all of whom had adopted suitable names, competed in spearing the rings with the following results: Sir Lanvol (Harry Truitt) 13 of 15, Sir Hector (Burse Litton), Sir Moroit (Geo. Seawell), Sir Galahad (Chas. Brumfield), Sir Denadam (Ed Haigh).

1888 brought the beginning of elaborate floral displays. While the focus was still on the Knighthood Tournament, flowers were showing up more in decorations in the parade and a "grand floral display" in the City Hall or in one of the theaters during the day. In 1888, "King Arthur (E.B. Mulgrew) and his Knights of the Round Table" was the name of the Tournament. After the conferring of titles to the Knights, a huge parade wended its way from Truitt's Theatre to Matheson Park. There the "literary exercises" commenced and at the close of the oration a double quartette rendered a selection and then it was picnic time. Then the jousting contest began, the prizes not only being monetary, but also having conferring the privileges of choosing the Queen and her court. The winning Knights were Sir Gaheris (Chas. Brumfield) 14 rings who crowned Miss Annie O'Connor as Queen; Sir Uwaine (Bert Haigh)

12 rings who crowned Miss Bertha Stone as first Maid of Honor; Sir Lancelot (Harry Truitt) 11 rings, 2nd Maid of Honor Miss Georgie Zane; Sir Gawaine (Ora Hassett) 11 rings, 3rd Maid of Honor Miss Emma Truitt; and Sir Beaumains (George Seawell) 10 rings who crowned Miss Mamie Swain. Following the coronation, both the King and Queen addressed the Knights. Then the "Horribles or Calithumpians made their appearance and afforded amusement for the visitors until the train took its departure."

In the early 1890's, small May Day celebrations were held with the focus being on picnics and floral displays. Then in 1895 with "less than ten days devoted by the people of Healdsburg to the Festival preparations," a successful Floral Festival was staged. Buildings in town were gaily covered with the blue and gold Festival colors. "The Plaza was a pretty sight, and the bell tower looked like a heap of flowers." The Festival was held for three days beginning on Thursday, May 16, with the crowning of "Queen Flora," Emma Meiler. The crowning ceremony was held, after a march around the streets, in the Plaza with dignitaries giving speeches. A crown was placed on Emma's head by Chairman Dr. J.R. Swisher, and a golden key to the city was presented by Mayor Young. Another procession followed, and then the various afternoon events followed. A baseball game was held between Healdsburg and Forestville with the "Healdsburgs walking away with the laurels by a score of 29 to 4."

The next event was a concert by the Sotoyome Band in the Plaza which had "hundreds of electric lights forming a complete canopy over it to the admiration of thousands of people." Then there was a well-prepared program at the theatre where the Queen sat in front of the stage upon a blue and white throne. "The floral display won the admiration of everybody, and there is no doubt that Sonoma County never had a more beautiful, a more varied, or a

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King Arthur and His Knights in front of the City Hall, circa 1879.



Emma Meiler in the Floral Festival on Healdsburg Plaza, 1895

more extensive show of horticulture than this. The floral displays were so numerous that instead of spreading refreshment tables in the pavilion, as at first intended, it was found necessary to rent the Wigwam for that purpose on the opposite side of the street."

Friday, the gala day of the Festival, brought visitors by train, buggies, and horseback. The Sotoyome Band met the train from San Francisco and Santa Rosa bearing dignitaries and all were whisked off to be in or view the grand parade which followed. Flower bedecked floats, rigs, and bicycles came from Santa Rosa, Geyserville, Lytton Springs, Windsor, and of course many organizations in Healdsburg. Two local floats were really different. "A wigwam on wheels containing a band of Indians was built and adorned by the Indians themselves, and they were very proud of it." The second novelty, "the only historical float in the parade was that of the Italians. The float represented King Ferdinand and his black pirate captains depicting a great event in Italian annals."

It was estimated that more than 10,000 people from as far away as San Francisco and Ukiah came to Healdsburg for the second Floral Festival in 1896. The "adornments on the buildings were above comparison and the window decorations were original, unique, and inspiring. The arch on South Street was an imposing affair" and the Plaza was a "worldly paradise with the electrical illumination of blue and gold producing a dazzling effect." The first night's entertainment of music was highly successful.

Healdsburg's third fiesta was in 1904. It was promoted by lots of advertising with silk badges ("I'm going to the Healdsburg Flower Festival, May 26, 27, 28th, 1904") and leaflets ("You are invited to attend the Healdsburg Flower Festival") distributed at the local train station.

Miss Isobel Simi was elected Queen and the Western Carnival

Company presented 7 "pay shows" and 3 free street attractions.

On Thursday, May 26, Queen Isobel was crowned by Mayor Merchant, and her Prime Minister, C.H. Pond, issued her proclamation. After the oratory address, "the Band played several selections while the people viewed the beautiful spectacle presented by Queen Isobel and her court as they sat in state upon the gaily decorated throne." Later there was dancing at Truitt's Theatre, and the Midway shows were well patronized.

Friday, May 27, at 11:30 a.m., Marshall McMinn "got the parade in order" for the 10 to 15 thousand people who were in Healdsburg to view! The parade included the Queen's gold and white float, the most gorgeous one ever designed in Healdsburg, and presented Queen Isobel in her royal robes enthroned on a raised stand covered with a beautiful gold canopy and surrounded by her maids who were gowned in dainty pink dresses. The parade also included floats from Cloverdale and Santa Rosa. In addition to the Queen's float, Healdsburg had a float done by "local Indians who staged a scene from a pow wow." "Dr. Crocker's automobile made a very striking appearance and was decorated emblematic of the sanitarium he is soon to open in Healdsburg. Miss Marie Chappari, representing a Red Cross nurse, was one of the occupants of the vehicle." The parade also included carriages, equestrians, and bands leading each division. This was followed by a Band Concert, and later the Queen's Grand Ball at Truitt's Theatre.



The May Queen, Isobel Simi and Suite, May 1, 1904

Saturday, May 28, began with a Band Concert at 10 a.m. King Rex's followers (Calithumpians) erected a police station at the corner of Matheson and West where all the violators of the King's law of wearing a mask while on the streets were punished. In the afternoon, the various bands gave concerts and there was the crowning of King Rex and Rex's Parade. The evening brought Rex's masked ball at Truitt's Theatre, a Band Concert at the Plaza, and street entertainment and Carnival.

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Fourth of July Events

July 4 has been celebrated in Healdsburg from the inception of the town. Festivities would include picnics, music, and, in the earlier days, salvos of artillery, an oration and the reading of the Declaration of Independence. Various groups and citizens would gather at the Plaza and then march to one of the groves or grounds where the "exercises" would be held. "Good music, dancing, excellent dining, amusing races, and a peaceable happy time would be proper signs of success."

The earliest July Fourth celebration recorded in Healdsburg was in 1858 and held at the newly built Hassett Bros. flour mill, the largest building in town. The Gala Independence Day Ball cost \$5 which included supper.

The towns of Cloverdale, Geyserville, Healdsburg, and Windsor took turns having larger celebrations and would send "delegations" to each town. "Delegations" not only included people, but also fire trucks and firemen for the various parades.

This happened on July 4, 1876, the Centennial Fourth, with bigger celebrations in Santa Rosa and Cloverdale. However, "E.A. Hendrick, having been supplied by subscription, inaugurated the Centennial Fourth in this city by firing 100 guns. At noon he fired two more amidst the ringing of all the bells in town. At sun down 50 more were fired, the artillery ground being the Plaza." A private celebration at Magnolia Farm consisted of the usual exercises, winding up with a grand "hop" in the evening.

Healdsburg advertised a celebration in 1877 which included a procession, literary exercises (including music and the reading of the Declaration of Independence), a picnic, dancing, and games. In the evening there was "an elaborate display of fireworks" and then a grand ball at Powell's Theatre.

July 4, 1883, provided an all-out celebration with the "military presence" of the war veterans of the Rod Matheson Post and the remnant of the Russian River Rifles.

In 1903, a Knighthood Tournament was a leading feature with riders from all parts of Sonoma and Mendocino counties being invited. Miss Mabel Seawell was Goddess of Liberty and there was a "balloon ascension" in Matheson Park. The ring spearing was won by Charley Leslie who took 15 of 15 rings with C.W. Briggs and Leslie Bidwell following with 14 each.

The Merger

(Later to become the Water Carnival)

In 1907, the Knighthood Tournaments and Floral Festivals melded together with the 4th of July celebrations and the fledgling late summer Water Carnivals of 1905 and 1906. This year



Helen Sewell and her brother Sewell Hilgerlob with their bikes made tandem at the floral Festival celebration, 1904

"Orations and Exercises, Aquatic Sports, Tournament, and other events" were advertised for a two-day event.

The Goddess of Liberty was Miss Jennie Hewitt who led the parade of dignitaries, floats, decorated carriages and automobiles, equestrians, and "organized footmen." There were the usual July 4th "literary exercises" and then the "Tournament Riding" on Center Street. Following the Tournament were "athletic contests" with medals given to winners of the P. A. A. sanctioned meet. A Band Concert, fireworks, and a Grand Ball capped the day's events.

Swimming, diving, and boating events were featured the second day, but more on this when we document the Water Carnivals and succeeding festivals in the next RRR!

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View of the Plaza and City Hall, Healdsburg, California, circa 1910



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