



# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

SUMMER 2009 • ISSUE 105

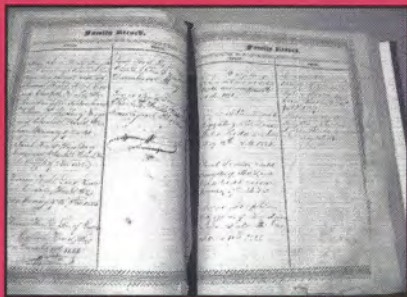
An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society



*Dr. Elisha Ely and Family, circa 1858*

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*Heald Family Bible*

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## JESSE AND DAN HARRINGTON'S BLACKSMITH ANVIL

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**RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER**

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

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**In This Issue**

**G**. Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, writes in the July, 2009 issue of the Smithsonian that museums are in the "Forever business", quoting Brent Glass, director of the National Museum of American History. Glass, this past April accepted two artifacts relating to the Red Sox winning the World Series in 2004 -- a base used in the 2004 World Series and a jersey worn by Jon Lester who conquered lymphoma to pitch the game that won the series for the Red Sox.

In his acceptance of the artifacts, Glass stressed that "the Smithsonian is in the 'forever business'. Baseball, he added "is more than just a sport; its rich history mirrors civil rights achievements, triumph over adversity and other proud themes in our heritage."

Clough, in his article, emphasizes that 'forever' institutions such as museums, libraries and universities "are especially important in uncertain times because they provide stability and continuity; they are at their best when they maintain their core values even as they face new challenges."

In this issue of the *Russian River Recorder* we have attempted to bring you a slice of the rich history of our area. The Museum presently holds many artifacts which are stored away and with the great work by our research curator, Holly Hoods, we are able to spotlight some of our unusual and interesting "hidden treasures" . . . the blacksmithing anvil owned and used by Jesse and Dan Harrington and the Heald family Bible. And we thank Darla Williams Budworth, a very devoted Museum volunteer, for giving us the history of the Ferguson family Coverlet now on display in the main gallery as a part of the *Color, Craft and Comfort* exhibit.

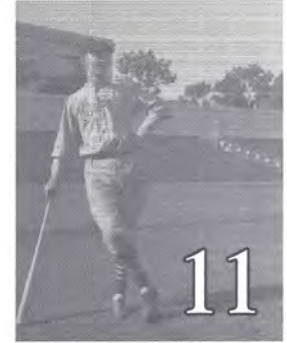
Ann Howard first appeared in our Spring 2008 issue with her article *Geyserville Our Neighbor to the North*. In this issue she gives us a fascinating account of Dr. Elisha Ely, the first white settler in Geyserville. The material, as you can tell, was meticulously researched and presented in a scholarly manner. Ann told us that her husband was of great help to her in writing the article because of his input on what part of the story should be emphasized and what needed changing. Thank you for giving us this insight in a special time in our area's history.

Holly Hoods, the Museum's very professional research curator, had planned to write an article for this issue about President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's WPA and how Healdsburg profited from this program way back in the 1930's. However, in doing some research she came across an oral history by Robert (Bob) Meyer who talks about his family who came from Germany, his school days, crops and farming and the wine industry. The interview was conducted about 20 years ago by Geyserville historian Louise Bosworth Davis, transcribed by Anna Hansen in 2008 and edited for publication by Holly Hoods this year. What a rich record of the 1920's to the 1950's beautifully told by Bob Meyer who is in his early 90's and has just moved into a retirement complex in Healdsburg. This is a prime example of how our museum is making certain that our rich heritage is preserved for the next generations to enjoy. Our thanks to Bob Meyer for sharing these memories with us.

Arnold Santucci

Editor





## **4 Artifact: The Ferguson Coverlet**

*by Darla Williams Budworth*

Darla shares with us the beautiful coverlet now on display in the new exhibit in the Museum's gallery, Color, Craft and Comfort: Quilts of the Healdsburg Museum, and gives us a fascinating history of the Ferguson Coverlet and the Ferguson Family who came to California in 1849.

## **4 Artifact: The Heald Family Bible**

*by Holly Hoods*

On display during a Heald Family reunion in Healdsburg on June 13, 2009 Holly gives a brief history of the Heald Bible, purchased by Elizabeth Heald, mother of Healdsburg founder, Harmon Heald, in 1830. It was given in 1975 by Jack Heald of Turlock to Museum Founder Edwin Langhart and the City of Healdsburg's Bicentennial Committee. Another hidden treasure preserved by the Museum.

## **5 Dr. Elisha Ely: The First White Settler in Geyserville**

*by Ann Howard*

Ann Howard whose work first appeared in the Recorder's Spring 2008 issue ("Geyserville: Our Neighbor to the North"), brings us a well researched account of the history of the Dr. Elisha Ely family, the first white settler in Geyserville. You will find her account most interesting, informative and well documented.

## **10 Artifact: Jesse and Dan Harrington's Blacksmith Anvil**

*by Holly Hoods*

There are many treasures hidden away among the artifacts stored and preserved by the Museum. In her search for interesting artifacts Research Curator Holly Hoods came across the anvil owned by Jesse Harrington of Alexander Valley, the last blacksmith in the Valley. Because of her research we enjoy the story of blacksmithing and the Harringtons, father and son, who carried on their trade until the son, Daniel retired in 1968.

## **11 An Oral History with Robert (Bob) Meyer: School Days, Crops, Farming, and the Wine Industry**

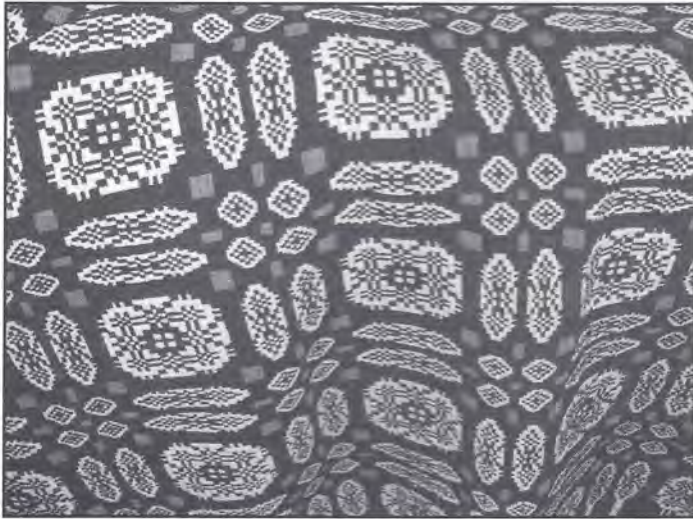
*Interviewed by Louise Bosworth Davis in 1988 and Edited by Holly Hoods, 2009*

Robert (Bob) Meyer, interviewed approximately 20 years ago by Louise Bosworth Davis, recalls a rich history of his family who settled in Geyserville, school days, crops and farming and the wine industry during the 1930s up to the 1950s. This is a fascinating story and one we know you will enjoy.



## ARTIFACT: FERGUSON COVERLET

by Darla Williams Budworth



*The Ferguson Coverlet is on loan to the Healdsburg Museum and can be seen as part of the current exhibition, "Color, Craft and Comfort: Quilts of the Healdsburg Museum."*

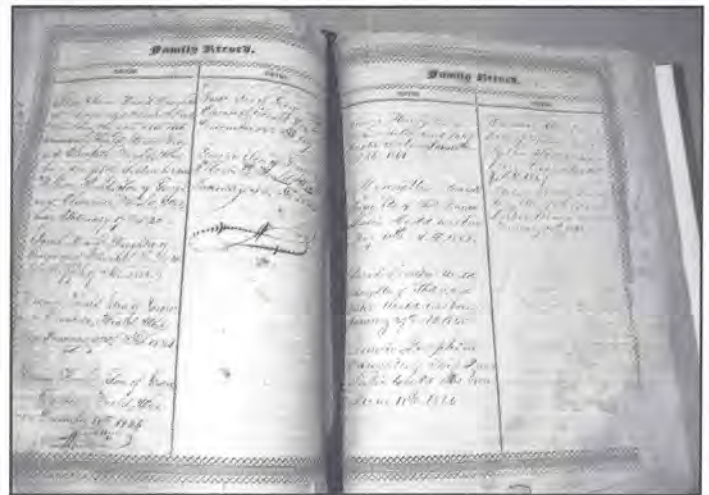
The Ferguson Coverlet was hand carded, hand woven, and hand dyed by Mary Cooperider Ferguson in 1852.

Mary was the mother of the W.W. Ferguson family that came west to California from Clay County, Indiana by way of Jasper County, Iowa. They joined the Iowa Company covered wagon train in 1849, traveling to California by ox-drawn wagon. The Fergusons first lived in Yuba City. There they purchased a boarding house, which Mary operated while her husband W. W. Ferguson worked in the gold fields nearby, and their three oldest sons sold Mary's homemade candy in the local gambling houses. In 1857 the Fergusons purchased land in Alexander Valley from Cyrus Alexander. They became pioneer settlers of Alexander Valley. This was to be their home--along with their eight children--for the remainder of their lives.

My grandmother, Minnie Ferguson Williams, was Mary Ferguson's granddaughter and she inherited her grandmother's coverlet. When Minnie died in Healdsburg in 1964, she left the coverlet to me, her only granddaughter. I am pleased to share this family heirloom and my family history with the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society. RRR

## ARTIFACT: HEALD FAMILY BIBLE

by Holly Hoods



This Heald Family Bible was donated to Ed Langhart and the City of Healdsburg's Bicentennial Committee in 1975 by Jack Heald, a teacher in Turlock, California. The Bible, published in 1829, was purchased by Elizabeth Heald, City Founder Harmon's mother, in 1830 shortly after the death of her husband, George. The Bible is in excellent condition and contains handwritten records of the births, deaths and marriages of the Heald family. It measures 10" x 6" and has a leather cover.

Fifteen Heald/Ridenour/Vandevier relatives met on June 13, 2009 to celebrate a family reunion in Healdsburg. They traveled from Oregon, New Mexico, and a variety of places in California. The family gathering was organized by Dan Yoshimoto of Eureka. Don Arata of Windsor helped host the group, displaying an excellent command of local history and of the Heald family genealogy. The family met at the Museum and toured the gallery, then went to visit Heald graves at Oak Mound cemetery. After lunch, they traveled to see March and Heald's old mill (Royce Meyerott's place on Felta Road) and then met at the Healdsburg Library to examine historical photos, family trees and Heald artifacts brought over from the Museum. Some of the descendants at the reunion had never met each other before; others hadn't seen each other in 45 years; many had never been to Healdsburg. They were particularly interested to see the Heald family Bible. RRR





# DR. ELISHA ELY: FIRST WHITE SETTLER IN GEYSERVILLE-1851

by Ann Howard

As I study the early history of the little unincorporated village of Geyserville to the north, I have uncovered more information about and pictures of the first white settler, Dr. Elisha Ely, and his family.

In 1999 his great-granddaughter, Anne Fairfield (Frank) Dubois visited the Healdsburg Museum and left a colored photograph of a large oil-on-glass portrait of Dr. Ely completed in the 1870s that hangs in her home. I contacted her recently, and she kindly verified the information I have compiled and added more details. She and her brother, Curtiss E. Frank, then scanned four early photographic images - priceless treasures of their ancestors - and sent copies to me.



Dr. Elisha Ely, born on December 25, 1819, in New York City, was the son of Elisha, Sr., and Elouise (Curtiss) Ely. "He began a banking career at an early age, but finding such a life distasteful with that career soon began the study of medicine at Rochester, New York, his preceptor being Dr. William W. Ely, a first cousin. He attended lectures at the medical department of the College of Geneva, New York; at the Buffalo Medical College; and at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York City, graduating from there in 1847." In August 1848 he married Mary Aseneth Narcissa Campbell, a native of Rochester where her father was in the milling business, and later Buffalo, N.Y. A summary of the biography found in the 1889 "History of Sonoma County" provided the following, extensive detail of his life.

"Dr. Ely practiced in Rochester until December 1848 when he left for California on the steamer *Crescent City* as far as Chagres, Panama. Experiencing a delay of 40 days on the Isthmus, he finally arrived via the *Oregon* through the Golden Gate on April 1, 1849."

(The *SS Oregon* left from New York with Captain Pearson for San Francisco on December 2, 1848. She put into Panama on February 23, 1849, where more than 1200 passengers, all bound for California gold mines, had been waiting for more than two weeks in deprivation. Only 250 made it aboard the *Oregon* for San Francisco. She arrived April 1, 1849, where she anchored near a U. S. warship in order to prevent the crew from deserting to the gold fields, as had happened earlier with the *California*, according to

the Maritime Heritage Project, Sausalito, CA).

Dr. Ely at once settled himself "for practice in San Francisco, which then consisted of two frame buildings, one brick structure just finished, fewer than a dozen old adobes, with the less fortunate camping about in tents. For a month or two, he knew of only one other physician actively engaged there. In November 1849 he set out for Sonoma County in a little sail-boat, and bad weather kept him there until December. A cataract, which had formed on his right eye, gave him much trouble and interfered with his surgical labors to such an extent that he decided to cast about for land to fall back upon in case his worst fears were realized."

"He purchased a tract of land about one mile from the present town of Sonoma and then returned to San Francisco in a small skiff. While on the water he smelled smoke and upon arriving at the wharf found San Francisco blotted out by fire. He immediately returned to Sonoma County and opened an office at the town of Sonoma." He reported to the census taker in 1850 that he was a medical doctor with real estate valued at \$10,000. In the fall of 1851 he removed



*View of the first cabin dated 1851 at Dr. Elisha Ely's farm north of what became Geyserville taken on April 10, 1873, by Joseph H. Downing, photographer from Healdsburg. The cabin exemplifies the split-redwood log residence first constructed by pioneers in this area. Dr. Ely standing in doorway and Mrs. Ely in white seated to the left.*

to what is now known as Geyserville. His wife joined him in 1852 being among the first white ladies to arrive. The Elys resided in their home one mile north of Geyserville until October 1871 when they moved to Healdsburg to secure better educational facilities for their twin daughters.

In a letter dated September 2, 1855, to his youngest brother, Oliver, who was living in the East, Dr. Ely explained that upon Oliver's arrival in San Francisco sometime in October, he should proceed north to the Petaluma boat landing, the fare \$2.00. From there he would continue by stage, the fare \$3.00, to Mr. Godwin's Store, Russian River, which would bring him within a quarter mile

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of their home. "Nothing new here except a pair of twins now about a month old." They were born August 5, 1855. (Looking at the birth dates of the births of Elisha's siblings, it is possible that Elisha Ely was also a twin).



Taken about 1858-9 - Dr. Elisha Ely, Mary Campbell Ely, Louisa Maria Ely, Mary Aseneth Narcissa (Campbell) Ely. Standing, Oliver Curtiss Ely, Elisha's youngest brother. (Courtesy of Curtiss Ely Frank, Jr. and Fairfield (Frank) Dubois, great-great grand children of Elisha and Aseneth Ely).

*(The original of the photograph under glass was carefully scanned without taking it apart to create the image displayed above. Curiously, the head of Dr. Ely, seated on the right in the original, had become detached from his body. The professional photographer who scanned the original digitally replaced Dr. Ely's head upon his shoulders!)*

Dr. Ely was "frequently called upon to go on long trips in the practice of medicine. Strapping saddlebags on his horse, the physician would depart, leaving the safeguarding of the children and their mother in the hands of the friendly Indians of the Geyserville section. The natives, true to their trust, lay by night in a circle, three deep, about the house in which the doctor's wife and children reposed."

Dr. Ely was a squatter among many who thought the new state of California was open for settlement, but soon learned of the Mexican land grants. He and other settlers on the Tzabaco Rancho had been misinformed by rumor about the character and intent of Capt. L. A. Norton who represented the land owners. Norton received threats to his life, but heard that Dr. Ely was "the brains and the managing man of the squatters, he being a man of intellect and a fair-minded, reasonable man upon all subjects, excepting the one at issue." When Norton approached Dr. Ely and explained that he did not want Ely's land for himself, as rumor had it, and that he wanted to look at each man's land and sell it to him, Ely arranged meetings

for Norton with the squatters. All of the settlers were able to pay off their land in three years, and Dr. Ely, as secretary of the group of men led by Downing Lamb, penned a resolution of apology to Capt. Norton, thus ending twelve years of the Squatters Wars in northern Sonoma County.

In 1860 Dr. Ely reported to the census taker that he was a physician with the value of his real estate \$10,000 and personal belongings \$1,000. The twins were five years old, and Elisha's younger brothers, George and Oliver, and an Indian girl age 12 named Jenny Lynd, were living with them.

In July 1861 Martha Elizabeth Kilgore, age 19, became the bride of Alexander Stites in Healdsburg and moved to Geyserville in October. In her "Memories of Geyserville in the '60s" written at age 82, she described Dr. Ely. "Perhaps the most outstanding character in our community life was the dearly beloved friend and physician Dr. Elisha Ely. A man of education and skill, he was always available to the many calls upon his strength and resources. Many times I remember his driving by on his way from Healdsburg and calling to give me medical aid, when he would produce from his bag a beef steak, or some such delicacy – fresh steak was not to be had here



Dr. Ely kneeling in his vineyard, Mrs. Ely in white, surrounded by orchards, with their shoestring home in the background on the hill. Taken by Joseph Downing on April 10, 1873, about the time Ely sold his extensive land holding to Walter B. Cummings.

- with the remark, 'Here, daughter, I was getting one for myself and I remembered you.' He was one of those rare men whose nature combined the qualities of masculine strength and feminine tenderness. His wife [Asenath] being an invalid, he brought up his twin daughters [Louisa and Mary] with a gentleness seldom seen, even in women. I recall his telling me how he wakened the children in the morning that they might not be startled from their deep sleep, by playing softly on his flute till they were gradually and happily aroused."

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Guests at the Ely's home on the hill looked east across the Russian River valley. On the right Elisba is standing with Aseneth seated, and Louise with her head on her mother's lap. Taken April 10, 1873, by Joseph Downing. Mary Campbell, Louisa's twin, had died September 7, 1872, of typhoid fever after they moved to Healdsburg.



View to the east from Dr. Ely's home that his family enjoyed from the 1850s to 1871 on the hill overlooking his vineyards and orchards with the Russian River, Geysers Peak and Black Mountain in the background.

"He early built on [what was later known as] the old Bosworth place the long farm house known as a shoestring house, which was so familiar in California in that period, and he chose this picturesque spot because of the wide sweep of valley below. Here his far-flung hospitality shed its precious influence on this storm-tossed little settlement [during the Civil War], while his justice and fair play gradually softened the bitterness and distrust of conflicting elements. He was the first certificated physician in this county, and he represented the finest type of that rapidly disappearing institution, the family physician."

On Friday evening, November 18, 1864, while living in her home on the hillside, Mrs. Aseneth Ely was stabbed three times by a neighbor, Davenport Cozzens, another of the earliest white settlers in the area. In 1857 Cozzens had reportedly been thrown

from a horse and hit his head on a rock, resulting in occasional erratic behavior as reported in the long newspaper account of the court hearing of Cozzens's attack on Mrs. Ely. Mrs. Ely lost a lot of blood, and one of the wounds had penetrated her lung; she was not expected to live. Cozzens served two years at San Quentin Prison after being convicted of assault with the intent to do bodily harm, and his wife, who had witnessed the attack and fled the scene, divorced him during his stay in prison. Cozzens was released in September 1866, and his citizenship restored. The Elys' nine-year old daughter Louisa also witnessed the attack and was one of many called on to testify in court.

In October 1866 a "cutting affray happened at the new gold mines above Healdsburg. While locating an extension to the main lead, a difficulty arose between Dr. Ely of Geyserville and an unnamed boy 16 or 17 years of age who, in an altercation that ensued, was told by the Dr. to keep still, but refused. Dr. Ely started toward him, maybe intending to frighten the boy. The boy at first gave way, but finally turned upon the doctor and inflicted a severe though not dangerous wound in his right arm. The knife was thrust into the fleshy part of the arm, then drawn down to the wrist."

In November 1868 Dr. Ely informed the *Russian River Flag* "that an Indian was found dead on the trail leading from Dry Creek to Cloverdale, his throat cut and two stabs in his right breast. Nothing was missing except about 6 dollars worth (Indian valuation) of 'conchas', a sort of clam shell highly prized among the Indians for making beads. The [Indians] held a formal inquest over the body of the deceased aboriginal establishing the fact that he was dead and must be burned. He had been generally disliked, but his chief offense doubtless was in possessing so many precious shells, which some Indian coveted. In cases of this kind, it is the preferred policy of the United States Government to maintain strict neutrality."

On March 3, 1870, when Dr. Ely's brother, Edward, the proprietor of a fashionable clothing mart in Chicago, visited Healdsburg, the editor of the *Russian River Flag* enjoyed describing Edward Ely as "a real live business man from Chicago. [Ely] created such a sensation... everyone knew he was a foreigner to the county... so they stared at him with open mouths, yet they stood out of his way as he rushed along the sidewalk to attend to some little business he had on hand – for these Chicago people hava [sic] an air about them, which plainly says, 'shoo fly, don't bodder [sic] me, I'm in a hurry.'" The editor did go on to explain, however, after reading about Edward Ely in the "Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men of Chicago", that Edward Ely had 'left New York for Chicago with no money or earthly goods, yet by diligent industry... and an unusual degree of talent, has become one of the prominent men of wealth and influence of that great city'."

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On March 7 Edward Ely started for his home in Chicago, taking with him his nieces, Mary Campbell and Louisa Maria, the twin daughters of his brother Elisha, "to enjoy the educational advantages of the East." (The SF & NP Railroad did not reach Healdsburg until 1871, but the Intercontinental Railroad, completed on May 10, 1869, is assumed to have been their mode of travel).



Inside the Ely home in the 1880s when Calvin and Prudence Bosworth and two children lived there until 1902; Calvin became foreman of the Ely property in 1871. In 1873 Bosworth continued as foreman for Walter B. Cummings until Bosworth's death in 1910.

On October 5, 1871, *Russian River Flag* reported that "Healdsburg is soon to receive a valuable addition to its medical fraternity in the person of Dr. Elisha Ely, now of Geyserville where he has resided for the past twenty years on one of Sonoma's finest farms." Dr. Ely had purchased the property of Mr. James Curtiss on Tucker Street, and planned to move his family into their new home in two weeks. Dr. and Mrs. Ely wished "to avail themselves of the privileges of the Alexander Academy to properly educate their daughters, and at the same time – relieved of the cares of his farm – [the Doctor] could devote his entire attention to the practice of his profession. His experience of twenty years in this climate makes him familiar with the diseases peculiar to the region."

In 1871 Calvin M. Bosworth became foreman of Dr. Ely's property, and he and his wife, Prudence, and children, George age 12, and Mary age 10, moved into the Ely home on the hill.

According to records in a surviving 1870s ledger, on March 15, 1872, Dr. Ely purchased lengths of ribbon, buttons, and a comb for \$1.82 from Martha J. Trimble's store, thought to have been located in Alexander Valley. In June he purchased two boxes of collars for 50 cents, and in August one table cover for \$1.75 and silver buttons for \$1.50. In September his purchases were calico (fabric), buttons, and a set of pins and earrings totaling \$3.75, more calico and collars later that month. His October purchases were two pair of bracelets for \$2.25 and one pair of slippers for \$1.00. The last entries found were in December when he purchased silk for 13

cents, cambric (fabric) and braid for \$1.00. Unfortunately, half of the beautifully written entries in Martha Trimble's ledger were later covered with news clippings, some as late as WWII, stuck down carefully with unrelenting glue!

In February 1872, Oliver Curtiss Ely, youngest brother of Elisha, moved from San Francisco and was working at the Livreaux & Ely Mill in Guerneville.

On May 28, 1872, a tragic handcar accident occurred on the new railroad tracks just north of Geyserville. "Some young men desired to celebrate the completion of the depot with a dance, and a hand car was brought into requisition to bring some ladies down from up the valley. The car not returning as soon as it was thought it should, two young men took another car and went up the track to meet car number 1. There was no moon and no lights employed on either car. While passing through Eli Cummings orchard and while running at full speed, the cars came together." The collision resulted serious injuries to Miss Kittie Archambeau and her brother Charley, and to Miss Mary Ewbanks, and described in sad, vivid detail in the *Russian River Flag*. Dr. Ely of Healdsburg went up to Geyserville late Tuesday night and dressed the wounds, and on Wednesday, Dr. Daingerfield of Healdsburg and Dr. Quinlin of Cloverdale arrived for consultation. It was feared in the case of Miss Ewbanks amputation [of her leg] would be found necessary. [One of the young ladies is said to have later died from her injuries]. The article continued with a discussion of "criminal carelessness in this case... and of laws in some states prohibiting the running of trains or handcars without light after dark."

Dr. William C. Shipley, born in Healdsburg on June 2, 1872, remembered very well Drs. Ely, Forseman and J. R. Swisher, who were in active practice when he was just a small boy. To him "they were great men who wore voluminous beards and drove about with fast-stepping horses."

The Doctor and Mrs. Ely must have grieved terribly at the death of one of their twin daughters, Mary Campbell Ely, age 17 and one month, of typhoid fever on September 7, 1872, in Healdsburg. Two sons had died in infancy.



Louisa Ely sitting the ground with her father and mother standing to the right. Looking south at Mt. St. Helena in the distance. (Today Highway 101 runs through the location of the Ely, then Bosworth home on the hill just south of Canyon Road.)

Continued on page 9





The Elys taking their guests through vineyards and orchard to a picnic in the woods, later known as Bosworth, then Hoffman Grove.

On April 10, 1873, Healdsburg photographer Joseph H. Downing was among the guests visiting the Ely property one mile north of Geyserville, maybe for a last visit. That year the property was sold to Walter B. Cummings. Downing took thirteen different views of the Doctor's vineyards and orchards in the valley and the Elys entertaining their guests, and created stereographic photographs to be viewed in three-dimension with a stereopticon - priceless views of the history of early Geyserville.



Second from left, Mrs. Aseneth Ely with Dr. Ely in white, reclining. Daughter Louisa is standing wearing a white apron with a basket on her arm.

On May 4, 1875, the only surviving child of the Elys, one of the twins, Louisa Maria, became the bride of Benjamin Fowler, fourteen years her senior. They became the parents of Mabel E. and Mary Louise.

In early July 1877 in Healdsburg, James Field, age 40, swallowed a large dose of strychnine. "Dr. Ely was immediately summoned and when informed of the large quantity of strychnine Field had taken in water to dissolve the deadly drug, the Doctor pronounced the case necessarily fatal." The Doctor's office was located on the north side of the plaza. His ad in the *Healdsburg Enterprise* read, "Will attend promptly to calls in all branches of his profession."

On June 14, 1882, great sadness again touched the family when Mrs. Mary Aseneth Narcissa (Campbell) Ely died in Healdsburg of apoplexy at the age of 60. She had "fractured her hip five years prior, but bore her affliction wonderfully well, always having a smile and pleasant words for her friends." The 1880 census had also noted that she had a broken hip. Funeral services were held at the Presbyterian Church and burial in the Oak Mound Cemetery, but no records have been found so far for the four members of the Ely family supposedly buried there.

The newspaper reported that Edward Ely of Chicago paid another visit to Healdsburg in March 1889, this time accompanied by his wife. The couple was "making a tour of this state, more for pleasure. They had traveled over the southern portion of our state and failed to find any locality in possession of so many decided and varied advantages as northern Sonoma."

In November 1890 the *Sonoma County Tribune* reported that Dr. Elisha Ely "was removing to his daughter's home in Redlands, San Bernardino County, after 41 years in Healdsburg [area]." He died there on May 6, 1906 at the age of 86.



Four Generations. (L-R) Anne "Fairfield" Frank was born to Curtiss Ely Frank, son of Mary Louisa Frank, who was the daughter of Louisa "Louise" Maria (Ely) Fowler, the surviving twin of Dr. Elisha and Aseneth Ely. Circa 1931

In May 1922 Mrs. Louise Ely Fowler, visited Healdsburg with her daughter, Mabel (Fowler) Foster. She was a widow and the proprietor of the Mountain View Inn, on Hollywood Blvd. Two of her boarders were 42-year old Monroe Salisbury, an actor in motion pictures, and Wellington Edward Walis, age 33, a business manager of motions pictures.

Our appreciation, Fairfield and Curtiss, for sharing the 150-year old photographic image of your ancestors, the first family of Geyserville, California! **RRR**

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# ARTIFACT: JESSE AND DAN HARRINGTON'S BLACKSMITH ANVIL

by Holly Hoods



Anvil

This small iron blacksmith's anvil (18" x 3.5") once belonged to Jesse Harrington of Alexander Valley. Al Cadd of Geyserville donated it to the Healdsburg Museum in February 2009. Jesse Harrington, a well-remembered local character, was the last blacksmith in the valley. After 31 years pounding the anvil, he reluctantly retired in 1968 at the age of 78. He died ten years later in March 1978.

This anvil originally belonged to Jesse's father, Daniel Harrington, and is stamped "DH," for his initials. The other side is stamped "Peter Wright - Patent." A native of Missouri, Dan Harrington came to the Alexander Valley in 1888. The Harrington family, (Dan, his wife Jenny Lowrey, and sons Jesse, Harry and Oscar) lived on an 18-acre farm on Pine Flat Road and had a 160-acre homestead in the hills. Dan taught his son the blacksmith trade. The *Healdsburg Enterprise* reported the passing of the torch from father to son on November 4, 1937:

*Jess Harrington, son of Mr. and Mrs. Dan Harrington, has taken over his father's blacksmith shop in the valley. Dan, known to his many friends, had to give up the operation of his business in the early summer on account of ill health. He had operated the valley blacksmith shop for over 20 years.*

The Harringtons used this portable anvil when they traveled out to ranches to do repairs or shoe horses. Jesse Harrington, interviewed for the *Healdsburg Tribune* in May 1978 after his retirement, recalled traveling from Ukiah to Santa Rosa. By the time he took over from his father in 1937, Jesse was repairing more farm machinery than shoeing horses. He described the job of a blacksmith in the mid 1900s:

*You got \$1.50 for shoeing four feet and you furnished the shoes and all. Sometimes when you went far out, you'd get \$2.00. Today (1968) you'd get \$12. Trimming the feet is the most important part of shoeing a horse properly. But the fit of the shoe also is very important. Horseshoeing is pretty rough work. I've shod a million horses and never been hurt. Some blacksmiths say they are not afraid, but I always was. Sometimes I couldn't sleep, thinking about a mean horse coming in the next day.*

The Harrington Blacksmith Shop was located in a barn on Hwy 128 across the street a short distance from the Jimtown Store and across from the old Briggs place. The blacksmith building burned down in the 1970s with Jesse's large antique gun collection inside. The site was later used by the Alexander Valley Volunteer Fire Department.



Jesse Harrington,  
James Miller photo, 1968

Jesse recalled the past with great nostalgia in his 1968 interview with Marjorie Johnston of the *Healdsburg Tribune*. In the old days, the few people in the valley all knew each other and many were related, such as the Bidwells, Alexanders, Johnsons, Matthews, St. Clairs and the Patricks. In fact, so many residents of Alexander Valley were connected by family relations that the locals jokingly called it "Brother-in-law Flat." Before his death, Jesse struggled to comprehend the modern changes that transformed his beloved Alexander Valley.



Horseshoeing in Alexander Valley

*Suddenly the old days were gone. Everything changed around me. Water from Sausal Creek was piped to a reservoir for an electric power plant; the people formed a telephone company. The hay and wheat fields--the valley was almost all grain fields--were planted to orchard and vineyard, and there were cars, dehydrators, tractors and new people. I felt like Rip Van Winkle and everyone was a stranger... I was born 50 years too soon. RRR*



# AN ORAL HISTORY WITH ROBERT (BOB) MEYER

## SCHOOL DAYS, CROPS, FARMING, AND THE WINE INDUSTRY

*Interviewed by Louis Bosworth Davis in 1988, transcribed by Anna Hansen, 2008  
and Edited by Holly Hoods, 2009*

### FAMILY BACKGROUND

The first Meyer to come here was Clause. C-L-A-U-S-E, I think. He bought the properties that are about a mile south of Geyserville and actually that wound up in three parcels. One was the Ferguson ranch--Lily Ferguson was Clause's daughter. And then Ernest Meyer was the son of Clause Meyer. He was married to Clara Vanoni. His ranch was in the middle. The one on the south belonged to my grandfather, John Henry, and he bought it from Clause. So at one time those three ranches were all in the Meyer family.

My grandfather's name was John Henry, they all called him Henry. He was Clause's brother. His wife was Catherine. Her maiden name was Meyer too. It gets confusing! Henry and Catherine's children were... my dad was the oldest, Harry. My Aunt Annie, and her name was Anna, Anna Meyer Cottle. She lived in Healdsburg, in the area, all of her life. Then my aunt Bertha became Bertha Meyer Harlan. And they lived here, oh, probably 10 or 12 years. They had two sons, James and John.

The Harlan I mentioned was the Harlan family that had the big ranch up in the mountains just below Geyserville Peak in Alexander Valley. And the youngest was Will or William and he managed the Bank of America in Geyserville for a long time. He married Olive Seawell. They had no children.

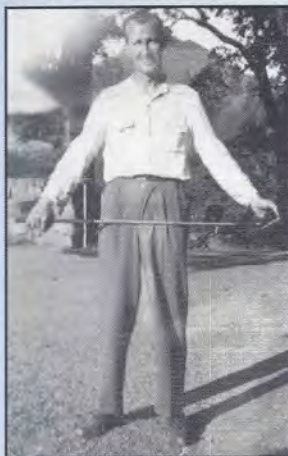
### MEYER RANCHES IN GEYSERVILLE

I am not positive when our family came to the area. It was before 1900, I'm sure. They settled in the three contiguous ranches there about a mile south of Geyserville. Originally there were two. The first one was Clause Meyer's. Then my grandfather bought his ranch from Clause. Then when Clause passed away he left half of the remaining ranch to Lily Meyer Ferguson and half to Ernest Meyer. That's how it went in three.

Now (as of 1988) Geyserville Peak Winery owns our old ranch. Sonoma Vineyards owns the Ernest Meyer ranch. And the Ferguson ranch has recently been sold, and I don't know who to--someone from the East. Now the house, Lily Ferguson's house is gone now. It was a beautiful little Victorian.

See, there were three homes. My grandfather's, the one in the middle on the Ernest Meyer Ranch, and then there was the Ferguson home. Bud Cake is living in Ernie Meyer's house. The property south of that was my Grandfather's and my Dad's. There are two houses on

it. I was born in 1916. The smaller home to the north is the one I lived in until I was 8 years old. Then I lived in my grandmother and grandfather's home.



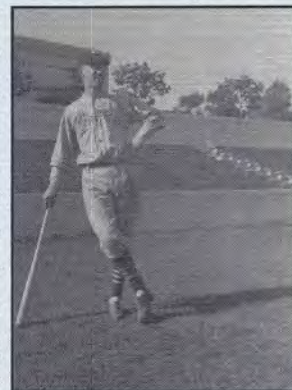
*Bob Meyer, 1960's*

I lived on that ranch for 8 years. Then we moved down to where what today we call the Red Barn Ranch. It's a mile south. It was in the Long family first. My dad bought it from one of the Longs. And I lived there from my eighth year until I went to school. We built that barn. Do you know what red barn I'm talking about? Right next to the Fredsons? The house we lived in is on the opposite side of the highway from the barn, on west side of the highway.

### GERMAN AND ENGLISH ROOTS

Why did they come to the area? They were opportunists. My grandfather came from the Bay Area from Germany. And they just saw this ranch land and they saw, just like people moving in the country today. There is no other way to answer that. Clause came first. Then my grandfather came later. There had to be a German community in the Bay Area. I can remember my Grandfather talking about different families. One family name was Giebe. I don't think of any others at this point. So I think they moved from a German community into another one. They were foreign. My Dad didn't speak English when he went to school. This was a big shock to my mother coming out of the Bay Area from an English family and moving into this farm community surrounded by all of these German people.

They were very, very frugal people. I don't remember any poverty in my family. I remember my grandmother always sending money back to Germany. Just what her background was in Germany I don't know, I'm sure that had its ups and downs too. But, my grandfather came over here first; he worked for quite a while. My grandmother was actually a mail-order bride. She came over with her mother and father and moved into that big house. She was much younger than my grandfather. I'd say at least 20 years.



*Bob Meyer*

My dad didn't speak English when he went to school. He must have had a spattering of it. But I do know that the language they spoke to him

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Bob Meyer

around home was German. I can understand German and began to speak a little bit of it because I grew up there; I was the only baby around. I was around my grandparents all the time, I can't speak it today, in fact I could never speak it. I know my grandmother didn't speak English, because she came right over here from Germany. And my grandfather probably dropped back into speaking German as a matter of convenience, and this is conjecture. Surely he spoke English. I just don't remember them ever speaking English. They spoke German as a matter of convenience. But when they had guests it was

always English of course.

My mother was from Oakland, and she wasn't German, she was English. Her name was Harris. Maude Charlotte Harris. And she was very English. Very proud of it. Dad was working in the Bay Area. He owned part of a candy business. He drove a horse and buggy around Oakland to Emeryville and up around Concord and back to Richmond. I don't know how long it took to make the route. But he distributed candy to the stores around the area. So he was working around there. My mother's dad worked in the shipyards and I'm sure that was his training in England. Her mother and the father both came directly from England.

### SCHOOL DAYS

I started (elementary) school in Geyserville. I missed going to the Independence school by one year. It must have closed in '22. I started going to school in Geyserville, which was a four room school at that time. I went to the elementary school in Geyserville all eight years and then went to the high school in Geyserville for four years and graduated in '34. I spent four years in the old frame building. The wood one. Then the last four in the new building.

### CROPS AND FARMING

Ernie and Clause and John Henry--all of them were farmers. And Lily Ferguson married Dale Ferguson and of course they were all farmers. My Dad was a farmer all of his life and he managed the Geyserville Growers. So, yes, he was a farmer but he was also an executive at that time in the business world. He always grew a variety of crops. My father's philosophy was that if you had 2 or 3 or 4 crops and one was bad the others would pull you through. Basically prunes and grapes and apples and pears. And always a few cattle on the sidelines. The ranches weren't cattle ranches. The land was too fertile.

I think that that was basically the pattern of farmers in the area. Grapes came in after the Prohibition and they were there before. That



Clause Meyer Ranch, circa 1895

was repealed in, I think 1933, so that was when the grape industry began to grow. Well some farmers I think had more grapes during the beginning and pulled them because of Prohibition and because of phylloxera.

Those ranches were more prunes than anything. That's true of the Ferguson, Ernest Meyer, and my father's ranches. Some pears. Ernest Meyer probably had more pears. But those two crops did beautifully in that soil. It was really too rich for grapes. Deep, beautiful soils. And the grapes came later. They were not a major crop. And there were not apples on the three Meyer parcels. The ranch my dad owned by the old red barn had a beautiful Gravenstein apple orchard. And that was basically again apples grapes, prunes, and pears.

The parcel that Dad bought from the Long family, which is where the red barn is, and that was about probably 50 acres, including the hill there. In the meantime it's been cut by the freeway and of course sold.

They grew a lot of hay for cattle, that's right. You see, you were so far from a market in those days for a specialty crop like pears and apples; you have to ship them to a market. Grapes were different because there were local wineries. Pears, apples, and prunes, well those were dried.

### CALIFORNIA WINE ASSOCIATION

I don't know that much about the California Wine Association, but the Geyserville Growers had the same land. That was a very important thing in Geyserville once upon a time. The California Wine Association was started about 1899 by John Bosch, and he left it about 1916, severed his connection with it, because he had become a Bahai and they said no drinking of alcoholic beverages so he shouldn't produce it either.

I really can't tell you much about that. I can tell you about the old building. It was on the property that is now owned by the Valley View Packing Company. And Raymond Brandt and I used to play in that gigantic building, it was tremendous. It had all of the old wooden tanks in it... just a small ghost town. And my father and the board of directors of the Geyserville Growers bought that building. And in 1930, the year before Repeal, decided to tear it down. So they destroyed the

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California Wine Association Asti Winery - south of Hamilton Lane, Geyserville.

old California Wine Association building. And that's, as I said, where the Valley View Packing Company is today and also the growers of the farms. Valley View is just north of the old growers building. Yes, it's contiguous.

I believe it was a co-op. It was a statewide association. I know there were a group of wineries associated together in a cooperative effort to market wine. I read it was the largest winery in Northern California, California. It could be an exaggeration.

That building had to be built before Prohibition because it was a tremendous operation. Just looking back, we had a million and a half gallons storage at the Northern Sonoma wines across the track, which was built by the Geyserville Growers. That was a million and a half, and I would say that the California Growers Association had at least a million. So in Geyserville there were vineyards that were owned by this association. Well, yes and no, there were people just growing grapes like my family did and they would deliver to the winery, John Pedroncelli, Fredson, or whoever was there in those days. Then there were wineries and cellars like the Nervos--they had their own wineries, so they grew their own grapes and made wine. But the problem then, as it is today, and always will be in California agriculture is the marketing. So this was the center for marketing all of the wines in the area. There is no way that small growers with a winery could have marketed their own product, and they certainly couldn't drink it all themselves and they couldn't drink it within the community. I don't even know if they crushed it at that big plant in Geyserville. It could have just been an accumulation of all the wines that were made in northern Sonoma County. You see transportation was a real problem in those days. You had to crush the grapes locally. You couldn't haul them more than 10 miles for goodness sakes! The railroad would have been there by then in 1899, but you couldn't haul grapes. Actually, they did in Asti. They hauled them in gravel cars and forked them out with pitchforks. It was just; it was the only operation that I ever heard of. Now, Asti was an independent winery at that time, owned by private families. So you had that giant plant, and the one in Geyserville, both of which were quite substantial.

Whatever happened to the California Wine Association? It continued in business, there was a California Wine Association when I came into the picture which was 1945. It was not that plant. What virtually shut the whole industry down was Prohibition in 1919. Then when it was repealed, a lot of these wineries got back into business. So CWA, is what we used to call it, went out of existence as such, it became a private winery, probably in the early '50's. I'm not sure about this. And up until 20 years ago (1968) they had a brand called Eleven Cellars, which was still a cooperative, and that was eventually taken over by the Perrelli-Minetti family in the Great Valley. That eventually dropped out, it just wasn't competitive, and isn't today. There is probably a California Wine Association today but I don't know who it's owned by, it'd be owned privately.

Actually the winery itself, that had the wooden redwood storage tanks was probably an average 20,000 gallons perhaps, I don't think 50 even, probably between 20-30 thousand and some smaller ones, was the main building. Then the distillery was where the Geyserville Growers' office is today. The winery is up by the warehouse in the northwest corner, or the northern part of that company that is owned by Valley View Packing. And that big winery took up most of that northern part of that 2 or 3 acres.

I'm sure they crushed some for Growers and I'm sure they brought wine in too and blended it and sold it for other small wineries in the area. Even the Domenichelli family had a little winery, the Nervos had a little winery, Chris Fredson had a little winery. They couldn't have crushed 15,000 tons of grapes there. We had trouble crushing 5,000 at Northern Sonoma across the way.



Geyserville Wine Association, Geyserville

## GEYSERVILLE GROWERS

There were 12 men all together, mostly German families, mostly German men that started the Growers in the 1920's. It was a farm coop. I had three boards of directors when I came into the picture in 1945. One was for the Geyserville Growers, the other one was for Northern Sonoma Wines Inc. The third one was the small dehydrator plant, called Geyserville Cooperative Dehydrator. And all of these

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*Geyserville Wine Association, Geyserville*

directors were some on one board, some on the other, they were all mixed up. It was the Geyserville Growers Inc., Northern Sonoma Wines Inc. That was a farm co-op. The Geyserville Growers were a private stock company.

Geyserville Growers ran the farm supply house. We sold pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers, spray materials of all kinds, even got into the irrigation business when I came into the picture, a little farm machinery, and they bought grapes, substantially. Usually from out of the area, they were cheating. They brought grapes over from Lodi, and other parts of the San Joaquin Valley. Why? See, we had all the growers that were the basis for Northern Sonoma Wines, but in order to play the market if we were short one year we went over to Lodi we would buy some zinfandel and bring them over and blend them with these wines. If we had a big crop over here we would sort of lay out of the market. I would even buy grapes locally on that basis to augment the supply of the coop. And this is what Albert (Glaser, Jr.) did for a long time. As a matter of fact, when I was managing Albert was our buyer. As a coop you don't buy grapes. You have members; they deliver their grapes, really a consignment deal, to the winery. We make the wine and market the wine for them, and then distribute the money back to them. And they in turn had stock in the company. It's like Sunsweet. All the members, or the people who own stock...they supply them, they get so many units for every ton they deliver. There are many coops out there. Avocados are a big coop. Sunkist, Sun Maid, those are big coops in California.

So you're taking a bit of a risk on what price your wine is going to get as the finished product and then you get paid after. And it was a risk. That's really why we sold in about '53 and became a part of Allied Grape Growers, which was a statewide organization. I used to go east and sell a million gallons of wine. We used to sell some locally to Gallo, Italian-Swiss, a good account in San Francisco called Pelligrini. And

then I used to go to New York and Boston and Chicago, basically a raw kid calling upon these people. And there was no future in that. We had no brand and we were basically at their mercy. They were pretty tough people; I can tell you some stories about some of the people I had to do business with. It used to be the Mafia. Some of them were very good people, and others were very questionable. So we were just butting our head against the wall. We didn't have the money to develop our own brand. We had a brand called Northern Sonoma and another little one, and we used to sell it locally but it was just a drop in the bucket, it just didn't amount to anything. What kind of wine was it? Dinner wines, reds and whites basically. You didn't even hear of varietals in those days. It was claret, it was burgundy and it was sauterne. The grapes grown in the community in those days were all common grapes. Petite Syrah, Zinfandel, those are varietals today, Carignane was a big one. It is a common variety. As time went on, the fine wine picture has become very important, especially in this area it has become everything.

Allied Grape Growers came in and took over the (Northern Sonoma Wines) winery in 1953. So that in effect took away all of the grape-growing potential that Geyserville Growers had, do you follow me? We made more money buying grapes and putting them into the coop and selling the wine than on selling farm supplies and shipping apples. The Gravenstein apple business began to disappear. It all went over to Sebastopol. So in 1953 was really the end of all of those organizations. Geyserville Growers Inc, Northern Sonoma Wines Inc, and even the little dehydrator was sold in 1953 to Valley View Packing Company.

I would say one of our biggest assets was that all of our stockholders were farmers so naturally they would buy there. But they got a fair shake on price, but we had to make a profit, we had stockholders. You can't have both. You can't sell it for nothing and make a profit.

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This is confusing. The Geyserville Growers as a stock company ceased to be a going concern. And another man and I from Ukiah bought the stock company and paid off the stockholders a very minimal amount. When the winery was sold and these three bought the Geyserville Growers' property we distributed the monies to the old stockholders, they got paid off very happily and everyone went home very happily. But the corporation was still in existence, so Benny and I became partners of a dehydrator in Ukiah. So the cheapest way to incorporate it was to buy the remaining stock company and the license that was with the Department of Agriculture in Sacramento, instead of starting a new corporation. In 1953 Northern Sonoma Wines, the Geyserville Growers, and Geyserville Cooperative Dehydrator ceased to exist as active corporations.

When Northern Sonoma got started, and just after that CWA building got destroyed, this has to be about '33 or '34, they bought the Sunsweet plant, which is now the lumber yard across the track. It has a big S on it, the old Sunsweet logo. So they bought it, built a fermenting room

## HISTORY OF THE GEYSERVILLE GROWERS

According to the official minutes of the Geyserville Growers (that Bob Meyer supplied for this oral interview), the Geyserville Growers started in January of 1933. The first directors were L. C. Smith, F. P. Abshire, who was president, F. Hartsock, who was secretary, W. R. Ferguson, Cyrus Petray, Harry P. Meyer, J. P. Whitton, C. F. Yoakim, F. C. Rose, Albert L. Glaser, George Larkin, and H.S. Morrill. The business of the Growers was apples, prunes, and pears. A new building was erected in June of 1933, adjoining "the present building." Members present at the first annual meeting January 10, 1934 were F. P. Abshire, Cyrus Petray, C. F. Yoakim, J. P. Whitton, Harry P. Meyer, H.S. Morrill, W. R. Ferguson, Smith, Rose, A.L. Glaser, F. Hartsock, Larkin, W. H. McMinn, E. L. Wisecarver, F. H. Kellogg, C. R. McHenry, E. C. Meyer, F. V. Kellogg, C. F. Beffa, John D. Bosch, J. W. Parrott, Henry Walker, W. H. McCutchan, W. A. McCutchan, and Fred Priese. At that time they decided to increase the number of directors from 12 to 15. The three added directors were E. C. Meyer, Alfred McCutchan and F. H. Kellogg.



and made a winery out of it. The buildings that Howard is in now? They were all part of the California Wine Association. Yeah, that's where the distillery was. I know the distillery was there. Whether it was expanded or made bigger I really don't know. The minutes would tell that. If the minutes don't mention it then it was part of the California Wine Association.

Allied Grape Growers came in and operated that plant until about '57. Then, Stacy Belli was brought into the picture and he took over as winemaker, and John Whitton was his assistant. Stan Brackett worked there for a while, Dick Rose did. But just for a couple of years. Marie Peterson was the bookkeeper. Then in '57 they closed the winery and took everything up to Asti. Asti at that time was owned by Allied Grape Growers. It was Louis Petri who started Allied Grape Growers. Allied is a cooperative, and Petri was doing much the same that Geyserville Growers did with Northern Sonoma.

Harry P. Meyer was hired as the manager of the corporation at the salary of \$2,500 per year.

In March of '34 the directors decided to buy the Sunsweet plant in Geyserville from the California Prune and Apricot Growers for \$12,500, which included 3 acres plus buildings and equipment. In May of '35 the office of the Growers was moved to the front of the packinghouse and at least 12 feet was added on. In November of 1937 they purchased the Pioneer House for \$700. Wine at that time was stored in rented cooperage at the Stefani, Massoni and DeTurk wineries. In August of 1939 Charles Yoakim was winemaker of the Growers. In October of 1941 over 2, 600 tons of prunes were dehydrated and the hours of work were cut to 8 am to 5 in the afternoon due to the Wage and Hour Law. In November of 1942 they decided to close on Saturdays and Sundays. Sales in October of that year were \$1, 573 and amount of wine shipped was 44, 435 gallons and the amount of green prune tonnage

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dehydrated was 2,926. In December of 1942 the stockholders decided to reorganize on a cooperative basis and be financed on a commodity loan basis.

In January of 1943 there was an agreement between Northern Sonoma Wines and the Growers. In February of 1944 it was resolved to file an application to the Department of Internal Revenue for a permit for a US wholesaler's basic permit to sell wines at wholesale. In June of 1944 it was decided to separate the dehydrator from the Growers and organize it into a cooperative. Minutes from that time to November of 1952 are missing. Bob Meyer, in the meantime, replaced his father as manager in 1946. In November of 1953 the boards of the Geyserville Growers and the Northern Sonoma Wines decided to make final disposition of the monies due both companies to a sale made to Allied Grape Growers. In November of 1954 the company's apple business and equipment were sold to the Miller Fruit Company in Healdsburg. The winery property was sold to the Allied Grape Growers in 1953. In November of 1955 the directors decided to sell the property west of the railroad to the Valley View Packing Company for \$15,000. In that same month it was decided in a stockholders' meeting to put up the Growers property for a bid. It was bought by Mario Zanzi, L. Charles Smith, and Clint Hawking for \$21,000. They also decided that inventory and stock would be sold "in an orderly manner." The last annual meeting was held at the home of Ed Morrill in May of 1963.

The first meeting of the Board of Directors of the Northern Sonoma Wines Inc. was held August 9, 1938 at the Geyserville Growers. The directors were C. E. Yoakim, C. A. Fredson (vice-president), Louie Frey, Alfred McCutchan, Harry Meyer (president), Walter Frey (secretary),

and Walter Sink. The plant superintendent was Leonard Fredson and employees were Jim Massoni and Gene Whitburn. In February of 1947 there was a lease agreement between Geyserville Growers Inc. (lessor) and Northern Sonoma Wines (lessee). By January of 1953 the members of Northern Sonoma Wines decided to sell all of their personal property and equipment and real property to the Allied Grape Growers. In June 1954 the Redwood Valley plant, which they had acquired earlier, was sold to Fairhurst Enterprises Inc. In May 1957 Northern Sonoma Valley Wines Inc. voluntarily dissolved.

The Geyserville Cooperative Dehydrator Inc. was organized in August of 1954 as a dehydrating cooperative and was an outgrowth of the Growers. The Board of Directors were George Stefani, Benjamin Norton (secretary, treasurer), W. R. Ferguson (president) Walter Bell, Caesar Beffa, Dwight Richards, C.R. McHenry (vice-president). Harry P. Meyer was employed as manager. In September of 1944 the board suggested that the grounds, buildings, dehydrators, and equipment be purchased from the Geyserville Growers for \$40,000, which was done in June of 1945. In September of 1945 it was decided that the Geyserville Growers, Northern Sonoma Wines, and Geyserville Cooperative Dehydrator would continue under the same management. Bob Meyer was employed at that time as assistant manager to succeed his father, Harry P. Meyer, as manager on January 1, 1946 as Harry P. Meyer wanted to retire. In November of 1951 Bob Meyer was employed as the executive manager and the positions of foreman and administrative officer were eliminated. In February of 1955 the property and assets of the Geyserville Cooperative Dehydrator were sold to the Valley View Packing Company for \$35,000. RRR