



# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

WINTER 2014 • ISSUE 123

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society

# Life Histories

*Marie Glaser Bosworth Beers*

*Columbus Derrick*

*Jerry Eddinger*

*Mary Lou Eddinger*

*Gabriel Fraire*

*Colonel Lewis A. Norton*

*Major Phillips*

*Stewart Wade*



## In This Issue

This issue is devoted to some interesting firsthand accounts and memories shared by local residents of the Healdsburg area, past and present. The time span of these articles covers more than 100 years. Some are excerpted from oral history interviews; others are drawn from published autobiographies. Narrators describe family life, farming, childhood, parenting, community, business, race relations, economics and politics.

Healdsburg's first mayor, Col. Lewis Norton, recounts his pivotal role in resolving the heated Northern Sonoma County land disputes, known as the "Squatter Wars," in the late 1850s-early 1860s. Dry Creek settler Columbus Derrick tells of witnessing disturbingly violent encounters between white settlers and Native people in the 1860s. Marie Glaser Bosworth Beers shares the fateful journey of her German immigrant mother, Sophie Ludmann, to join the Glaser family in Geyserville in the early 1900s. (This interview is one of many on file at the Museum, recorded by our late great historian friend, Louise Bosworth Davis, sister of Harry Bosworth.)

Major Phillips and Stewart Wade attended local one-room schoolhouses in the 1910s and '20s.

They describe early mornings and hard work, doing farm chores on their family ranches: Phillips in Dry Creek Valley and Wade on Mill Creek.

Jerry and Mary Lou Eddinger will be presented with the Healdsburg Museum's History Lives/Pioneer Award in April, 2014. We are delighted to feature an interview with Jerry, whose childhood memories of growing up in Healdsburg in the 1950s includes brawling, pranks, baseball and boxing. Mary Lou fondly describes her own family life at the Dry Creek Store in the 1950s. These articles are excerpted from their privately-published book, *Life is Good*; created from interviews with Shonnie Brown and edited and published as one of her LifeStories.

Gabriel Fraire, Healdsburg's current Literary Laureate, vividly recalls the very different Healdsburg of the mid-1970s and his young family's early experiences here. Vilma Olsvary Ginzberg rounds out our oral history issue with a poem celebrating shared family memories.

As always, we hope you find this publication thought-provoking, informative and engaging.

Holly Hoods, Curator

Pamela Vana-Paxhia, Editor



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*The Official Publication of the*

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# Columbus Derrick: Indelible Memories

*as told to Kyle Eddinger*

*For a time in the 1860s, early northern Sonoma County settler Joseph Derrick helped transport people out West from Missouri to California. On at least one occasion, he brought his young son, Columbus with him. Columbus was nine years old on this trip, but what he saw he would remember for his entire life. Luckily, he told stories to his grandson, Richard Derrick (Amasa Derrick's son) and Richard passed them on to Kyle Eddinger, the family genealogist.*

Columbus Derrick was about nine years old in 1869. He was with his father, Joseph, coming in a wagon train from Missouri to California by way of the Donner Pass. There was a young fellow trying to impress a lady in the group. The wagon train passed a "squaw" (Indian woman) sitting on a rock. He turned to the lady and said that if they passed another "squaw," he was going to shoot them off the rock. A few minutes later down the train, another "squaw" was sitting on a rock. The young man took aim and shot, shooting the "squaw" off the rock.

It was about five minutes later that 300 Indians came over the hill and encircled the wagon party. The Indians made them get out of the wagons and told them to line up. After they had the party lined up, the Indians told them that they needed to tell them who had fired the gun, and if they did not tell them they would kill everyone in the wagon party.

After a few minutes and a couple threats later, they gave up the young man. The wagon party--as well as young Columbus--watched as they hung the man upside down over an open fire. The Indians allowed them to continue their trip towards California, but warned them that if it happened again they would kill all and leave no survivors.

## A Close Call

In the early 1880's Columbus worked as a sheep shearer in Cloverdale, California. He got paid once a month and after he was paid, he and a couple of others would head into town to spend a little of it. It was about dusk when Columbus decided to head into town to meet up with a couple of friends. As he rode his horse into town, he was suddenly knocked off his horse. An Indian had thrown a rock and hit him in the back of the head [to rob him]. As luck should have it, he stayed conscious. As the Indian approached him on the ground, Columbus watched

until the Indian had gotten close enough. Columbus drew his pistol that he carried and shot the Indian in the shoulder. He had wounded the man, not wanting any worse harm to come to him. Columbus took the Indian to a nearby doctor and got the bullet removed.



Photo: Kyle Eddinger

*Columbus and Johanna (Snider) Derrick, Dry Creek Valley*

## Built His Own House

Columbus and Johanna had a log home that was built by Columbus's own two hands. Also, they had an orchard which they used to help earn a little extra money in the spring time. In the orchard, they had a few Jefferson Plum trees, which they would pick green (unripe) and haul into Healdsburg to sell to the Cannery.

The house was a remarkable home which included a beautiful handmade fireplace made of rock, clay, straw and wood. The outside of the residence was made up of redwood siding. The only tools Columbus used to build his home were a hammer, a broad axe and a hand saw.





Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*L. A. Norton*

## The Squatter Wars of Northern Sonoma County

*excerpted from The Life and Adventures of Col. L. A. Norton  
published by Colonel Lewis A. Norton, 1887*

I became favorably impressed with the then small hamlet of Healdsburg, and the broad acres of Dry Creek and Russian River bottomland lying on each side of the town site, while the little town itself was embowered in and overshadowed by a luxuriant shade of native oaks, with its varied and picturesque scenery, with water as pure as ever flowed from a crystal fountain, a healthful climate, without sand-flies, gnats, or mosquitoes to afflict humanity. I resolved to settle in Healdsburg, and take my chances to make a living at my profession. Among the first to renew an acquaintance at this place was "Old Man" Forsee, with whom I had been acquainted in El Dorado County. The old man informed me that there was a fine opening in Sonoma County, but that I must not go in with the land-grabbers. He proceeded to inform me that the country was covered with spurious grants, purporting to be Mexican grants, but

which were all fraudulent; and that he (Forsee) had united himself with the settlers to resist the claimants under Mexican title, both legally and forcibly.

Judge Forsee also said that the Fitch or Sotoyome Rancho was a fraud, that the patent issued therefore was a fraud, that on two sides there were no boundaries, etc., etc. I visited Santa Rosa for the purpose of learning the facts from the records, when, instead of finding the grant without boundaries, I found the entire estate defined by the most substantial lines, and that the United States patent had been on record for more than five years. I returned to Healdsburg and opened an office, and soon found that all legal proceedings at this place amounted to a grand "comedy of errors," deeds embracing sales of both real and personal property, one-half of them without a seal, many without acknowledgments, etc.



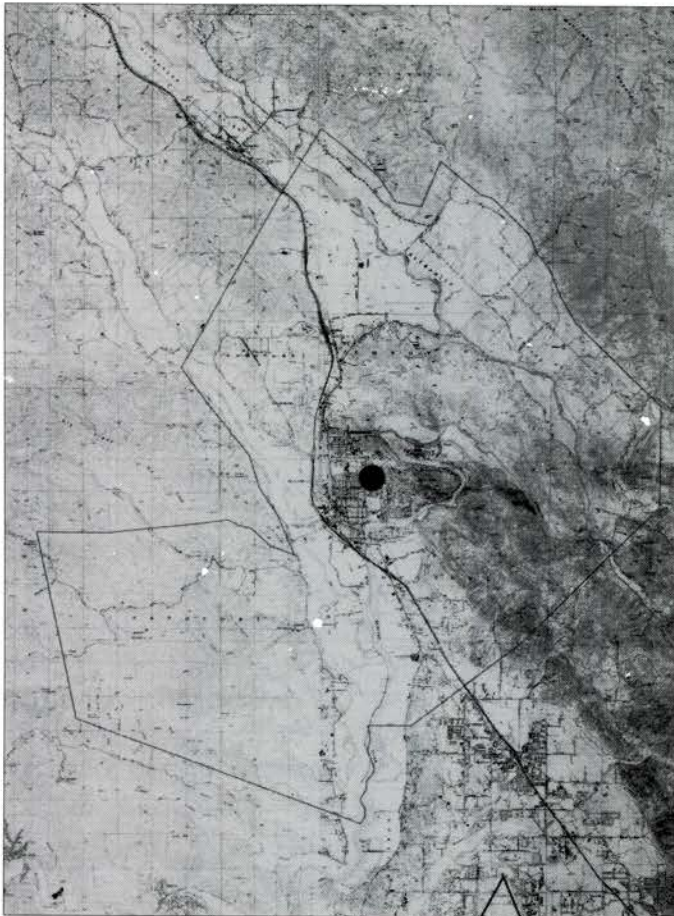


Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Map of Rancho Sotoyome granted to Henry Delano Fitch,  
50,000 acres, September 28, 1841  
(large dot indicates the town of Healdsburg)*

The Russian River and Dry Creek valleys at this time were nearly all in the hands of the squatters, which territory was covered with Mexican grants, as follows: Sotoyome or Fitch Grant, eight leagues; New Sotoyome [deeded by Fitch to Cyrus Alexander], three leagues; the Tzabaco Grant, [Dry Creek Valley/Geyserville] containing something over four leagues. The titles were all confirmed, and patents issued and on record. Notwithstanding all this, the squatters in possession had their secret leagues all over the county, and forcibly resisted all efforts to dispossess them, and the law seemed to be entirely a dead letter. Actions in ejectment were prosecuted to judgment; writs of restriction were issued and placed in the hands of officers, but resistance was made by armed force; the military was called out – a requisition for the militia on one side, and Captain Forsee mustering two thousand squatters on the other side. Parties would be evicted one day, and the next morning would find them in possession

of the same premises they had been ejected from the day before. Two thousand men had met and confronted each other in bloodless combat until the farce played out.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Norton's office on the corner of Center and Matheson Sts.*

Things were in this condition [in 1859] when Dr. L.C. Frisbie of Vallejo employed me to look after his interests in the Sotoyome Rancho. I took his business in hand, and succeeded in making some sales and getting along pretty smoothly for a few months; but it became necessary to bring several suits in ejectment, which I prosecuted to judgment.

I continued to eject the squatters from Frisbie's tracts, with greater or less resistance, until I had reduced the whole to possession. It now seemed to be the general opinion that I was the only one who could successfully cope with the squatters, and John N. Bailhache, as one of the Fitch heirs, or rather tenant by courtesy, having married Miss Josephine Fitch, had a large tract of land covered by squatters, and had made many futile attempts to expel them. They had become so well organized, and so confident of their ability to forcibly hold the premises, that they actually paraded the streets of Healdsburg, both men and women, with music and banners waving, and seemed to think that if they could only get rid of Bailhache, they would be secure in their homes. In accordance with this idea, they made a raid on him and forced him to secrete himself in the Raney Hotel. Seeing his danger, I marched out with a cocked revolver in each hand, meeting the mob, and persuaded them that I was the man they wanted, and not Bailhache; but they came to the conclusion that they did not want either of us, and retired, still



holding forcible possession of his lands. Mr. Bailhache about this time discovered that he had business at Fort Yuma; so he moved his family to Santa Rosa and departed.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*John N. Bailhache and wife Josephine (Fitch) Bailhache*

A few months afterward I received a letter and power of attorney from Mr. Bailhache at Fort Yuma, giving me full authority to enter upon any and all of his lands in Sonoma County, and expel squatters, etc. I adopted a new system of warfare. I put in teams and went to work hauling off the fencing from the farms on the west side of Dry Creek, thus rendering the land useless to the holders...

I took a posse of ten men, all thoroughly armed, and went with them in person. Stationing a few outposts to prevent any further shooting from the brush, I commenced throwing out goods from the houses and burning the buildings to the ground. In this way I went from house to house, until I burned down all the dwellings on the Bailhache premises occupied by squatters...

Although I had reduced the dwellings to smoldering ruins, the squatters continued to hang around, like the French soldiers around a burning Moscow, until the elements drove them away to the hills, where some of them put up temporary abodes

on the adjacent Government land. In our attempt to keep the raiders from the different places, we had only been successful in gaining possession of a small portion.

My next effort was to find someone who would dare take possession of some one of the places. At last I found a man by the name of Peacock, a powerful, resolute fellow, who proposed to purchase a piece of the land which a man by the name of Clark had been claiming, and whose house had been burned down. He contracted and entered into possession, and guarded a fine lot of hay, a volunteer crop growing on the place. The hay had matured and he had cut and cocked it, but in the meantime, contrary to my counsel, he had made great friends with and confidants of the squatters who had been evicted, and among other things told them that he would be going to see my brother the next day, to get his team to bale hay, and should be absent that night. I strongly opposed it, while he assured me that everything would be safe, but did not convince me. I was on the watch, and about two o'clock in the morning I discovered a bright light arising from the neighborhood of Peacock's hay. I rushed around, awakened Bailhache, Ransom Powell, and two or three others, and started for the scene of the fire. We succeeded in saving about one-third of the hay.

On Peacock's return it was impossible to convince him that the Prouses [squatter brothers] had any hand in this, or that they knew anything of it. He continued his former relations with them for about a month after this time, having gone to board with them. One day a dispute arose at the dinner table, and the two Prouse brothers set upon him, one of them armed with something that the evidence afterwards disclosed as being somewhat like a butcher's cleaver. They cut and hacked Peacock up in a terrible manner, so that for a long time his life was despaired of. For this offense I had Daniel Prouse sent to the penitentiary, and we continued to hold possession. The land being desirable farming land, others, seeing that our title could be maintained, commenced purchasing; and thus Bailhache was restored to his possession, which put an end to the squatter difficulty on the Sotoyome Rancho.

About this time I was requested to take charge of the Tzabaco Rancho, by John B. Frisbie and W.H. Patterson, of San Francisco, sending the request by James Clark, then sheriff of Sonoma County, who



held writs of ejectment against all the settlers on the Russian River side of the grant. I had been acting for them for more than two years as their agent, selling and leasing the Dry Creek portion, where they met with but little opposition to their title.

At this place I met Dr. [Elisha] Ely, who I had good reason to believe was the brains and 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. I took him in the buggy and continued my journey through the [Geyserville portion of the] Tzabaco Rancho. I informed the doctor that I came up to sell them their lands, and that I proposed to give every man a reasonable chance of paying for the farm I sold him. I was aware that the lands had been held too high; that the owners were honest in their convictions of the value of the land, but were mistaken; and for that reason I had refused to take the agency until they gave me *carte blanche* to dispose of them according to my own judgment. "But," said he, "if disposed to purchase, how can we? We are bankrupt." I told him that it was not necessary to tell me that they were bankrupt, for I knew it; and continued, "I am going to sell every man of you your farms, and as fast as you purchase I shall wipe the judgment out against the purchaser and again place you in the position of freemen."



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Dr. Ely and family at their Geyserville homestead cabin*

The doctor frankly admitted that if that was my intention, then I had been greatly misrepresented to them. I told him that, having unlimited power, I intended to be a benefactor and not an oppressor of

the people. The doctor took me at my word, rode through the settlement with me, and advised the settlers to purchase their homes, which seemed to them unusual advice. I notified them that, on the following Thursday, I would be at Captain Vassor's for the purpose of going with them over every man's place, and fixing a price upon it per acre.

I was there at the time appointed, and met the entire settlement, and went over every place, fixing my price upon the land as I passed over, and to my surprise and satisfaction every one of them thought that I had put a fair price upon his neighbor's land, but had got his a *little too high*. The result was that every man purchased his farm within the ensuing six weeks, paying one-fourth down and getting three years to pay the balance, at one per cent per month interest. And what was still more satisfactory, by the enlargement of time of payment, all succeeded in paying for their farms, and thus ended the squatter war that had been kept up for over seven years in the northern portion of this county.

But before dismissing the subject, I must say in justification of these men, that most of them, in my judgment, were honest in their convictions that the claimants either had no title to the lands, or if they had a title, it was fraudulent and that many of them today are among our most respected and prominent citizens. Our old feuds are now looked upon as a feverish and disturbing dream, or treated as a subject of mirth; and as for myself, the most of the men who wanted to see my throat cut are now among my warmest friends.

Civil War Footnote from *History of Sonoma County*:

*We are informed by reliable persons that the northern part of Sonoma County is much indebted to the firmness and energy of the colonel in keeping down an outbreak; as that part of the County boasted a strong secession element and when it was asserted that no recruits to the Federal army would live to cross the Russian River, he organized and secretly drilled a militia of Union forces and was at all times ready to meet the threatened outbreak. And when it was said that no Union flag should ever float in Healdsburg, he went immediately to Petaluma, purchased one, placed it on top of his carriage; carried it through the country to Healdsburg and nailed it to his balcony, where it continued to wave.*





Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Major Samuel Phillips, 1924*

## **Roots in Dry Creek Valley: My Shangri-La** *by Major Samuel Phillips, 1985*

*Although his given name was Samuel Heaton Phillips, early on in life, he called himself "Major" and it stuck. As both a charter member and a director of the Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society, it seems particularly appropriate that we include his remembrances of life in Dry Creek Valley.*

I was born in Oakland, August 25, 1902, the fourth son of Philip Walton Phillips and Mary Jane Miles Phillips; grandson of Duval Drake ("D. D.") Phillips and Mary Terry Phillips and John A. Miles and Jane Allman Miles.

"D. D." met Kit Carson in Missouri and was a front rider for Carson, carrying dispatches to General Kearny in California. Later, he enlisted in the Fourth Mounted Cavalry and was with General Scott and General Taylor in the battles of Palo Alto, Buena Vista, Vera Cruz, Churubusco, Chapultepec, etc.

My paternal grandparents had crossed the plains by wagon train from Missouri in 1849. After several years in the mines in the Placerville area with companions from Missouri and, having suffered severe losses constructing two dams in the winters of 1854 and 1855, his group moved westward to the



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Duval Drake "D.D." Phillips and Mary Terry Phillips, c. 1880*



Healdsburg area, where--with my father (then just six months old)--they purchased acreage from the "Lords of the Land," the Peña family, owners of the "Tzabaco" land grant. "D. D." in the early days had one of the most productive farms in the county. He was also a member of Sotoyome Lodge #123 F. & A. M. and a supervisor from the Healdsburg area in the 1870s. "D. D." died in 1904; his wife in 1907.

My maternal grandparents were John A. Miles and Jane Allman Miles, from Indiana. My grandmother emigrated from County Cork as a young girl with her family and lived in Boston for several years. One of her brothers, Allman, was established in San Francisco when he sent for her in the early '50s where she met and married my grandfather.

In 1858, they bought 60 acres of bottom land in beautiful Dry Creek Valley, built their home and planted orchards, vineyards and fields of grain. It was a very productive farm. My mother, the youngest with one sister and two brothers, was born July 10, 1865, six months before her father died of "apoplexy" [stroke].



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Mary Jane (Miles) Phillips, 1893*

Besides the few settlers in the neighborhood, my mother later recounted, there were Indians and occasionally gypsies on the road, begging and "borrowing." My grandmother finally married A. John Snider, with whom she had three more daughters and one son. They were subsequently separated.

In those days, if a farmer was cooperative and friendly, which they all were, he had no problems. If he needed help for whatever cause: lambing, shearing, plowing, planting, harvesting, summer fallowing, pruning or whatever, his neighbors were

there to help. And so it was during the years when my grandmother was widowed.

### Healdsburg to Oakland and Back

My father was the oldest with four brothers and one sister. Farming did not appeal to him. As a young man he attended the Pacific Union College in Healdsburg, one of the first colleges north of San Francisco. After graduating, he became a traveling auditor for the Northern Pacific Railway.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Philip Walton Phillips, 1885*

The April 18, 1906 earthquake was my next recollection. I remember the bed in which I slept upstairs was rolling from one end of the room to the other. Our house faced the west, and from the upstairs gable window we could see the fire and smoke of San Francisco across the bay. Our only loss was part of a brick chimney.

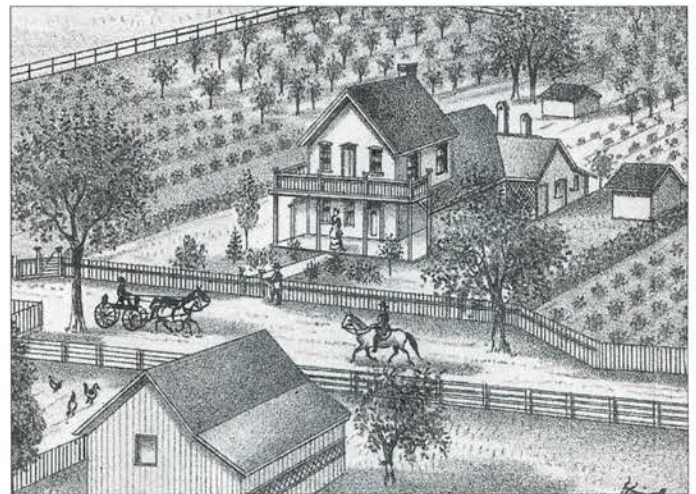


Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*D. D. Phillips home in Dry Creek Valley, detail of lithograph from 1877 Sonoma County Atlas*



Later that year, Grandma Phillips persuaded my dad to move up from Oakland and run the ranch. The ranch house, the "Peña Adobe," had been the headquarters for the "Tzabaco" land grant of several thousand acres, even including the Geyserville area to the east. Boundaries in those days, as now, start from the northeast corner of the old adobe from a ravine on the east side of Dry Creek Road, where there is evidence of an old road leading to the adobe digging site.

My grandma's brother, "Uncle Jim" Terry was a shipwright. After the purchase, he put flooring in, cut out the low, narrow openings in the two foot thick walls and cased in frames for doors and windows using 12" x 12" rough hewn redwood for beams. He also built two upstairs bedrooms with the staircase near the front door in the entry hall. All this was done with wooden dowels instead of nails.

A large kitchen was added as an ell to the structure, which was originally designed as a fort offering protection against the Russians and Indians back in 1834. A six-foot veranda was built around the three sides of the building. He also built an open gallery outside the two upstairs bedrooms where the family could sit and rock and wave to friends as they rode or drove by in their buggies or surreys.

Across the road there was a huge barn with stalls to accommodate twelve horses, with a hay loft and storage for equipment and rigs. There was a spring about half a mile back in the hills which had been dammed and pipes lain for the watering troughs in the barnyard. A big, tall pepperwood tree, a hundred or more years old, shaded most of the barn. Both have been eliminated in the last 40 years.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
**Dry Creek School, 1930**

### Our School

In the early days, one room school houses

were located about four miles apart, so no kid had to walk more than two miles to attend, unless some family was way up in the hills. On Dry Creek Road, the most northerly was Hamilton, then Dry Creek, Lambert and Manzanita schools. They also served as meeting halls, etc. Each had its own bell and belfry, a wood stove and a "Chik Sales" outhouse, a one or two holer type with a crescent-shaped, sawn hole on the side and the old Sears Roebuck catalogue hanging on the inside wall in lieu of toilet tissue.

Both my parents had attended and graduated from the Dry Creek School. It was situated on the top of a hill covered with oak trees, with a shed and stall for the teacher's horse.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Walton D. D. Phillips, "who will be thrashed for fighting at school as often as his father was, and Edmund Phillips, who floats along as smoothly as did his Uncle Ed."*

My two brothers, Walton and Eddie, attended that school in 1907 and 1908. They also had the usual ranch chores to do – feed the pigs, chickens, milk the cows, etc.

For diversion, they conceived the idea of "jousting." We used to have a lot of wooden barrels. (I can't remember what came in them.) The boys took the barrelheads, reinforced them with boards nailed crossways, nailed on pieces of old leather harness for arm and hand straps and they had their shields. Long, straight branches of trees, stripped of their leaves, served as jousting poles. Most of our horses were used for plowing, and I don't recall the



type of horse they'd use for "jousting." Mounted, each would ride to opposite sides of the corral; at a signal they would gallop their steeds towards one another, each intent on dismounting the other. This sport was short-lived when my folks became aware of its possible consequences.

### A Celebration and a "Surprise"

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March 1908, my folks celebrated their 15<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. There was a lot of hustle and bustle in the preparation. In those days, Klingle's Bakery (later the "Home Bakery") had a horse-drawn weekly route through Dry Creek. One of the butcher shops also had a weekly route.

On the appointed day, all the neighbors and friends came and enjoyed the festivities. I recall we had a Chinese lady cook, filling in as a housekeeper.

The minister who married them came from Napa to renew their vows. Ten days later on March 31, 1908, "the stork" delivered a baby girl to my mother. That same day one of our mares gave birth to a slick little baby colt, named "Alberta." My brothers, when they came home from school were more excited about the colt than their new little sister.

My mother had carried the baby so high that most of her friends (even her own mother) were not aware she was pregnant. After longing for 15 years, her wish for a little girl was fulfilled: Geraldine Marie Phillips.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Major Samuel Phillips, age 2*

Up to the time my mother became pregnant, I had filled in as a substitute for a girl. Pictures show that I wore dresses (which was not uncommon in those days) with white lace collars, curls and buttoned shoes.

### To Oakland and Back Again

In the fall of 1908, the ranch was divided, one third for each of the surviving sons, Walton, Ed and Fred. My dad, who was not inclined toward farming, leased his 72+ acres to two Italians, Adamo Michele and his brother. We moved back to our home in Oakland.

In 1912, the lease on the ranch expired, so my dad decided to try ranching again; and back to Dry Creek we again moved.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
*Students and teacher in front of the Dry Creek School (Geraldine Phillips 6<sup>th</sup> from left with large white bow in her hair, Major Phillips 11<sup>th</sup> from left), 1914*

My lifestyle changed. I now wore a shirt and bib overalls – milked the cows, fed the chickens and walked a mile and a half to and from school. It was the same old one room, one teacher and eight grades. It hadn't changed since my folks attended there in the 1860s and 1870s: same old wood stove and desks, same salute to the flag, same old slate boards with chalk and erasers. Eight classes reciting the 3 Rs with a little history and geography thrown in and a spelling bee every Friday afternoon. Oh, yes, and a 1900 revision of all the old songs our parents sang, plus a few modern tunes like "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree."

I had a little trouble in adjusting myself to this



new environment. I never was very large and, although nearly half of the kids were my cousins, there were some bullies who tried to make life miserable. I don't have a belligerent nature, but I can take just so much. My two brothers were boxers and good wrestlers and I had learned a few tricks. This one day, the big bully went too far – I grabbed him and threw him to the ground before he knew what happened. That ended harassing.

### Life in the Valley

At that time we had no electricity in the valley. We did have a community telephone line for communicating with the neighbors. Each family had a different ring. The phone box contained a magnet, a set of bells similar to the ones in old mantel clocks and a crank. With the receiver off the hook, one long crank alerted the telephone operator who would take the needed number for town or long distance calls and make the connection for you. Our number was one long and two short rings. Different combinations of the long and short rings were used for those on our community line. I'm not saying that neighbors did, but they *could* listen in on any or all conversations. It was pretty well known that one lady, having nothing better to do, would lie on her couch, near the phone and listen to all conversations. It was said that she was known to snore and sometimes if there was nothing spicy, she would fall asleep and could be heard snoring.

The only other means of diversion were teas, where the Neighbors' Club members would get together for gossiping. That and driving into town – buggies, surreys, Fords, Buicks or by horseback to shop on Saturdays and go to the "Nickelodeon" and stay for the band concert in the Plaza. That was the day. Everyone from all over the Dry Creek, Geyserville, Alexander Valley and Windsor area merged to listen to the Salvation Army Band Saturday night concert. Some, of course, had to stay home to do the chores and later go to some dance, either the Odd Fellows Hall in Windsor, the Odd Fellows Hall in Geyserville or a barn dance at Simon's, Wagele's or Plasberg's, where the whole family (kids and all) danced until the clock struck twelve. Then, after the midnight potluck, we danced again until daybreak when it was then time to go home to the chores of the day – plowing, puning, milking cows, feeding stock or fowl.

Those were the days of the Rag, the Farmers Walk, the Two Step, the Turkey Trot with an occasional square dance or Virginia Reel or tag dance, three step, etc. etc. with accordion, fiddle and harmonica. It sounded pretty good.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Major and Rena (Buffi) Phillips on their wedding day,  
February 15, 1947*

You know, I think a little bit of Heaven fell from out of the skies and settled in and around beautiful Dry Creek Valley! I can see through the eyes of our forefathers, the paradise, utopia which they found and which we now have: my Shangri-La! The snow-capped Mount St. Helena, the forests of oak and redwoods, the rich verdant valleys, the sufficiency of good pure cold clean water, the golden poppy and blue lupine-covered hillsides, weather conducive to happiness and longevity. Truly there's no place on earth that I love more sincerely than Dry Creek Valley and our friendly, cozy little town of Healdsburg.





Photo: Harry Bosworth Collection

*The Glaser Family in 1913 – Sophie, Albert, Albert Julius and Marie Emma*

## **The Glasers: A German Immigrant Family in Geyserville**

*as recounted by Marie Glaser Bosworth Beers*

*from an oral history conducted by her daughter, Louise Bosworth Davis, December, 1986*

My mother, Sophie Ludmann, had finally decided to come to America in 1902. She was going to come with a girlfriend who had been a neighbor of my father's (Albert Glaser) in Germany. And the two girls were to come together. The neighbor girl was to become my father's wife. My mother had intentions of going on to San Francisco to apply for a job as a cook, as that was her profession. At the last minute, the other girl's father refused to let her go. Well, my mother had purchased her ticket, so there was no turning back.

### **Germany to California**

My mother crossed the ocean on a ship in third class passage. It was a difficult trip with many

of the passengers getting seasick. After making her way through Ellis Island, she continued her journey across the country on a train.

She couldn't speak English; she couldn't understand English. "How far do I go? Do I dare take my shoes off? Do I dare sleep?" So, she didn't take her shoes off. She didn't sleep for a day or two all the way from New York into Chicago.

It was train changing time when she got to Chicago and she finally went off to sleep, figuring that they would ride for a long time. She wasn't asleep more than a few hours when the conductor came in. She didn't know what he was talking about, so he grabbed her suitcase and took off. She grabbed her shoes and, in her stocking feet, followed her



suitcase. He finally got her on the right train. She said that she never took her shoes off from then on and that was another week!

One time she took a nap and woke up to find the whole car empty. It had been full. The car was empty and full of Indians with feathers in their hair. She about died. Finally, the other passengers began to come back in. After they went a short distance, the Indians got off the train. They were railroad workers working on the tracks, but they were still dressed with their feathers. After the stories she had heard in Europe about them, she about died.

The conductor felt sorry for her, so he talked to her every day. My mother knew two words. She knew the word "yes" and the word "no." The conductor would ask her a question, "Yes." And he would smile and go on. He would come back later when he had time, sit down and talk to this young girl. And he would ask the same question and "Yes." After saying "yes" a number of times, she thought, "That's getting tiresome, I better say something else." The next day he comes in with the same question, "No." And he just about split laughing. So she said, "Yes" again.

Later, when she got to the Glaser family, she told them the story. The question the conductor had been asking my mother was, "Do you like me?"

### **Finally Arrived**

She came to strangers. She did not know the Glaser family until she came here. And all they knew was that she was coming with this other girl; she was to stay a week or two and then go on.

No one met her at the train station. They had no idea who they would be picking up and they were working. It was spring and they were busy on the ranch with plowing and all of that. In those days, the women didn't drive horses.

I think that it was a man by the name of Skaggs who drove the mail wagon from Geyserville out the rural route. She arrived as the mail came in, so she went out with the mail wagon. She rode out and the driver told her, "This is where the Glasers live."

Albert had the German flag out and he came to the road to meet her. He was so thrilled to meet someone from his homeland.

Well, that's how they met. The family was real nice and they talked her into staying and helping

there. She worked there for the summer. She and Albert were married that same year on November 23, 1902.

Two years later on December 5, 1904, my brother, Albert, was born. Exactly four years later on December 5, 1908, I was born. I was his birthday present, but I don't think that he welcomed it.

My grandmother named both of her grandchildren. My brother was named after Albert, his father, and his father's brother, Julius. She named me after her two of her daughters, Marie and Emma.



Photo: Harry Bosworth Collection

*The Frederick Glaser ranch c. 1905*

### **Life on the Ranch**

We lived on the ranch. My favorite dolls were cows and cats and horses. I did have dolls. They got their clothes changed maybe once a year. Other than that they slept. They were good. They didn't argue or fight, but they didn't wear out either. I liked being outside.



Photo: Harry Bosworth Collection

*Marie Glaser with the neighbor's dog "in harness" c. 1915*



I made harnesses for my neighbor's dog and hitched him up. Made a harness for a little kitten. Made a little cart out of an empty thread spool and hitched her up. I did all kinds of things. Outside of school, I didn't have many friends because they were on ranches and we were on our ranch. Once in a while you would take a long walk. In the summertime, there was always something to do.

I had the chickens to feed every night. My brother fed them every morning, but I got the eggs at night and fed the chickens at night time. That was my job. And feeding the cats. As soon as I was old enough, it was my turn to carry the wood onto the porch for the stove and the heater. By then my brother graduated out into the field to help do the work. And, when need be, I milked the cow and did a few other things.

### **Right from Wrong**

I loved my mother, but when she got through punishing me, you wished she had used a stick, it wouldn't have hurt so long. When she got through punishing you, you were so small that you just about had to get on a ladder to look into a frog's eye. She didn't have to use a switch on me at all. All she had to was talk to me. She had a way of really working on my conscience. I never pulled the stunt again that she was punishing me for. She explained everything and when she got through, you knew that you had done wrong and you had better not do it again, because your conscience punished you.

### **Birthdays**

We couldn't afford dessert and my father didn't care for dessert. As I grew up, I liked dessert, but he said no. We were healthy without it, I guess.

Even though my brother and I had the same birthdates, my mother still had to make two cakes. One year on the birthday, my brother got his favorite cake and icing and a week later I got mine. The next year, my cake was first on our birthday and his was a week later. But each got a birthday cake; Mom didn't get out of making two cakes.

There was no presents or cards. A "Happy Birthday" and a cake. That was it.

### **School Days**

It was the Canyon School on Canyon Road. All eight grades were under one teacher. And the

average was 21 or 22 students. One year, we had 25 and that was big. When I graduated, there were two brothers (the Stefani brothers) and me - a big class.



Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Canyon School with teacher Miss Morrison, 1914*

The very first teacher in the school was Miss Morrison. She was a sister-in-law of one of the trustees, Mr. Eastlick. I guess I was going on five. I wasn't supposed to be in school, but I wouldn't stay home. I was going to school with my brother. I wanted to go to school. My mom told her, "If she is too much trouble and won't keep still (I was quite a talker in those days), I'll make her stay home!"

The teacher said, "Oh don't, she will get answers out of those Italian children when I can't. She keeps on talking until they answer."

Those children had to learn English and so I would jabber with them until they would come across with an English word. "Let her come. She helps me teach these kids English."

School was close enough that we walked home for lunch. If it rained real hard then mom would let me take lunch. I wanted to take lunch and be with those kids. So when it rained real hard, she would let me take a sandwich or whatever I wanted.

### **Our Holiday Traditions**

We had the Easter Bunny. We always colored eggs and had a nest made out of fresh green grass. Our eggs were in our nests. My brother had his nest to find and I had mine.

One time, my mother fixed up an extra nest. That was when my granddad was still there and he was taking care of the chickens. She put it in the chicken feed bin. She said he came in like a little boy, just thrilled to death. The "Easter Bunny" had left him some colored eggs in his feed bin. "Look!



Look!" He always wore an apron and he had it in his apron and he came running up to the house. "Look, Mutter! Look!"

We had, as we could afford, a Thanksgiving dinner, truly thanks giving, not a commercial Thanksgiving like nowadays. And so was Christmas. It was truly a Christmas celebration, not commercial. We sang our songs, we read a sermon in the *Book of Sermons* that the folks had. We really had a church service. Then we opened the presents and so on. On Christmas Day, when I was big enough to write, it was spent mostly writing thank-you notes to friends who had sent gifts.

There were gifts at Christmastime; those that could be afforded. When I was a small child, we would get toys. After I played a little while with my dolls, they would be put away for next year. As we got older, there would be such gifts as we could afford and we needed.

We always had Christmas cookies: *springerle* (the white and the cinnamon) and the sugar cookies that we called *ausstecherle*. And *lebkuchen*, the little *ausstecherle* were animals and stars and things like that.

We did have a pie sometimes. As a small child I don't remember one, but as things got a little bit better, we would have a mince pie or a pumpkin pie. Usually one for Thanksgiving and then the other for Christmas and that would be it.

We always had a Christmas tree. The tree was one that we cut down from our own property about two days before Christmas. We had some ornaments. The first ones were either left by the previous owners or were brought from Germany. I still have some. They were old, probably older than I. I still put them on the tree once in a while for sentimental reasons.

We always opened our presents on Christmas Eve. We always had a hot drink on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve. It would be either mulled wine or a hot brandy.

When I was a small child, Santa Claus was just too mean. So I begged for Mrs. Santa Claus. And Mrs. Santa Claus always came to our house. She was dressed like an old lady. She was camouflaged somewhat. I can't remember what she did for a face, whether she put something on or what, but I sure gave her the once over. My mother always had some excuse why she wasn't there - said she had

to be somewhere. After I got older I knew. My mother said that the first time she dressed as Mrs. Santa Claus, she thought sure I would be wise before she even got out. Much later when I was old enough to know she said, "You kept looking at me and looking at me."

And I said, "You know, Mama, Mrs. Santa Claus looked so much like you, and she had a tooth exactly like yours." (My mother had a crown on her front tooth.) But I accepted the fact that it was Mrs. Santa Claus. My grandfather was Santa Claus, and he just loved to paddle kids, he was too rough. So I begged for Mrs. Santa Claus. She was nice.

In Germany they didn't call them Santa Claus. *Belsmerdle*, I think, usually they went around the day before Christmas and paddled all the kids to be sure they would be good. And then the Christ child came down, left the gifts and the tree and so on.



Photo: Harry Bosworth Collection  
*Sophie Ludman Glaser, 1950s*

### **My Mother**

She was a hard working person. She worked like a man and had two houses to take care of. She had to take care of my grandmothers' house and her own house. They made cheese, churned butter, dressed their own poultry and butchered their own pigs. She canned all the fruit for her family and her mother-in-law. And she made all the jams and jellies that we ever had. And she worked out in the fields. She made all our clothes. I thought the world of my mom.



# Challenges and Opportunities: Growing Up in Mill Creek and Healdsburg

*an oral history of Stewart Wade, excerpted from an interview with Holly Hoods, 2012*

I was born in San Francisco on November 16, 1914, although we lived in northeast Montana at the time. We lived way out in the boondocks. I was the first child and my mother wanted me to be born in civilization. Since my grandmother and aunt lived in San Francisco, she wanted me to be born there.

My father was Charles Henry Wade. We left Montana on November 11, 1918. Since the war was over, we didn't have to rush getting to California. At the time, we owned a 1915 open Dodge. There were no paved roads in those days. It was all mud and dust.

We drove to North Dakota first. My father's sister lived there. Her husband had the bank in town. We came down to her place and she had my fourth birthday for me. She gave me a bag of chocolate candies. Chocolate wasn't commonplace like it is today. They were very nice, so I decided to save some for my grandmother. We came across the river to California from New Mexico. They didn't have a bridge. We came across on two barges - one for the car, one for the passengers. We reached the other side and I said, "Where's Grandmother? We're in California."

"Oh, it's another day's drive," I was told. I decided that I'd better eat the candy, so I did.

## Life on Mill Creek

We came to Healdsburg in 1919. You couldn't drive out to Mill Creek Road at the time. We had to come to town and go to Farnsworth's Livery Stable. His employee, Frank Blanche, drove us (my father, mother, brother and me) out in this buggy to the property to see if we wanted it or not.

My father went into the building business. He and his business partner were responsible for many of the houses in the immediate area and the post office.

While we lived out there, we didn't come to town very often - maybe once a week. If we came in at all, it was usually on a Saturday. My father let the men working for him off work at noon on Saturdays. We were as self-sufficient as possible. We raised pigs, chickens, turkeys and ducks. We had fruit trees.

There were wild pigs, deer and squirrels. I killed all those things. In fact, I killed my first deer when I was seven years old.

My father made us very responsible when we were kids. We went on the jobs with him. That's where we made our first paychecks. We acted as messengers between the men on the jobs and my father. My brother and I also acted as guides for hunters. We would show people where the trails were, where the springs were and things like that.

## My First School

We had a one room schoolhouse, Daniels School, on Mill Creek Road. I had to attend that school to keep it open. I made the sixth student. Later on, we sometimes had as many as ten students; twelve at the most.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Daniels School, pre-1940*

The principal came out every year to check up on the teacher and see how the class was doing. When he was ready to go, he opened the door and lying on the front steps was a six-foot rattlesnake! My brother and I went out, killed the snake and cut off the buttons [rattles] to save them.

That was the last visit from the principal.





Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*Daniels School's teacher and entire student body, c. 1924  
(Bob Wade, second from left; Stewart Wade, fourth from left)*

### **On to High School**

Moving on to high school meant coming into town. It was a big place and I was scared.

Mr. Ed Kent was the principal. He gave a talk on the first day of school. He said, "There's a sign outside that says, 'Slow Children.' Well, there are no 'Slow Children' here."

That impressed me, but I still had lots of problems. One day the math teacher sent me to the principal's office. I was failing in math because I couldn't recite. Mr. Kent had been a math major. In fact, he had his Masters in math from Berkeley. He asked me a few questions and then he said, "Well, you know this stuff."

"I know," I said, "but she scares me."

"I'll tell you what you'll do," he said. "You go back to the class and you put the stuff on the board or recite whether you know the stuff or not. Do the best you can. Drop her!"

### **My Typical School Day**

We would be up and at 'em by 5am; feed and milk the cows. (There were never more than five of them.) Take the milk home where we had a hand-turned separator. After separating the milk from the cream, we would thoroughly clean the separator parts. Bob would take the skim milk and feed the pigs. I would put the cream in a 5-gallon can. Once every two weeks, we took the can in to town and shipped it by train to the cheese factory in Petaluma.

After wood was brought in for the cook stove and fireplace, we would clean up and change into our school clothes.

After running our trap line on the way to school, we would do the janitorial work. This

included bringing one or two buckets full of water from a spring that was located down an old abandoned road. Then we would sprinkle oiled sawdust on the school floor and sweep it up, clean the blackboard, dust the desks, bring in wood and start the stove.

After school we would scoot for home, where mother often had fresh baked rolls or other good things to serve us as we had only had two sandwiches since breakfast. Then I would go after the cows. They could be very elusive. Many times I didn't get back until well after dark. On wet, dark, rainy nights, I would hang onto a cow's tail and they would lead me home.

After milking the cows and separating the milk, we would wash up and all sit down together for dinner. After dinner, Bob and I would do the dishes. Then the good part would come - we would read together or separately until about 10 pm. We were always ready for bed by this time.

### **Our World Changes**

My father died in 1929. We lost everything - all our money, plus money he had borrowed for the construction jobs. Poor Mother! She had a one-month old baby girl and these two boys. I was fourteen and my brother, Bob, was twelve.

We moved from a beautiful three-story house to a one-bedroom apartment on Matheson Street. We lived there for a year. My mother had no money at all - not a cent. My brother and I had been saving money for college, because it had been a foregone conclusion that we were going to college. Together we had saved over \$300, which was a considerable sum in those days. My mother took all of the money out of the Savings and Loan. We lived on that money for a whole year. Three months after she took that money out, the Savings and Loan went broke and nobody got a nickel! Weren't we lucky?

My mother was very distraught during this time. It was very difficult for her. She finally got a job in San Francisco as a housekeeper. She took the job in part because her new employer would allow her to bring her daughter along with her.

My brother and I were left on our own.

### **On Our Own**

Robert Jones invited Bob [my brother] to live with him. They had a house in town and a farm out



on lower Dry Creek Road. Bob and Bobby [his son] were buddies all through grammar school and high school

My father died during my first year of high school. With all the turmoil, I think I got more "F"s that first year than anything else.

After Mother left, I got a job working for a family. They were retired Salvation Army people. Unfortunately, they didn't feed me enough. I was hungry all the time. I think that since they were older, they just didn't realize how much food I needed.

Then I got a job with Al Worden. He was a great guy. He was married and they had a little baby. On a typical day, I'd wash the baby's diapers and help Al get breakfast. Then I'd run into town through the cemetery to the library and do the janitorial work there. [Today that library is the Healdsburg Museum.]

I also had a job at the drug store. I knew I wouldn't be able to afford college, but they had a program for learning to be a pharmacist. You worked at a pharmacy for four years while you went to high school. When you graduated from high school, you took an examination. If you passed, you were an assistant pharmacist for two years and then you would be qualified to be a pharmacist. Unfortunately, the program was discontinued before I could complete it.

Then the Wordens were going to have another baby. They wanted to hire a girl full time to help. Al Worden said I had to move on.

### My World Changes Again

I was desperate - and worried. Finally, I went to see Mr. Kent, the principal.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Kent, c. 1950

He was the only one person I could think of. I'd already talked to the preachers and none of them could help me. Other people were asking for help, too. It was the Depression.

Mr. Kent listened to me and asked me a few questions. Then said, "How'd you like to come and live with us?"

Isn't that nice? He lived in the second house on Tucker Street. I moved in with him and his wife. I was planning to look for a job and do the Kents' yard work in exchange for room and board, but Mr. Kent had other ideas.

"Your job" he said "is to get through high school. And make friends. And join clubs."



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
Healdsburg High School 1932 Student Council  
(Stewart Wade, seated first from left)

So I did. I got an "H" in tennis and another in football. And I tried the different clubs at school. And I did make friends. And I tried not to be so scared, but it was hard.



Photo: Healdsburg Museum Collection  
Healdsburg High School 1932 Science Club  
(Stewart Wade, second row from top, sixth from left)

I stayed with the Kents for the rest of my high



school years. Then they took my brother in.

I graduated from high school in 1933. I was president of my class! I ended up first or second in my class in math! How's that for irony? I was so afraid of school when I came in, but here I was in a big school with 54 other students in my graduating class.

### **My Turn to Help**

My mother's health began to deteriorate after she moved to San Francisco. She suffered terribly from arthritis. I'm sure her condition was made much worse from all the worry and stress. The family she worked for had a father who was a retired patent attorney. They were very wealthy and had a beautiful home in the Berkeley Hills. He fell in love with her and wanted to marry her. She wouldn't marry him, which I think was a mistake. People weren't quite as liberal in those days.

Mother eventually became an invalid. The man took care of her and paid her medical bills for two years. Finally, he said, "Stewart, it's your duty to take care of your mother."

So I did. I took care of both my mother and my sister. I had to put my mother in a nursing home, but I did raise my sister. At twenty-three, I became the youngest member of the local PTA!

My mother was sick and I didn't know what I was going to do for money. I hadn't paid off all my father's debts. My father used to tell us stories about his father's partner who had skipped off with \$100,000. That's like several million dollars today. My grandfather paid the whole thing off, but the family never had much money. I remembered that story and I decided that I was going to pay off his debts. Fortunately, I did. I sold the farm on Mill Creek Road in the middle of the Depression. I got only a fraction of what it was worth, but I got cash and paid off the debt with a little left over.

### **Working Life**

Nat Dodge owned the rubber company. In the summer of 1933, 67 men were standing in front of his building and I was one of them. Mr. Dodge came out and said, "I'll take you and you."

I was one of them. He knew my father, so I

got a job.

I was working in Emeryville. Woody Frampton and I were roommates in a cooperative boarding house. We had to pay \$45 a month for room and board. I was working and Woody was going to Cal Berkeley.

I thought about it and I decided that I could start my own boarding house. I took in ten boys – two from Santa Rosa and eight from Healdsburg. I made a menu every month and I did all the shopping. For the first two years, I did the cooking, too. I had learned how to plan and cook from my mother. The boys had to make their own breakfast and eat lunch out. On Sundays, we all went out. I charged the boys between \$11 and \$17 per month for room and board, but nothing for my time. I didn't think that would be fair.

I never got a degree. I started working as soon as I got out of high school. It was during the Depression and if we had a day with no work, I'd audit classes. I took a lot of geology courses and chemistry classes. They didn't know I wasn't a student. I didn't get any credits, but I did get an education.

### **The End of the Single Life**

Donald Grant and I dated girls who were friends. They were both from Healdsburg and they both went to Mills. My girlfriend won one of two scholarships awarded in all of California.

One night Donald said, "I'm going to ask my girl to marry me tonight."

"Well" I said, "I plan to ask Arla to marry me tonight."

So we each asked our girls on the same night. He was the best man at my wedding.

The four of us were very good friends for years afterward.

### **Secret to Longevity**

People ask me how I've lived so long. I think it's because I don't worry any more. I had my worries in high school - plenty of them. I would feel sick. My stomach would churn at night. I thought I had ulcers. When I got a job, I was doing real well. I didn't have anything to worry about but the job.



# Life is Good

## The Jerry and Mary Lou Eddinger Story

*excerpted (with permission) from their privately printed book, Life is Good*



Photos: Jerry and Mary Lou Eddinger

*Mary Lou Cattalini (Eddinger), c. 1947 and 1959*

### My Childhood at the Dry Creek Store

In 1950, when I was eight years old, the old Dry Creek Store came up for sale. My parents, who had wanted to do something different in their lives, purchased it, and we moved there on November 1, two days before my ninth birthday. My mom (Rose Palmieri Cattalini) loved people and wanted to get into the business world. For me, at that age, the most exciting thing was that we would have the only television set in the entire Dry Creek Valley!

The back part of the store became our living quarters. Mom loved giving wedding and baby showers for everyone, so our tiny home was a place for celebration as well as for visiting, playing games, eating and laughing. Our bathroom was a cold and damp addition onto the back porch. The store in front had groceries, a deli with hanging salamis above the glass refrigeration unit with the delicious Italian cold cuts and cheeses and, of course, a few American cold cuts and hot dogs, along with big slabs of bacon. We had a large-sized commercial slicer, and my mother would always tell me to pay attention to the slicing first and then talk to the

customers afterwards!

All the wines were lined up in a row behind the cash register. The beer and wine vendors would change the displays every so often, but I remember Thunderbird wine in particular. The cigarettes were on the right side – Lucky Strikes and Camels being the big sellers of that time. Next to the grocery area was a card room, then the bar area. There were separate entrances to the grocery and the bar, and a large sign hung outside the bar entrance saying “Wild Joe Cat,” in reference to my dad, Joe Cattalini. We also had gas pumps in the front and a bocce ball court behind the store. There was a very old barn on the right hand side in back, which housed farm equipment.

At such a young age, I helped with virtually everything. I didn’t literally tend bar, but I had to help stock the merchandise, including the liquor. I inventoried the stock twice a week and continued picking prunes as well. Jerry says that I made “the best damn salami sandwich for only fifty cents!” But I loved what I did, not considering it to be work. I



remember that Mike Belli (who was younger than me and lived down the road) used to come in the store as a preteen with notes reading, "Please sell Mike a pack of Lucky Strikes," signed "Michael's Mom" in *his* handwriting. He'd hand me twenty cents, the cost of a pack of cigarettes and be on his way.

The card room had a large, round table surrounded by oversized captain's chairs, some of which we still have. I oiled the pine wood floors with a mop every Sunday unless I could convince my mom to have someone else do it. The card room, which always seemed so dark to me, was a place where the men would gather and play poker. My other job was to go in there every hour and gather fifty cents from each of the players for the use of the room.

The card room was behind another room where we stored bulk motor oil in big metal Mobil Oil dispensers. We'd hand pump the oil into quart poring cans right there in the room and then carry the cans outside for our gas station customers. We also had a punchboard in the bar. It had holes covered with paper in which tickets for prizes were hidden. We'd buy a board and people could punch out a hole and see if they won – much like buying a lottery ticket today.

Red Standish, who installed and maintained our jukebox and pinball machines, got a percentage of the take. I can still remember this one classic arcade game called "Shoot the Bear," which everyone loved to play. The player would put in a quarter for three games or a dime for one, causing a bear to start moving in front of a forest background. If the player "shot" the bear, the bear stopped running, his eyes lit up and he reared up on his hind legs and growled ferociously. Then he ran in the other direction. On Friday and Saturday nights, people would bring their musical instruments and sing and play. My Uncle Ernie's father-in-law, Ira Haney, played the fiddle on these occasions. Every Christmas, Red Standish would bring our family a gift of Libby glassware, some of which I still have.

The Dry Creek Store at 3495 Dry Creek

Road, right in the heart of Dry Creek Valley, was the stopping off point or gathering place for people who either lived in the area or came through on their way north and south or en route from the coast. The store might be considered today's equivalent of either a gas station mini-mart or an old-fashioned corner grocery store.

I knew all the deliverymen by their first names. Frank Beeman and Bob Pomery were our Clover milkmen. Frank Bastoni delivered French bread from Franco American. "Big Al" Epidendio was the egg man. Milt Rose delivered Made-Rite meat products. Charlie Garayalde brought Wonderbread five days per week. "Ravoli Fred" Oberti (also known as the "Ravioli Man") owned Homestead Pasta Company in San Francisco and had a home on Wine Creek Road off of West Dry Creek. Fred brought us boxes of ravioli, and later on, when Mom had her restaurant, delivered ravioli there as well.

There was also Charlie Slender, the Granny Goose Potato chip man, who is still around. Felix Richards was the Mobil Oil man who delivered the gasoline for our two gas pumps – one for good gas and one for "cheap" gas. We also had Jerry Aquistapace as our beer man. Other deliverymen brought produce, canned goods, wines and cold cuts. Along with our customers, they were like family to us.

Most everyone worked in agriculture in those days and our local customers were ranch workers, farmers, loggers and dairymen. The logging trucks coming through from Annapolis stopped by our store and bar while bringing logs to local mills, including the two huge mills in Mill Creek. I remember when Jerry and I got married on September 30, 1962 at St. John's Church in Healdsburg. Many of our loyal bar and grocery customers went down to buy clothes from Penney's and Rosenberg's to wear to our wedding. Most people gave us a dollar or perhaps five. They were good people and a proud bunch of folks.





Photos: Jerry and Mary Lou Eddinger

*Jerry Eddinger, 1949 and 1957*

## Memories of a Healdsburg Boyhood

I was born on April 16, 1939, at the County Hospital in Santa Rosa. Dad worked as a barber in town and Mom was a waitress at the local White House Grill and later worked for the Salvation Army. I was sick as a young child with both asthma and mastoiditis, a serious infection of the mastoid bone. I was in and out of the hospital and became the first person in the state to get penicillin for an ear infection. My family moved to Kelseyville in Lake County where they thought the air would be better, but that wasn't the case. So we returned to Healdsburg and my dad began working at Plaza Barber Shop on Plaza Street.

Mom was a big part of my life and we were always really close. She loved flowers. My dad would never plant a flower and she'd never plant a vegetable. They kept up this pattern long after their divorce when I was six.

After the divorce, I stayed with Mom who remarried in 1948. My sister, Mary, my brother, Dick, and I were raised by my mom and stepdad, Martin De Lisle, a great guy. Mom and Martin then had two more kids, Marta and John, who were several years younger than me.

Mom was a great cook and had special meals for each day of the week. Tuesday was Red's Tamale Day. Sunday was pot roast or fried chicken and Sunday night was bacon and eggs. Martin fried his toast in the leftover bacon grease and wouldn't eat

steak without the fat. Any uneaten bacon grease went into an old coffee can for reusing. We would strain the cow's milk through cheesecloth into a bucket, and the cream surfaced right to the top. Mom used to take the milk out of the bottom and set it in the icebox. My brothers and sisters loved the thick cream, but I loved the cold milk with my cereal. I can still remember just what it tasted like.

Besides being a great cook, Mom was a wonderful seamstress. One time in high school she made me a shirt with the buttons on the wrong side. When I mentioned it, she said that if I buttoned it up, no one would be able to tell. For our wedding, both Mom and Rose [my new mother-in-law] unknowingly purchased the same fabric and dress pattern at J.C. Penney's (for their mother of the bride/groom dresses), and they both made the exact same dress to wear. About two weeks before the big event, they were talking and figured this out. Knowing that Rose was also sewing Mary Lou's bridal gown, Mom immediately bought new fabric and made a different dress for herself. Another time, Mom made Mary Lou and me a beautiful velveteen quilted bedspread. But, as it turned out, it was the wrong size for our bed. So, she made another one. She put so much work into this true labor of love.

When I was growing up with Mom and Martin, we lived off of Reed Court in the Veterans Housing in Healdsburg, where Giorgi Park is now.



Some folks looked down on this postwar, government-built housing. I remember this one kid who would tease me about living there. My teacher, Miss Meisner, told this guy that people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.

In the neighborhood, there was a whole gang of us boys – Benny Barton, Bill Bean, Bob Campbell, Jim and Dick Moore, Reggie Elgin, Jim Blazer and myself – among others. The ballpark, just a quick slip over the fence, was our hangout. One night I got stuck in one of the new light stands which were on the ground waiting for installation. The Fire Department had to put a rope around me and pull me out. We also hung out in the nearby storm drain, which had a six-foot wide opening. Crouched over or crawling with flashlights, we could explore all the way to the river. Our favorite initiation to the neighborhood was to scare new kids by turning off the flashlight while we were inside the drain! I took my friend Bob Campbell there and gave him a good fright when he was about ten years old. I did the same thing with Gordon Waltenspiel, who later became my boss. When I was a young boy, we used to play a lot of marbles at school and break out into fights. Byron Gibbs was the principal at Healdsburg Elementary School when three of us got into “minor” trouble. Mr. Gibbs sent us home with a note and the next day our parents all came to school – and they weren't happy. We three boys – Denny, Larry and myself – were all lined up, and I was the first.

Mr. Gibbs began: “We're gonna break you kids up. Denny's going to St. John's. Larry's going to Geyserville Elementary. And Jerry's going to join Al Barbieri's Boxing club.”

My stepdad, Martin, showed real perseverance with me. He had been a Texas league ballplayer before he joined the Army, and he instilled in me a love a baseball. Martin was one hell of a pitcher! He had a flat glove that was barely bigger than his hand and he could catch anything you could throw. When I was in fifth grade, Martin got a job as a trimmer for Philo Lumber Company and we moved to Boonville. My siblings Dick and Mary graduated from Anderson Valley High School and I attended school there through the eighth grade – up until I returned to live with my grandparents (Finchers) and go to Healdsburg High School.

On that Halloween while I was living with my grandparents, Denny Tillitson, Jim Moore, Bob

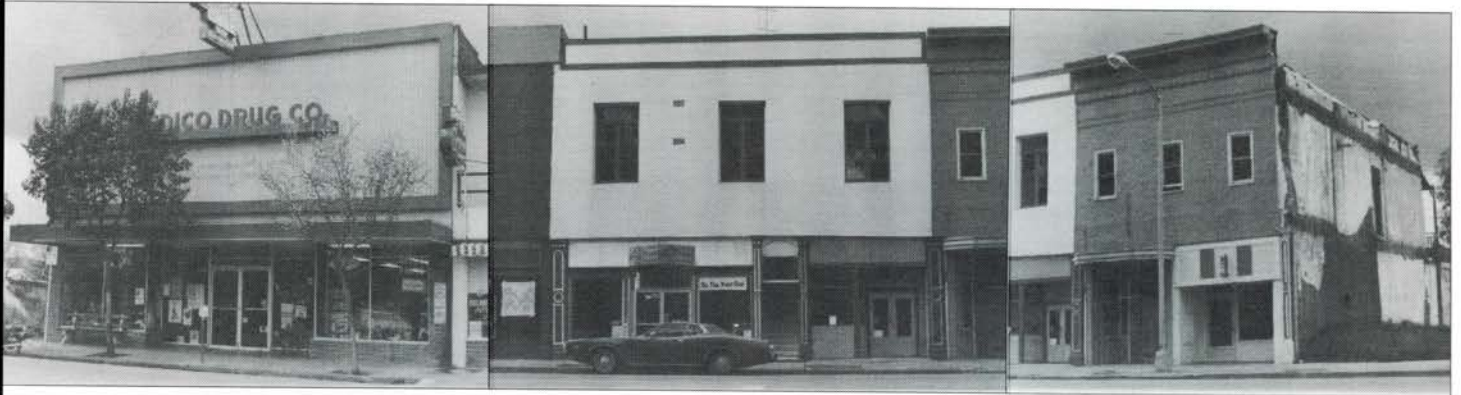
Campbell and I went down to Memorial Bridge. We put a mop of hair and some clothes on an old broom and sprinkled catsup over it. We laid the figure right down on the highway. They we got on both sides of the road, and by pulling a rope, got this apparition to stand straight up just in time for a lady to hit it with her car. She screamed and screamed! We took off down the tracks, but got caught by Frenchie Revel because Denny was too slow. Frenchie, a local cop, nabbed us in an old Ford and took us to the police station. Officer Cook, my neighbor, was there, and Grandma Fincher became unglued.

My problems continued to get worse after the Halloween incident. One night, I traded my motorcycle for a car that Allan Tankersly and the McCarty brothers had. Later, I found out that it didn't belong to them. After Denny Tillitson and I were arrested for being in possession of a stolen vehicle, we were released, and thus preceded to the 8-Ball Pool Hall where we got into a fight with the McCarty brothers over the car. Dennis and I were both sent to the Sonoma County Juvenile Hall, but we were released after about fifteen days because the McCarty brothers actually admitted to stealing the car. All of this was enough to bring my parents back to Healdsburg.

When I was a young teenager, I worked grapes and prunes for my uncle, Bill Tevendale (Tevendale's is now Lambert Bridge Winery), and I lived in a little house for the workers. I worked with Phil Perry at both Tevendale's and the Mann Ranch on Dry Creek. I remember Phil approaching the vines, saying, “I'm gonna take this row!” He always had a gallon wine jug pulled by a rope tied to his belt loop. He would work the vines until the jug was empty and that marked the end of his workday.

In high school, I worked for Syl Rossi's Truck Stop changing truck tires. I also worked for Al Barbieri's Healdsburg Furniture and Appliance Store. Al, who founded the Boxing club, had a genuinely positive influence on Healdsburg's youth. Nick Belli, who I thought was the toughest kid in town, also belonged to the club. He and I were frequent boxing partners when the club was inside the old American Legion Hall where the Mitchell Center is now. Clarence Ruonavaara and Art McCaffrey were involved in both the Boxing Club and the Boys Club, and I truly believe they were responsible for keeping me out of prison.





Photos: Healdsburg Museum Collection

*When we first arrived in Healdsburg in 1975, the west side of the Plaza was in disarray from the 1969 earthquake that left most of these buildings uninhabitable. It reminded me of bombed out buildings from some past war.*

## I Remember Healdsburg...1975

by Gabriel A. Fraire

*In 1993, I wrote the book "I Remember Healdsburg" which is a collection of memories from Healdsburg residents about their earlier days in Healdsburg. They were "seniors" at the time and now most, if not all, are gone. In trying to convince some to participate I said, "If we don't record your stories now, when you die they will die with you." It was true and it often helped convince them to cooperate. Recently, at a Sunday brunch I heard myself saying the exact same thing to my peers, many who are now "seniors." I think it is of extreme historic importance for people to record their stories. History is made by those who record it. So, when Holly Hoods asked me to write my recollections of my early days in Healdsburg, how could I refuse?*

My wife Karen and I first moved to Healdsburg in 1975. We had been living in a rented farmhouse in Southern Illinois. It was a nice existence, but it was extremely cold in the winter. It was also very flat. Arriving in Healdsburg with its wonderful climate and surrounding hillsides was very, very nice.

We would drive the countryside and marvel at the variety of crops: apples, prunes, grapes and an occasional hops field. We saw family-sized working ranches with their home gardens and backyard orchards. It made this beautiful patchwork quilt of colors that would change with each passing season.

Driving up Dry Creek Road, there was no Warm Springs Dam, and we wandered past Skaggs Springs on this tiny two-lane road heading west. One could easily imagine that the landscape probably wasn't too much different from when the first non-native settlers moved their wagons along this road. Peaceful, serene, beautiful. We fell in love with the surrounding area.

The town, however, was a different matter. The 1969 earthquake had rattled the west side of the Plaza to the point of making many of the buildings uninhabitable. There were a few businesses still working out of those buildings (a diner, an insurance sales office, a drugstore), but many of them were empty. It reminded me of photos

from past wars where cities had been badly bombed, leaving behind only rubble and hollowed out buildings.

I don't recall exactly when the buildings were finally leveled, but I do remember that for many years the whole west side of the Plaza was an open empty field. While the town debated the Plaza's future, I kind of liked the open space that allowed light to flood the Plaza, especially in the evening.

At that time, the library was in the Carnegie building that now houses the Healdsburg Museum. There was only one Mexican Restaurant and no "fine dining." Trains actually used the railway. There was no Senior Center. The Old Roma Station on Front Street which now houses several wine tasting rooms was no more than a barn and a parking lot for PG&E employees who left their cars to carpool in company vehicles up to the Geysers where PG&E had several plants. There was no performing arts venue and the small movie theater on North Street only showed movies in Spanish and, get this, you could actually buy underwear in town. We had a JC Penney store in the Mitchell Center and the Rosenberg's Department Store in the building that sits on the southwest corner of North and East Streets.

Although Healdsburg was our first California home, we both found work in Santa Rosa and moved there



for a few years before buying property in 1982 off of the north end of Dutcher Creek Road.



Photo: Gabriel A. Fraire

**The first house in California that Karen and Gabriel Fraire lived in was on Grant Street in Healdsburg. They paid \$120 per month.**

When my wife became pregnant, we discussed having a home birth, but the very mention of it terrified both her parents and mine. Karen researched area doctors and decided on Dr. Nicholas Grace to help us with the births. There are plenty of other Healdsburg residents who had their children brought into this world by Dr. Grace.

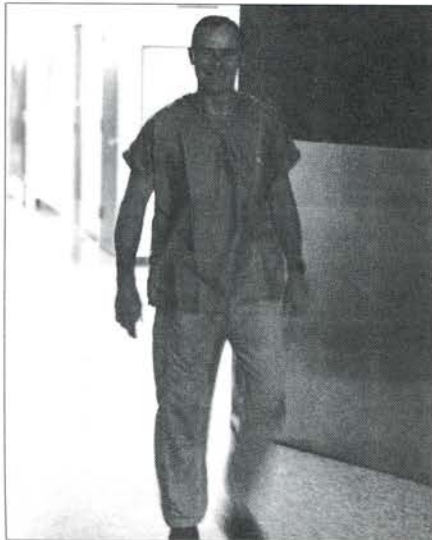


Photo: Fred Green (Karen's father)

**Dr. Nicholas Grace in October of 1984 right after the birth of Maria G. Fraire, Gabriel and Karen Fraire's first daughter.**

Our first daughter was born in Healdsburg Hospital in 1984. For us, having a child was really the beginning of being much more involved with the Healdsburg community.

At the time of our daughters' births (in 1984 and 1988 respectively), Healdsburg Hospital still allowed doctors to deliver babies and even had a "birthing room."

It was a room where the pregnant mother could be with her family throughout the process. They were nicely decorated rooms designed to enhance a soothing experience. I was able to witness both births and even hold my daughters immediately after they were born. They were magical moments. It almost felt like we were at home, but surrounded by a professional medical staff in case they were needed.



Photo: Fred Green

**Karen and Gabriel Fraire at the Healdsburg Hospital "birthing room" awaiting the birth of their daughter.**

At the time there was also no Alliance Medical Center or Healdsburg Primary Care building. The land along Prentice Drive adjacent to the hospital was an open field, providing easy access for deer to come down from Fitch Mountain. It was not unusual for patients to be able to sit in their room and watch the deer graze.

There is one thing I really miss from "yesterday." It was our favorite Russian River access point. It was at Asti. Each summer we'd anxiously wait for the ground to be bulldozed and the summer bridge dropped into place. They would unlock the gate up near Old Redwood Highway and you could drive down and park anywhere alongside the road and walk to the river. We swam, canoed and floated in tube tires. It was great and my kids loved it. There was also Del Rio beach on Fitch Mountain with its little dam that created this nice swimming hole. And there were several spots to access the River along Fitch Mountain Road. I went to look for one of those spots recently and found a locked gate forbidding access.

Things change, places get altered, modified, removed, replaced and often, sadly, get forgotten which is why I encourage others to record their history; write it; speak into a microphone; sit in front of a video camera, but *do it!* Let the future know Healdsburg through the eyes of those of us who lived here.

*Gabriel A. Fraire (www.gabrielfraire.com) has been a writer more than 40 years. He is currently the Healdsburg Literary Laureate. For more information about the Healdsburg Literary Guild go to: [www.hbglitguild.com](http://www.hbglitguild.com).*



**young people are so precious**

© Vilma Olsvary Ginzberg

I am filled to overflowing with stories of my times,  
bursting at the seams with memories yearning to be shared;  
up-to-my-eyeballs with love, lessons, laughter  
    waiting to be handed over, passed along.  
I need you, my precious grandchildren,  
to help me carry this bountiful harvest  
    destined for your own nourishment;  
I need you to carry the weighty fruits  
    of my weightless soul's garden  
    to be taken home.



*Vilma Olsvary Ginzberg*

*Vilma Olsvary Ginzberg is the current president of the board of the Healdsburg Literary Guild. For more information about the Guild, visit: [www.hbglitguild.org](http://www.hbglitguild.org).*



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