

RUSSIAN RIVER

RECORDER

Published by
HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 1978



H.H.S. Orchestra — 1913

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133 Matheson St. Healdsburg, Calif. 95448

Issue No. 8 April, 1978

ANTIQUe AND COLLECTABLE SALE

WHEN - Saturday, May 6th - 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
WHERE - Town Hall, adjoining the Healdsburg Museum
PURPOSE - To raise funds for future Museum expansion

You can respond to an urgent need - to assist the Healdsburg Historical Society in making their first Antique and Collectable Sale a huge success.

We are seeking donations such as china, glassware, metal objects, toys, old jewelry, lamps, pictures and frames, dolls, postcards, trinkets and knick-knacks. A limited number of items will be accepted and sold on consignment, providing their value exceeds \$20. A silent auction will be part of the program.

Items may be brought to the Museum between the hours of 1 - 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. For larger items, or if you would like someone to pick up articles, please call Jack Relyea (433-2641), Bernice Auradou (433-3679), or Verna Lafon (433-2668). If possible, please try to deliver articles to the Museum by May 3rd.

Search your cupboards, attics, and basements for items you would like to donate to this worthy cause.

Thank you,
Ways and Means Committee

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The date of our next general meeting will be Thursday, May 18th. The date was changed from the usual fourth Thursday so that it wouldn't conflict with the Future Farmers Fair parade. Please plan to attend, enjoy the program, and learn about the upcoming picnic on June 4th.

Knowing that I've been looking for information about the Geysers resort, Mrs. Cleone Tilley recently contacted her friend, Margaret Powell Kidder, in Toronto, Canada. Mrs. Kidder's father, at one time, was an owner of the Geysers. The following is the first half of her recollections of her childhood days at the famed resort. . . . Ed Langhart

THE GEYSERS

In 1885 my father, Doctor David Powell of Marysville, and uncle, Howell Powell of San Francisco, bought "The Geysers", a famous resort in California's early days. It was situated in the Coast Range mountains about 80 miles north of San Francisco, in Sonoma County.

The early registers in the hotel were full of priceless signatures, for many famous people stayed there, enjoying the health-giving waters and famous steam baths. Unfortunately those registers were lost. (In the tragic fire of 1938).

It was a unique place of 1,000 acres on a small river called Pluto Creek. The south hillsides were covered with a thick forest of pine, laurels and madrone. The north hillside, sparsely wooded, was gashed by a canyon belching forth boiling mud, by steam fumeroles, and by a variety of hot and cold mineral springs. There were banks of sulphur, epsom salts and silica. Can one imagine a more interesting and lovely spot to spend a part of every year, as I did from the time I was six months old until I was twenty-three!

The hotel was always under lease and for a time the rights to bottle the hot magnesia water, cooled and carbonated, were let. The company must have failed, but I have vivid memories of a shed housing "The Bottling Works" and for many years, I suppose as long as the bottles, corks and machinery held out, we bottled our own water. There were even labels that had the picture of a lovely lady on them and the words "Geyser Water". We also had one of the earliest ice-making plants and made our own electric power. Water for it was brought from high up the creek in a wooden box-flume and emptied into a concrete reservoir on the hillside behind the hotel. How often I went with the man-of-all-work to start the dynamo at dusk, and what fun it was to help the ice out of the large containers, by playing the fire-hose on them.

Donkeys had brought the cement up the hill for the reservoir and were left for us to ride. We learned to ride on "Jack" and "General" and "Colonel". Later we had a Mexican riding mule for one summer and then each summer horses were sent up from either Cloverdale or Healdsburg. We spent our days riding the mountain roads and trails, and picnicing by mountain streams. Cobb Mountain, its flat top covered with ferns and giant sugar pines, was a favourite day's ride, and we often met our guests arriving by stage at "Eagle Rock" - the western boundary of our property.

What an event the journey from Marysville was each year! Mother in starched petticoats and muslin "dressing sack", bending over the big trunks, packing, in the already stifling heat of the valley. We rose at dawn to take the train and my grandfather in his white linen suit and wide panama hat was always there to see us off. We had to change trains at Suisun and again at Santa Rosa - depending on whether we went by stage coach from Calistoga (twenty-seven miles) or by Cloverdale, which was a seventeen mile trip by stage. Both roads were deep with dust by the first of July. To go through in one day we went by Calistoga, arriving there about eleven in the morning. We would be met by Charlie Foss, a famous stage driver of those days. Trunks would be strapped to the back, or boot, as it was called, and we would climb into the great three seated stage. The great privilege was to sit on the high driver's seat with Charlie and watch him 'tool' his four horses with great skill and showmanship! There was a long drive across the valley, stopping for lunch at McDonald's farm. It was from Mt. St. Helena to that farm that Robert Louis Stevenson first talked on a telephone. He spent some time on Mt. St. Helena trying to recoup his health.

From McDonald's there was the long slow climb up the mountains, stopping frequently to rest the horses, or leave mail or parcels at some isolated house. Twenty-seven long miles in dust and heat but the last downhill six miles made up for it. What a dash! Down the winding mountain road - each ravine filled with ferns and luxurious growth. At long last we would draw up beside the hotel veranda with a flourish. We children were out in a flash and off to the Powell cottage. There was the old familiar bridge that joined the cottage to the hotel, the banks of myrtle and the great oak tree. A year is such a long time

when one is young and it always seemed remarkable that everything was just as we had left it. The same cigar box to fill with acorns, the same cracks in the tongue and groove ceiling, the same picture on the wall - "Highland Cattle driven before the Storm". The driver, in a smock, still hadn't managed to get the cattle safely home.

. to be continued.

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THE ALBION ROAD

An almost forgotten chapter in the development of coastal communication and transportation was recalled when the Albion branch of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad was dismantled in 1933.

Many truckloads of the old road's rusty rails arrived in Cloverdale in November of that year for shipment from the railroad freight yards there. Hundreds of tons of the old rails were eventually shipped, to be used elsewhere on the N.W.P. line.

The Albion line came into existence in the early 1920's when building was commenced on the line that was to run from Albion to connect with the main line of the Northwestern Pacific. There were several proposed routes - one passing over the mountains from Anderson valley and following Dry Creek valley to Healdsburg, and one connecting with Cloverdale.

Many rights-of-way for the Dry Creek Valley route were purchased. Completion of the road's plans were delayed and it was finally built only as far south as Navarro and Christine, in Anderson valley.

The road would have served a country sparsely settled. The main reason for its construction centered on the prosperous and developing lumber activities in that section. For many years the road served its restricted territory, but because of the arrival of trucks and busses, which made such inroads into the lumber business, the project was finally abandoned.

In the early planning of the road there was some rivalry between Cloverdale and Healdsburg for the terminal and for years Healdsburg held the decision. But, by a quirk of fate, Cloverdale was the winner, for the Albion line was coming out there. But how differently than originally planned! Cloverdale was the terminal for its last disposition.

NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME!

Our membership committee, headed by Chairman Bob Jones, has been busy. The following are new members who have not previously been listed in the Russian River Recorder:

Helendale Barrett	Kenneth Gonsalves	Mrs. Hayden Reinecker
Walter Bell	Lydia Goodyear	Wayne Rulofson
Olive Bell	Richard Guglielmino	George St.Clair
Homer "Duke" Bidwell	L.E. Guptill	Maxine St.Clair
Alyce Bidwell	Pearl Guptill	Valerie Scherf
Diane Birdsill	Kurt Hahn	Elaine Darby Schieffer
Muriel Bronner	Sandra Kecskemeti	Fay Seghesio
Warren Bronner	Winifred Kennedy	Herbert Selzle
Ellyn C. Brookins	Avis C. Lamb	Gloria Selzle
Rosalind Consiglieri	Jean A. Mazzoni	Mrs. Harry C. Stevenson
R.R. "Pat" Dennes	William McGowan	Stephen Sweet
Doris Farris	Pressly Mothorn	Stewart Wade
John C. Fisher III	Daniel Oberti	Arla Wade
JoAnn Fisher	Jo Osborn	Lorraine Goddard Witt

TOTAL 1978 MEMBERSHIP, APRIL 1st - 332

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ANNUAL PICNIC

June 4th, Villa Chanticleer, will be the date and place of our annual picnic. Mark the date on your calendar! Further details will be given at the May meeting.

NEWSPAPER INDEXING PROJECT:

Several members are now engaged in our long-range project - indexing the Healdsburg newspapers. The ultimate goal here is to provide, at the Library or the Museum, a card file index to complement a complete microfilm file of the local papers, for use by anyone in the area interested in local history.

We have on hand now Healdsburg newspapers from 1865 to the present time, except for the year 1885. Once indexed, they will comprise the most comprehensive history of our area that could be had.

Any member interested in participating in this work please contact Ed Langhart, Museum Curator.

THE "RAG" MUST GO!

The Home-School Club, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Ladies' Aid of the First Baptist Church and of the Christian Church, the Ministerial Union, the Ladies' Aid of the Presbyterian Church and of the Methodist Church, and the St. Paul's Ladies' Guild.

These organizations separately petitioned the City Trustees in 1913 to enact an ordinance abolishing the "rag" dance within the city. Each petition, in varying phraseology but with one meaning, held up the iniquity and demoralizing effect of the "rag".

At the Trustees' meeting, one man, F.E. Mascherini, stated "I have seen all kinds of dancing and the rag is pretty tough. It is unfit for young women and you should control it."

"I went over to the hall (Truitt's Theatre) one night with a friend," said Trustee McMinn, "to get a look at the 'rag'. I didn't see anything especially out of the way, although there was a fight there soon after I arrived."

"Of course, I'm opposed to anything that has a tendency to harm the morals of our young people," said Mayor Stevens, "but I believe this Board will have a pretty hard time in trying to keep up with the changing styles of popular dancing - the 'turkey trot', the 'fish-wiggle', and all of the rest of them - and draft ordinances that will eliminate everything irregular. But I am willing to try."

"Perhaps it would be a good plan for the members of the Board to go to dancing school and keep in touch with the times," said Trustee McMinn.

"I believe we ought to pass an emergency ordinance and put a muzzle on the whole thing," said Trustee Alexander, who had not gotten the new dog ordinance quite out of mind.

The petitions were held for consideration and two weeks later an ordinance was introduced to prohibit the "rag". However, second thoughts must have prevailed, for at the following meeting of the Trustees the ordinance was not offered for final reading.

"If there are any restrictions that we can place upon a dance hall to make it a respectable place for young women, I'm willing to stand for them," said Mayor Stevens. "I think, too, that the parents should take more of an interest in the welfare of their children, and not put it up to this Board to keep them straight."

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS - 1896

The following accounts are quoted directly from the Healdsburg Tribune. Remember, it wasn't until 1903 that the Wright brothers took to the sky.

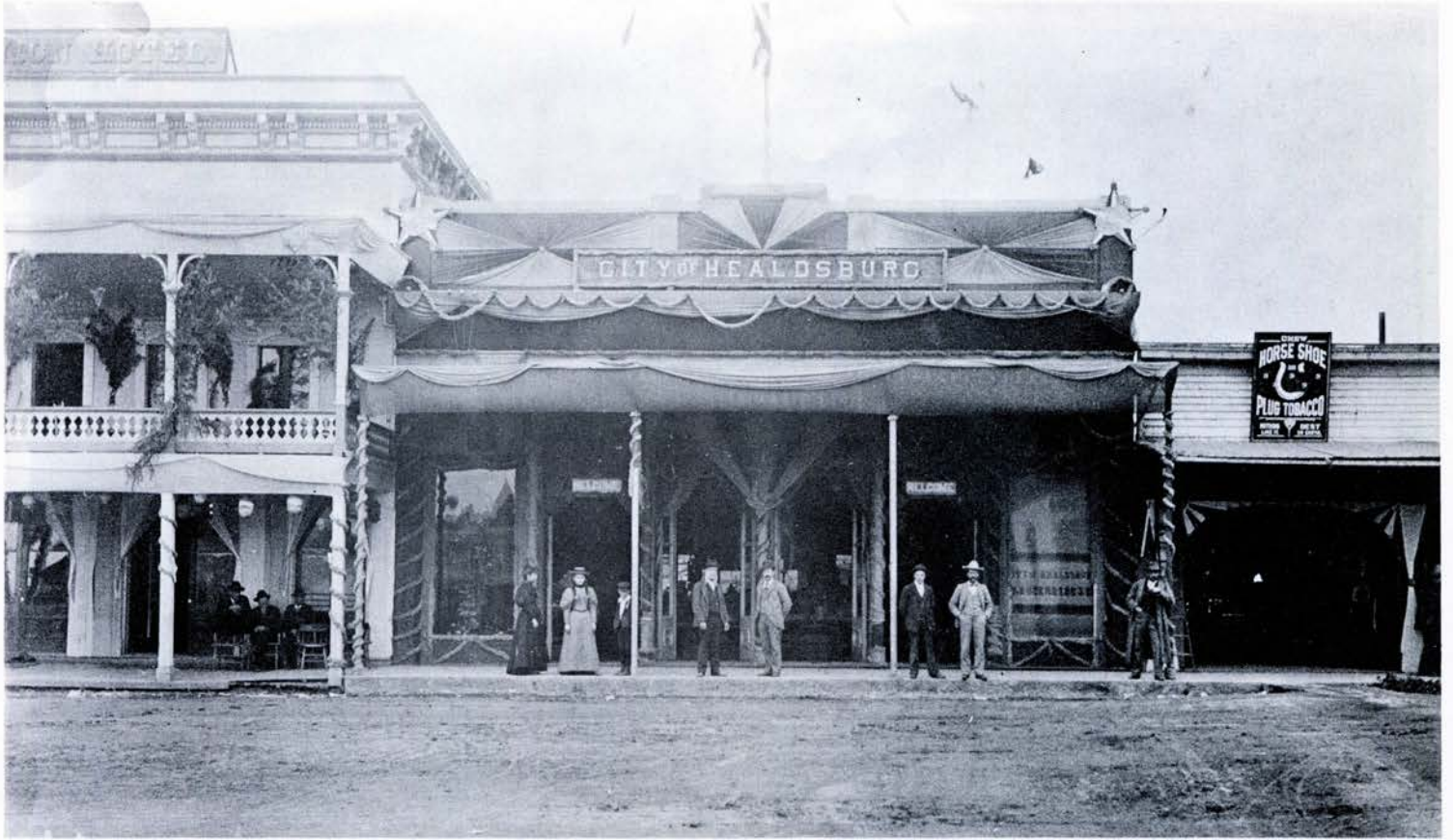
HEALDSBURG, Nov. 26, 1896 - The airship that has been seen soaring in the sky in various parts of the State and startling the populace has been in the vicinity of Healdsburg, too. James McClish, who is a pioneer and a reliable citizen, declares that he observed the strange object floating about high up in the air the first night it made its appearance. At about 6 o'clock in the evening he saw the engine's light flashing over his farm a few miles south of town at quite a tall elevation. His family also saw it and it was a mystery to them what it was until they read about the craft of the atmosphere in the newspapers. They first supposed that it was a meteor, but it traveled too slow for that and its course was horizontal. Mr. McClish stated also that the light emanated from a dark object, whose form, however, he could not discern in the darkness.

HEALDSBURG, Dec. 3, 1896 - The belief that the mysterious and sensational airship really exists is growing here while the theories of the skeptics have been frustrated. Jas. McClish made the statement personally to the editor of the Tribune Saturday that the object which came to his view was undoubtedly a craft of the air, constructed by human hands. It soared over his ranch at an apparent height of 300 feet, and it moved with considerable rapidity, raising and lowering in its course like a pigeon's flight. When first he saw the strange object it was approaching from the opposite direction and shed a most brilliant light, very similar to that of an arc lamp. The ray issued from a material form, and as it passed on a light of less power was seen coming through a deep cut aperture in the rear of the navigator of the sky. Mr. McClish said nothing about the strange sight to anyone, though his family saw the same thing, until he read about it in the papers, fearing that he would be regarded as the inventor of the airship himself and subject himself to considerable ridicule at the hands of disbelievers. Constable Norton was down at the river bridge at a late hour a few nights ago when the reflection of a large moving light in the water called his attention, and as he looked above him to see what it was he was startled as his eyes followed an illuminated object high in the air and it appeared, in

the position he saw it, to be shaped quite like a barrel, but either end came to a small convex. Others who saw it that night gave the same description. One man secured a field glass for a good observation after it had departed a long ways and he says the thing appeared to him to have a round body which seemed to inflate and deflate as a means of propulsion. The same night there were numerous men who observed a moving body in the sky. All that was perceptible at 10 o'clock was a light of a brighter hue than the stars and it would flicker and disappear and reappear again, evincing that it was attached to something that was rambling about in one direction and then in another. There were so many people who saw the phenomenon here that its existence cannot possibly be a myth or illusion, and all agree that it was nothing other than the airship which has engrossed the attention of the California people and excited so much curiosity universally.

THE FLYING MACHINE AGAIN

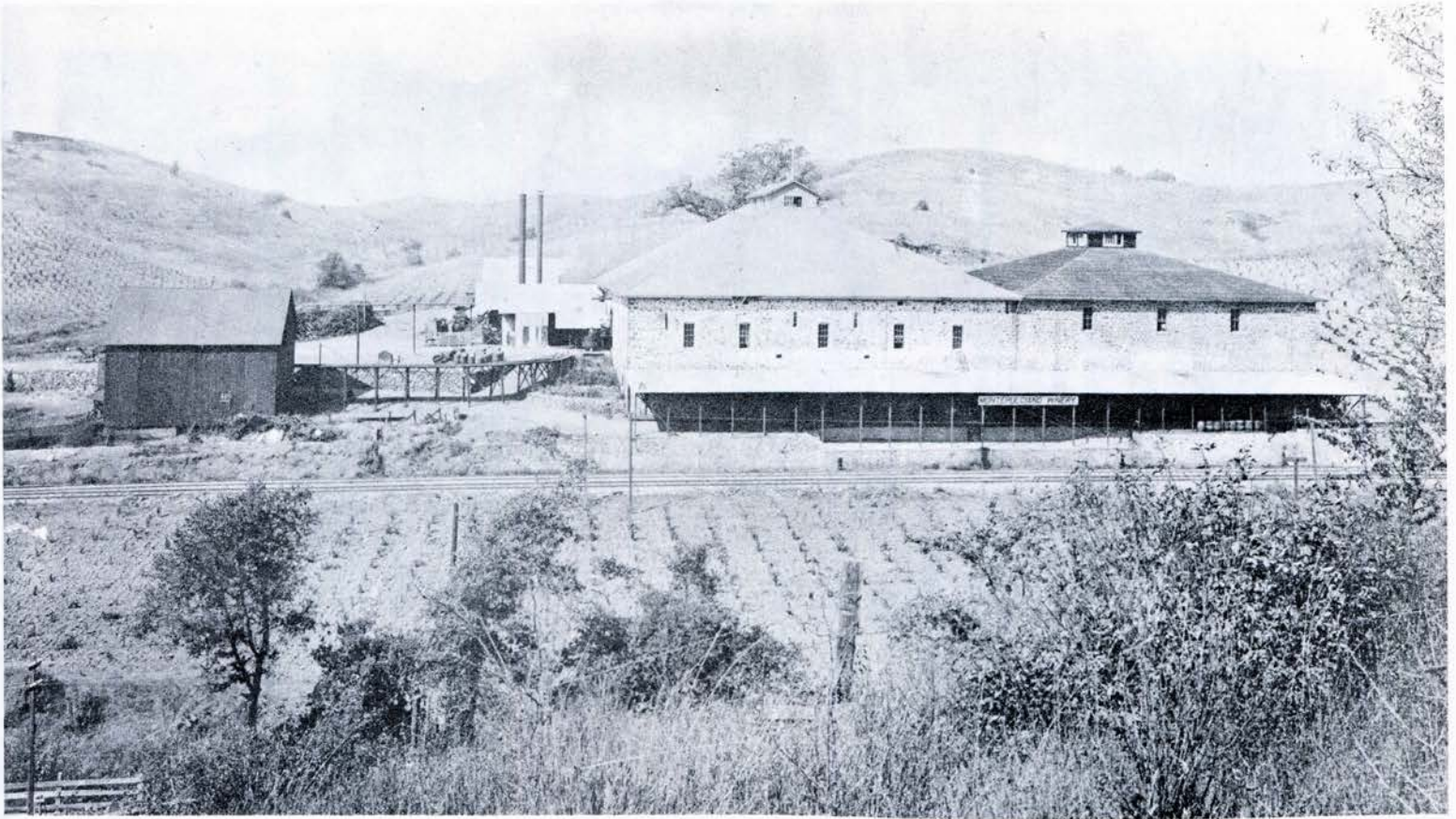
HEALDSBURG, Dec. 10, 1896 - The airship has once again been seen in Healdsburg. Parties whose integrity the editor of the Tribune would not dare to question single-handed, saw the seraphic craft close to the earth Friday night, perambulating about the railroad depot. The gentleman, who has been successful in keeping the machine far enough away from the mundane sphere to maintain the secrecy of his invention, on this occasion was equally cautious, for he steered the airship up to Healdsburg when the fog was as thick as we've seen it. The parties who discovered the flying machine's second voyage to Healdsburg assert that the haze was that intense that when the mysterious navigator of the sky hove in sight it was within a stone's throw from where they stood in amazement. It came straight for the spellbound spectators and descended closer to the earth as it approached nearer, as if to rest the machine for awhile on terra firma. Suddenly the man who operated the rudder looked and saw some people who might reveal the secret of conquering gravity. Quick as a flash the flying machine turned the nearest corner and, speeding above the orchard south of the depot, departed. In another moment it was high up in the air and out of sight. The onlookers were overwhelmed with astonishment. They hurried to town as soon as they rallied and brought us the startling intelligence.



W. Rosenberg & Co. "City of Healdsburg"
West Street - 1893



Odd Fellows Hall - 1905



Simi's Montepulciano Winery – 1910



Mervyn D. Silberstein and Friend – 1910

PIONEERS SELL ALEXANDER VALLEY STORE

(Enterprise, Aug.26, 1937)

"Mr. and Mrs. James Patrick, pioneers of Alexander Valley, have sold their store, oil station, and auto camp ground to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Minkler of Healdsburg.

"The Patricks operated the store for 44 years, until three years ago when Patrick had to give up his business on account of ill health. Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Batt have been in charge of the business. Mrs. Batt is a granddaughter of the Patricks. The Patricks lived with the Batts for a year and they will now make their home with their daughter, Mrs. Thomas Alexander.

"Mr. Patrick observed his 83rd birthday January 8th and Mrs. Patrick was 80 on January 15th. The couple will observe their 63rd wedding anniversary on Sept. 9th.

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SON TAKES OVER BLACKSMITH SHOP

(Enterprise, Nov.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.

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MEXICAN FARM LABOR

(Enterprise, Aug.29, 1935)

"Because of the impossibility to get satisfactory help in this section for hop picking, ranchers of the river district have approached the American Legion and other patriotic organizations for their reaction on the importation of gangs of Mexicans to be brought here to pick hops and to be returned to their homes immediately after the conclusion of the harvest.

"It is felt that Mexicans will be greatly preferable to Filipinos or Japanese, and this seems to be the reaction of those asked.

"The hop picking situation is getting desperate. Despite all efforts to secure help from private and governmental sources, the class of workers available is entirely unsatisfactory. Those who would make good pickers seem to prefer to wait for the prune crop as they say they cannot make anything picking hops under the present conditions.

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The Healdsburg Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the generous donations made by individual members to the Memorial Fund:

In memory of JACK AND CLARA AURADOU

In memory of EDWARD B. SNOOK

In memory of CAPT. JOHN P. GATELY

THE FIRST HEALDSBURG SCHOOL

Although we have no photographic record of the first public school house in our town, the keen memory of one of the original students paints the following picture:

The first public school house in Healdsburg was built in 1858 on Fitch street, where the social hall of the Federated Church now stands. It was one large room with two windows on each side and two doors at the front, facing Fitch street. It was never painted, inside or out, but in the beginning the room had been papered. The desks were of redwood, very plain, and at the end of the room was a small, raised platform, on which was a table and an old fashioned, black wooden arm chair, for the teacher. Near one door stood a very large pine tree, like a sentinel. Nearby was a large madrona and other trees.

The children avoided playing on the grounds west of the school as the depressions in the ground there brought to their minds the fact that that was once the Healdsburg graveyard, and it was whispered among the children that "maybe all the dead people hadn't been taken away."

It was soon evident that more room was needed so a small house was obtained on Center street, between Matheson and Mill streets, where the receiving class was taught. Later, about 1863, as the number of students increased, another building was brought alongside the first school house, and the younger children were taught there.

Still later, about 1869, a period of rapid growth in Healdsburg, there were so many children that the advanced classes, or grammar department, as it was called, was taught in the old Christian Church on West street. A portable partition was used to divide the wide space into two rooms during the week. The two old school buildings were used by the primary and the intermediate classes.

In 1865 there was an average daily attendance in the public school of 105 and an enrollment of 112 children. This varied, but gradually increased to an enrollment of 140 in 1871. About 80 students attended the private schools, the largest being the Alexander Academy on University street. The staff of the public school consisted of the principal, who was in charge of the "grammar department" or advanced classes, one teacher for the intermediates and one for the primary students.

At the beginning of each term a long list of the girls, and another of the boys, would be made out and tacked up on the wall near the door. One list was of the girls who were to sweep and dust the school house - they didn't know the word "janitor". One week Susie B. and Sarah C. would be in charge; the next, Emma B. and Annie F., and on through the list. The work was done conscientiously.

The boys' list was of those who would fetch and carry wood and water. The water was brought from a neighbor's well, in a wooden bucket. The bucket, with its dipper, was left on a bench near the door. All day long the children who became thirsty would drink from the bucket. On warm afternoons the teacher would tell some boy to pass the water around. Then he would take the bucket and dipper and trudge up one aisle and down another, each child taking a drink as he came to them.

In January, 1871 the tax monies of the school having run short, the continuing term was supported by "rate bills". The rate for the primary department was \$1.50 per month, and the intermediate department \$2.00 per month, payable monthly in advance. There was a general dissatisfaction at not having a "free school" and many parents were not sending their children on account of their inability to pay the "rate bills".

The school houses were deplorable, according to the many critical editorials on the subject. In 1868 the editor referred to "those two rickety old sheds which are a standing disgrace to the community". In April, 1871 the people voted for a tax to pay for a new school, and bids were called for immediately, the contract going to Albertson and Liddle for \$6,000. The new two story school house, facing Tucker street, was formally opened Monday, October 16, 1871. The news of the following week carried this article:

"The two old buildings, formerly by way of courtesy called school houses, have been sold, one to Sam Meyer for \$135, the other to Jesse Seaman for \$85. Both have been removed from the public grounds."

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HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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