

# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Published by  
HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JULY 1978



West Street at Matheson (1873)

# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Published by

HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

133 Matheson St. Healdsburg, Calif. 95448

Issue No. 9 July, 1978

## ADDITIONS TO THE MUSEUM COLLECTION

The museum has been fortunate to receive a variety of valuable items from Mr. and Mrs. John T. Bailhache, including the architect's plans and specifications for enlargement of the original Fitch adobe, a pieced coverlet beautifully done by Josephine Bailhache, and a clarinet used by Solon. June Jones has made a gift of the lance used by her father, Charles Leslie, a member of the Healdsburg Lancers.

A rare old cradle scythe, a plowshare, and a roughlock were gifts from Duvall Bell. A double barrel shotgun owned by Edward F. Dennes was given by his son, "Pat" Dennes. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Sullivan have donated an elegant pair of high button shoes, old glassware, a large plate with a picture of City Hall in the center, and a collar box used by Mr. Provines.

A lightning arrestor from the old city powerhouse in Alexander Valley was brought in by Paul Pugh.

Edwina Goddard Roix gave the wedding dress of Hattie Truitt Goddard, a beautiful satin jacket and gown from 1883, and a photo of Frank and Hattie at that time.

Exquisite wedding invitations and dance programs, all from the 1880's, were among a collection of personal things sent us by Edna Haigh Roseborough. She also included photos of the Haigh and Fried families, their friends Eli Bush and wife, as well as a scrapbook and other items. Roy Patchen contributed a breast drill, an old item seldom seen anymore.

Photos were received from Robert Hasset, Helendale Barrett, Verna Lafon, Richard Haub, Walter Wilson, Francis McReynolds, and Ella Deck.

The museum Board of Trustees and the curator wish to thank all who have remembered the museum as a repository for interesting items and relics of the past.

A SPECIAL AWARD OF MERIT WAS MADE BY THE CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES TO OUR MUSEUM CURATOR, ED LANGHART, AT THEIR MEETING LAST MONTH IN BAKERSFIELD. THIS IS AN ANNUAL AWARD FOR UNUSUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE PROMOTION AND PRESERVATION OF CALIFORNIA HISTORY. MR. AND MRS. LANGHART AND OUR RECORDING SECRETARY, JAN HARRISON, ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE FROM HEALDSBURG.

THE PALMS  
(Crocker Sanitarium)

Harry Bosworth Crocker was the son of Henry Crocker, Geyserville rancher, who had settled there in 1878 with his wife, Mary, and their baby son, coming from San Francisco where they were well known. Harry B. graduated from Healdsburg High School in 1894 and attended Stanford University. He graduated from California Medical College in 1900 and practiced two years in San Francisco. He then opened an office in the Masonic Block in Healdsburg and in less than a year announced he would build a first class and modern sanitarium, the first such institution in our area.

It was located on the corner of Matheson and University streets and the building, a concrete structure with tile roof, in the Mission style, was built at a cost of \$12,000. It contained twenty-four rooms and three baths and could accommodate twenty patients. In the surgical room everything was complete in the way of equipment and instruments. It was to be open to all physicians in the town. At the open house held in July, 1904 over a thousand persons were shown through the facility by Dr. Crocker.

However, after just two years, the building was converted to a hotel for tourists and commercial men. It was renamed "The Palms" and was under the Management of Mrs. Crocker. The place had been thoroughly renovated, and, because it was claimed to be earthquake proof (this was shortly after the earthquake of 1906), it was popular with travelers. A free carriage service was maintained to convey guests to and from the business district, the river, and the depot. Although no liquor was served the food was excellent. Mrs. Crocker made a specialty of serving parties with dinners in private dining rooms, allowing some dancing and card parties.

A year later, in August, 1907, The Palms was leased by Dr. Crocker to Fritz Lueck, who made a specialty of Sunday dinners for families. M.V. Williams, the office assistant, met all trains with a newly acquired bus. And to this day The Palms has been a residence available to the people of Healdsburg.

Margaret Powell Kidder of Toronto, Canada, has written about the Geysers Resort as she remembers it at the turn of the century. Her father, Dr. David Powell, was owner of the resort during this period. This is the second of three installments:

### THE GEYSERS

We begged for beds on the open part of the porch so that at dawn we could look up to the top of the tall pine tree touched by the sun coming over the mountains and hear the blue Jay's raucous call from the topmost branch. My sister always insisted that the jay was her favorite song bird! We had a swimming pool in the creek - the boulders taken out and a wooden dam put in each year. The water was a most perfect temperature, due to the hot springs bubbling up here and there. There was a row of cubicles on the bank for changing into our bathing costumes, and what decorous bathing costumes we wore! Mother's, knitted by Gantner and Mattern of San Francisco, was long sleeved and high necked, with stockings and canvas soles attached. My sister and I had woven one-piece affairs called "Annette Kellermans". Then sailor-collared taffeta dresses worn on top. I never remember learning to swim - I learned at such an early age - but how we managed to stay afloat so decently garbed, I will never know.

Our steam bath was truly unique and I'm sure very unsanitary by the standards of today. Steam was piped directly from the hillside into a small room in a bath house. The building was a wooden affair with an oval tank about four feet deep and I would think about 12 or 14 feet long by 10 feet in width. There was a shower of cold water and three dressing rooms, each with a brown leather covered couch, so one could relax after the bath, which of course we never did. The procedure, after donning French chemises, the fine linen hand-embroidered kind, (all our old ones were saved for this purpose - modern nudism would never have been condoned) was to go into the little steam room, which had benches along each wall, hold a wash cloth over your face and sit until the perspiration was pouring from every pore. When we could take it no longer we dashed into the plunge (we could regulate the temperature of the water to suit ourselves), then into the cold shower. No modern sauna can compare!

We usually began the day with the steam bath, then spent the day riding, with a swim in the late afternoon, walking up from the swimming

pool just in time to see the stage arrive with its dust-covered passengers. There was always a man stationed at the stage landing with a feather duster to dust off the passengers and their luggage. I wonder if there is such a thing as a feather duster extant. They must have been made of turkey feathers bound to a wooden handle. I can remember Chinese boys in lovely silk costumes, who used to wield dusters of peacock feathers in the court of the old Palace Hotel in San Francisco.

Our picnics were often very different, too, for we would get the Chinese cook to mix Boston Brown Bread batter and put it in a coffee tin, and to give us some raw eggs. Then we would take them to a boiling spring by the side of the creek and put the bread in to boil. It would be done in a couple of hours, so, after a climb up the creek or a walk in the woods, we would come back and retrieve it, and boil the eggs. How good they tasted!

. . . . . to be continued.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### 50 YEARS AGO

A new railroad passenger depot was constructed just west of the old depot, which was left to handle freight.

Plans were drawn and work commenced (but never finished) on a new and beautiful Fitch Mountain Tavern on south Fitch Mountain Road.

Harold Tucker and Johnny Hillhouse left on a tour of the Orient on the President Cleveland. They were members of the ship's orchestra.

World shotput record, held by Ralph Rose for 19 years, broken.

Road built to the top of Fitch Mountain. Three acres on top reserved for hotel and cottages.

Art Meese succeeded W.B. York as Commander of the American Legion.

Two miles of new concrete highway in Alexander Valley, leading toward Knight's Valley, was completed and opened for use.

Eight new cottages were added to George Day's auto camp on Mill street. Two were large enough to accommodate double beds.

Maksente's Tire Shop, just south of Bill Maher's harness shop, was destroyed by fire.

Samuel L. "Wood" Wattles died at age 56.



Fred Young, Ed Quinn, Harold Rosenberg, Roy Haley, Russ Stevens (1942)



Ethel Williams, Maude Robinson, Queen Mabel Seawell, Gussie Lambert, Nellie Gum (July 4, 1903)



Lake Sotoyome (Memorial Beach) 1910



HEALDSBURG HIGH SCHOOL - 1914

Back: Don Petray, Lou Rowland, Claude Burke, Teo Rosenberg, Sewell Hilgerloh, Al Parker.  
 Front: Ernest Frellson, Al Hoskinson, Glenn Dewey, Leslie Price, Geo. Bovett, Ward Grant.

## "OLD GLORY" ON FITCH MOUNTAIN

Perhaps there are some still living who recall the unfurling of our flag from the summit of Fitch Mountain on a Sunday afternoon in April, 1917. Those were patriotic times, and our country had just entered the war against Germany.

Thirty men, with the aid of two horses, had on that morning, drawn a lofty flagpole up the Ralph Rose trail and placed it, with the necessary tackle, in the fork of a majestic oak that crowned the peak.

In the early afternoon many small groups could be seen slowly wending their way, by different routes, up the steep slopes, to express their loyalty and allegiance to the Stars and Stripes. When the moment arrived to dedicate and raise the 12 x 18 foot flag, President George W. Hayes of the Chamber of Commerce, in a few well-chosen words, referred to the auspicious occasion that had brought nearly 200 people to the top of the mountain. As the municipal band played "The Star Spangled Banner", Guy Rose slowly raised old glory to her place. After the singing of the National Anthem an eloquent address was delivered by Professor H.R. Bull.

The sixty-five foot pole was donated by A.F. Stevens, and Horton and Grand donated and made the iron work which bound the sections together. Louis Heitz gave the use of his team and help in the transportation. His big horses, "Doll" and "Bunch", was the first team to ever take a wagon to the summit of the mountain. The wagon bearing the pole was drawn up from the Camp Hale side of the mountain and with twenty men pulling ahead by ropes and ten men behind, the entire load was transported to the very summit under the great oak tree.

The following assisted in transporting the pole and placing it in position: Guy Rose, Louis Heitz, Tom Young, J.M. Alexander, Charles Hearing, O.C. Huebner, George Day, Henry Nelson, Herbert Bush, C.O. Swanson, Joe Dicke, S.M. Hankins, Dave McDermott, Ollie Albertson, Harvey Frost, E.B. Deakin, Tony Desette, John S. Williams, Charlie Rimmel, Tom Warren, John Sullivan, Clarence Hudson, Claude Nosler, N. Pettis, George Fitch, A. Verpade, John Hartman, W. Peters, C.K. Hudson, Harry Emerson, and R.C. Nelson.

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

In memory of

MR. and MRS. MERVYN SILBERSTEIN

In memory of

CAPT. C.L. KIMBALL  
DR. MARGARET V. KIMBALL  
GENEVIEVE KIMBALL BENJAMIN  
GEORGE and LULU DAVIS  
WILL and BLANCHE DOANE  
CAROL DOANE BENNETTS

NOTE:

Appreciation is extended to the Healdsburg Answering Service, 227 Fitch Street, for the special attention they give to the printing of the Russian River Recorder.



## PIONEER REUNION

In 1907 a reunion was held at the residence of George Kimsey Bell in Dry Creek Valley to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival of the family in Healdsburg. Sibyl Hassett Roberts, now of Santa Rosa, was among the many family members in attendance that day.

In 1850 Thomas Bell crossed the plains to California, to be followed two years later by his brother Shadrach. George Kimsey Bell came in 1854 and settled in the Santa Clara valley. In 1855, however, he returned to his home in Missouri to commence preparations for bringing his widowed mother and the remainder of the family to California.

In 1857, when but a young man of twenty-one years, Mr. Bell commenced the return trip in the responsible position of captain of a "wagon train" composed of about three hundred persons. Besides his mother, Margaret Vaughn Bell, and sister Ludy (later Mrs. Lynn Bledsoe), and three brothers, Albert, John and Harry, the party included an uncle, Thomas H. Vaughn, his wife and three daughters, Lizzie, Josie and Carrie, and two sons, Jesse and W.J. Vaughn.

They reached a spot on Mill Creek September 25th, 1857, where they remained some time, and a few weeks later the Bells purchased the ranch where Kimsey Bell and his family resided for many years. The remainder of the party settled in or near Healdsburg, where they have since lived, with the exception of Thomas and Harry Bell, who, after a few years, returned to Missouri.

Present day descendents of the family include Walter Bell, S. Duvall Bell, Rowena Martin, Bill and Dave Stine, Margaret Stuart, Catherine Curtis, David Hanlon, Fred Hartsock, Irene Skelton, Grace Dixon, and Mildred Keck.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Officers and Directors of the HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Rose Demostene....President	Mary Kay West.....Corresp. Sect'y.
Nelson Cardinal...Vice President	Robert C. Jones...Director
Major Phillips....Treasurer	Robert Hassett....Director
Jan Harrison.....Recording Sect'y.	Jack Relyea.....Director
	Thomas Roscoe.....Director

Newsletter Editor: Ed Langhart

The following article was one of a series published in the Healdsburg Tribune, commencing in 1938, by Dr. William C. Shipley who was born in Healdsburg in 1872:

#### A "DOG-POWER" PUMP

When John Grater (a short, fat, jolly, glad-handed German) and his wife (a rather forceful Irish lassie with a foghorn voice) built the Union Hotel, now known as the Plaza Hotel, they installed some very old-country ideas, such as using a Chinese gong to call the guests to meals. Three times a day Grater would get out this ancient oriental alarm, beating it in the lobby, the bar, and out in front of the building on the sidewalk. The sound of this gong would reverberate and echo through the old hotel, up and down the street, and across the plaza. In fact, on clear days it could be heard for blocks. How its music made one's mouth water, for the Graters were famous for the tempting food they spread upon their table, and the price was 25¢ for a big husky meal.

Being thrifty and not wanting to depend on outside sources for a water supply, Herr Grater had a deep well behind the hotel and he installed a good-sized pump to lift the water into a large tank atop a tankhouse. For the motive power he had a large cage or wheel-like contraption, treadmill fashion, connected to the pump, and two very large dogs which, when water was needed, were placed in this exaggerated squirrel cage. Around and 'round it would go as the dogs walked within the wheel. This gave them exercise and helped them earn their daily bread, for each dog could consume enough food for four men. The dog food cost nothing, for there were plenty of scraps from each meal served, to more than feed the dogs, cats, and pigs which were kept in a pen behind the hotel.

The Graters were great hosts, set a bountiful table, ran a well patronized bar, made every nickel count, were honorable citizens, and waxed fat and rich.

THE TAX ROLL, 1851

One hundred and twenty-five years ago land values in Sonoma County were not high, and according to the records, land in the Healdsburg section now worth \$10,000 per acre could have been bought for \$1 at that time.

In the first tax list of the county, dated 1851, there were but 190 taxpayers, and every one of them had to go to Sonoma, the county seat, take the oath and sign the roll. Among the names may be recognized such old family names as Harmon Heald, "father" of Healdsburg, Cyrus Alexander, John Bidwell, Canute Baronda, the Carillos, John B.R. Cooper, and William Bennett.

Cyrus Alexander, who gave his name to Alexander Valley, admitted ownership of 4,340 of those fertile acres, "cash value, \$3,255," described as part of Captain Fitch's tract. To the name of Canute Baronda, "one league of land," or 4,240 acres, assessed for \$4,240. William Bennett owned six and one-half leagues near Fort Ross, and John B.R. Cooper had 12,790 acres of the Molino Tract, "cash value, \$12,790."

There was a war tax in those days, too, and the taxpayers of the time had as much difficulty shaking it off as those of the present. It consisted of a \$25 "militia tax," through which the state and its counties were protected against the threat of invasion and Indian uprisings.

The taxpayer with a "Mexican cow" got off cheaper in the tax collections than the one with an "American cow," but the difference in bovine nationality seemingly made a difference also in the quality and quantity of milk. Female dogs were assessed for \$3 straight, males for \$1, two for \$3, or three for \$5. There existed in that day a "town of Ruth," which like many other things of the period, is now forgotten.

\* \* \* \* \*

NEW MEMBERS RECENTLY ADDED TO THE ROLL:

Barbara Clarke	Stacy Belli	Wendell Packwood
Mary Calhoun Graham	Marie Belli	Ella Packwood
Alfred L. Andrews	Beth Salisbury	Olive Wilson
Mrs. Russell H. Green	Ray Wainscott	Mrs. Judith Miller
Francesca B. Trouette	Teresa Burkdoll	Marjorie Hendrickson

THE DRAYEUR CASE

The year was 1903. On a Sunday in August, in Healdsburg, Sophie Drayeur made known the death of her husband, August, admitting that she had struck her husband over the head with a piece of stovewood the previous Friday. She was bound over by Judge Provines on a charge of manslaughter but two weeks later the District Attorney raised this to a charge of murder and she was held for trial.

The sympathy of the community was with Sophie, as it was well known the old winemaker was addicted to heavy drinking and abused his wife terribly, often threatening to kill both her and himself.

Constant Drayeur, son of Sophie and August, testified that for more than ten years his father had threatened the life of Sophie. He said the slightest suggestion from the mother always met with violent rebuke from his father.

When Sophie was placed on the stand she stated that, on this occasion, her husband had repeatedly tried to choke her, and, from his determination, she realized she must protect herself. Then, she alleged, she seized the piece of firewood and struck her husband across the forehead, and afterward threw the stick into the wood box.

Sophie then begged him to lie down on the bed, she tried to make him comfortable, and then went out on the porch to sit. In a short time she heard a sound as of a body falling and this was followed by the sound of furniture being violently thrown about. She was afraid to enter the bedroom.

She didn't go in until Sunday morning about 10 o'clock. At that time she took a glass of water to him and found him covered with blood. She summoned neighbors and they told Sophie he was dead.

The case was given to the jury, and, in a short time, they returned a verdict of "not guilty".

\* \* \* \* \*

TO THE TELEPHONE COMMITTEE: THANK YOU!

The members of the Telephone Committee are the communications line between the Board of Directors and the general membership. These seventeen people each make about a dozen phone calls, prior to each meeting, to those members living in and about Healdsburg and without their dedicated service the attendance at our meetings couldn't be maintained. This committee is composed of:

GWEN HASSETT  
MARGARET LUCE  
MARY DOWLING  
CARMEL BOTTINI  
VIRGINIA ZOBEL  
ROSE DEMOSTENE

MAXINE BELL  
BERTHA CARLEY  
CLARICE SULLIVAN  
HAZEL WILSON  
TED KELLOGG

JAN HARRISON  
EVELYN IVERSEN  
SUZANNE GUSTAFSON  
SHIRLEY RELYEA  
ALETA RULOFSON  
PEARL GUPTILL

## AUNT KATIE'S CALCULATION

Katie Miller presented a problem. Her husband and some friends were leaving for a Fourth of July celebration in 1854 and they were much concerned as to how to conceal a jug of whiskey which was in the house. From her known capacity it was deemed unwise to leave Aunt Katie at home in company with the jug, so one of the more agile men climbed a tree, and unseen by Kate, tied it securely far out of reach of his thirsty friend.

Not long after their departure Auntie's natural thirst was in need of quenching. She, therefore, cast about in search of the treasure, but it was nowhere to be found. At last she caught a glimpse of the lost jug, nestled among the leaves, but far out of reach. Diligent cogitation solved the riddle of how to gain the prize. She carried out a large wash-tub, and having taken correct bearings, placed it immediately beneath the jug, and next, procuring her husband's rifle, she took deliberate aim, fired, the bullet pierced the target, the liquor trickled into the tub, Aunt Kate regaled herself, and was found on the return of the party, in affectionate proximity to what remained of her favorite tippie, having had as much "independence" as was good for her.

(Valentine and Catherine Miller, widely known as "Felta" and "Aunt Katie", were among the earliest settlers in the Mill Creek area, owning the old mill property originally settled by W.J. March.)

\* \* \* \* \*

## ANTIQUA AND COLLECTIBLE SALE

Our May 6th antique and collectible sale resulted in much fun, some work and some profit! The sale of items donated by members and friends brought in a total of \$794 to add to our treasury. Verna Lafon chaired this committee and those assisting her at the sale were: Pat Schmidt, Bernice Auradou, Bob and June Jones, Chrystal Langhart, Nelson Cardinal, Jack Relyea, Major Phillips, and Rose Demostene.

Felix Lafon was responsible for the attractive posters which advertised the sale. We extend a big "thank you" to all who contributed items, thus making this sale the success it was. Funds raised by the sale will be placed in the recently established Museum Memorial Fund of the Healdsburg Historical Society, to be

used for future improvements, acquisitions, and expansion of the museum

## ANNUAL BARBECUE A SUCCESS

On Sunday, June 4th, members and friends gathered at the Villa Chanticleer picnic grounds for our second annual barbecue. Chicken, prepared by the American Legion, was enjoyed by approximately 150 people. Highlight of the barbecue was the raffle of a painting of the old Pena Adobe done by Rosinda Holmes. Over \$100 was raised by this and the proud new owners of the picture are Mr. and Mrs. Frank Balbi.

Arrangements for the barbecue were made by Chairman Jack Relyea, with Gladys Barnes handling the ticket sales. A good time was had by all.