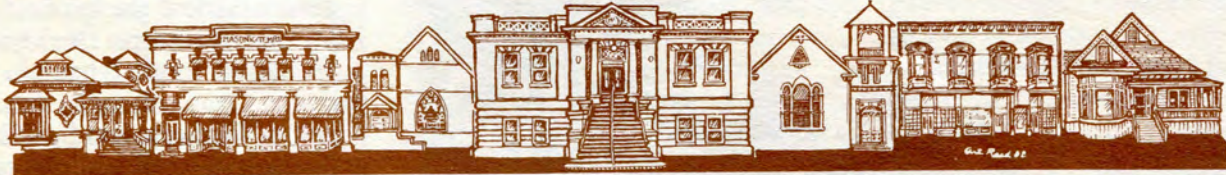


RUSSIAN RIVER



R E C O R D E R



• *Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society* •

FALL 1990 • HEALDSBURG 1930 • ISSUE 38

By Alice Grove • Page Two

MATHESON ST. HEALDSBURG, CALIF.
"THE ROAD TO FITCH MT. SUMMER RESORTS"



◦ HEALDSBURG ◦ 1930 ◦

Alice Grove

November, 1930, sixty years ago; what was going on in Healdsburg? What sort of small town were we? Do we find any common ground with Healdsburg today? Let's go back to an objective account as published in the Healdsburg Tribune for November, 1930.

The name of the paper, The Healdsburg Tribune, was in the same old English script as it is today. The November 1, 1930 issue, five cents a copy has a banner headline above the name, "Daily Tribune Observes 11th Birthday." Below the script name, a headline, "Hill Fire Rages Uncontrolled." This article concerned fires in San Mateo County and the southern California Malibu Beach area.

The featured item of November 1 news was the anniversary celebration. A lengthy article by Cyrus Etheredge, editor, stated the Tribune became a daily paper 11 years earlier and in 1930 expanded from a six-column newspaper to a seven. Inaugurated several years ago, a second edition is printed in the mornings for the benefit of country subscribers.

According to Etheredge the Tribune has a world-wide picture service of Newspaper Enterprise Association, the largest feature organization in the world; the Pacific Coast Picture service of United Press; comic strips, cartoons, sport drawings and feature articles of general interest; and world news from United Press, the world's largest evening paper telegraph agency. Locally, the Tribune reports fully the happenings of the community.

Looking forward, Etheredge anticipates the building of the Golden Gate Bridge and the great new development which will be seen in this area.

On the front page was a long article congratulating the Diana Packing Company, the dominant canning enterprise of northern California. This company canned three types of tomatoes, solid pack, standard pack, and Italian style tomato paste. The company employs 85 to 100 people during the canning season and has an annual payroll of \$85,000, the bulk of which is paid to local people and

spent in Healdsburg.

Page three features school news. In "School View on Athletics" high school Principal Kent defended the school's position against a critical group of citizens. Kent said the reason Healdsburg High had no football team in the Sonoma County League was due to a lack of funds (sound familiar?) and a lack of sufficient players to stand the strain of a league season (hard to believe!).

On page five, minor damage on Halloween. One broken window caused by green orange. Sheep shearing wages reduced from 12 1/2 and 13 to 10 cents per head. The dog tag law is enforced.

The Plaza Theater is showing Man Trouble with Dorothy MacKailie and Milton Sills. Also the radio broadcast of Amos 'n Andy will be heard at 8:30 so patrons will not miss an episode of their favorite radio program.

Many election ads were throughout the paper in anticipation of the November 4 election. One brief and to the point--"No on 7, daylight saving time. You can't make a 25-hour day."

A special election notice from the Golden Gate Bridge and Highway District presented for election day: "Proposition to incur a bonded indebtedness of Golden Gate Bridge and Highway District amounting to \$35,000,000 (the correct figure) to construct a public toll bridge across the Golden Gate.

Page seven urged all readers to trade at home-owned stores. Participants were Rosenberg and Bush; Burlan Reid Chevrolet Co.; Imrie and McClellan, foods of highest quality; Massoni and Belli Service Station; The Toggery, Julius Georgi, menswear; Healdsburg Hardware; S. H. Cooley Ford Dealer; C. J. Rouse, furniture, wallpaper, and paint; A. W. Garrett Hardware; Vitousek Shoe Store; Wallace and Jones, the harmony



store; Rose and Stevenson Hardware; Schwab Bros. Shoes; and General Drug. Classifieds: Turkeys, pumpkins, player pianos, new and used from \$93; 25 tons red oat hay delivered \$17; clean coal; rugs made from old carpets and rags. Eggs, firsts 38 cents, smalls 13 cents.

Social and personals: Members of the ORU Club were entertained by Mrs. Jirah Luce at her home on Matheson Street. Bridge was played at three tables. Mrs. Guy Rose was given high score, and Mrs. Everett Lampson was awarded low. Jackie Zanzi of Santa Rosa is visiting for a few days with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Carlo Zanzi of Alexander Valley. Busy Bee Bazaar was successful, nets \$65. Francis Passalacqua, student at St. Mary's College, was visiting at home over the weekend. Walter Nardi motored to San Rafael Monday with his sister, Elsie Nardi, who was returning to Dominican College after spending a few days at home. Louis Wasson and John Fay of Geyserville motored to Petaluma Sunday for a practice game of horseshoes.

In other news, "Merger of Healdsburg Bank is Made." Healdsburg today has one big bank instead of two smaller ones, by a merger of the local branches of Bank of America and Bank of Italy. The merger will be housed in the former Bank of Italy quarters at the corner of West and Powell (now Healdsburg and Plaza) under the name of Bank of America Trust and Savings. The merger is one of 438 in California of the two systems. No reduction in personnel.

"Ramblings of a Spectator" falls under the-more-things-change category: Have you ever traveled along Front Street from the railroad tracks into town on University Street? You remember that months and months ago the California type

of pavement was torn down the center to put a sewer pipe down in a trench? I thought the city dads would need no more urging than to have their attention drawn to a disgraceful street condition. But the street is still terrible.

The November 5 edition covered election returns. A light turnout of voters passed the Golden Gate Bridge and Highway District proposition.

November 6 indicated one drunk driver arrested. U. S. Steel dropped to a new low since 1928. Railroads are lowest since 1924. Utilities a new low for the year. More than \$2 billion lost. The church page lists: St. Paul's, Christian Science, Presbyterian-Methodist, Full Gospel Mission, and First Christian.

Featured on November 12-- Life in a future on a chain-store basis with the last frontier of individualism falling when even farms are operated by corporations was forecast in an address to the Kiwanis.

On November 18, Rosenberg and Bush 65th anniversary sale including Hart,

Schaffner, and Marx suits and overcoats from \$16.85 to \$32.85. Extra size bath towels 37 cents, 81 by 99 sheets \$1.35.

In the November 24 edition, Fitch Mountain Road to be widened to a 40 to 50-foot highway in anticipation of increased traffic when the Golden Gate Bridge is opened.

On November 26 girls organize a town basketball team-- Evelyn Ceriale, captain; Evelyn Day, manager; Helen Edwards, Daisy Richards, Eleanor Richards, Audrey Puget, Theresa Ferrari, Evelyn Cook, Marie Gully, Wanda McPherson, Mildred Renfro, and Yvonne Barmettler.

Ad (what a dream!): Have a new 1931 Chevrolet 6 for Christmas. Standard coupe, bumpers, spare tire lock, radiator ornament, \$717 delivered here.

Under the mast of the Tribune--"Our 125th year." Healdsburg's personality will continue to flourish as long as we appreciate our heritage and accept the responsibility of preserving the lifestyle of small-town America.



MUSEUM NEWS

SUCCESSFUL TRANSPLANT

Our Museum continues to thrive after being transplanted to its lovely new home in the Carnegie Building. In our first month of operation at the new site (May), hundreds of visitors turned out to see the Museum that they had so patiently waited for. Although it is usually difficult to build up public attendance in a new location after a long closure, during the months of June, July, and August over 1500 people managed to find their way to our door. By next summer we hope to double that figure.

MAKES MAJOR MEDIA

On September 16 the Museum was featured on KRON TV on the Bay Area Backroads show with Jerry Graham. The new Museum showed off very nicely on video, we thought. So much so that the director was heard to murmur, "Gee, we look just like a real museum!" The show was widely seen in the bay area and has upped our attendance and donations considerably this fall.

On October 7 the Chronicle ran an article about the Victorian homes of Healdsburg, largely inspired by the Museum's popular publication, Historic Homes of

Healdsburg. Of course it's no news to us, but the above proves that if done correctly, history can be news and can help draw attention to our worthy burg.

TOYS AND QUILTS

"Toys of Christmas Past: the 10th Annual Antique and Collectible Toy and Doll Exhibit" will open November 20 and will run through January 7. We hope to turn the Museum's new rotating gallery and gift shop into a Yuletide wonderland of delightful playthings from yesteryear. Our shop will feature unique Victorian Christmas reproductions and craft items for sale. If you have toys that you wish to loan for this exhibit or Christmas crafts that you wish to sell in the gift shop, call us right away.

On January 30 the Museum rotating gallery will premier a very special exhibit, "A Stitch in Time: Sonoma County Quilts 1830-1930." The handiwork of pioneer emigrants and later residents will be shown in this visually and historically exciting show. We are still looking for more quilts to add to our collection for this exhibit; so if you have one that you would like to share, please call us.

NEW HOURS--TAKE NOTE

Beginning on November 20

the Museum will be open for public viewing Tuesday through Sunday 12 to 5 p.m. The research library is available by appointment only. Closed Mondays and all major holidays, including Christmas and New Year's.

ARTIFACT DONATIONS

Since our last publication the following generous people have donated to the Museum collection:

Roberta Alexander, Lois Schwab Bertagna, Ed Butterfield, Billie and Roy Clark, Bessie Cunningham, Remo Galeazzi, Dorothy Haub, Gertrude Hendricks, Bob Jones, Kathy Littman, Roy Lowe, Betty Neill, Elaine Olson, Lorraine Owen, Rena Phillips, Irma Pohl, Clara Schieffer, Ben Steele, Leola Ridenhour Trapp, Robert Wade, Elaine Wichers, Doreene Zanzi.

*Healdsburg Museum
Edwin Langhart, Founder
Hannah Clayborn, Dir.
221 Matheson Street
Healdsburg, CA 95448*

707/431-3325

Staff

Diane Johannsen
Verna Lafon, Editor
Curt Sloan, Layout

Help • We need an editor



SOCIETY NOTES

By Phillip Smith

Gentlepeople

The new Museum has now been open for more than six months, and the Society should thank itself for making this period a successful one. As you are aware, our generous financial support contributed a great deal toward the interior and exterior improvements and refurbishing. Additionally, we have provided docents on a regular basis and are operating a gift shop on the main floor. Needless to say, our continued support (both financial and time) is essential if the Museum's high quality is to be maintained.

We recently reached an agreement with the Healdsburg City Council to borrow sufficient money to pay for a permanent part-time employee for the next two years. This has allowed the museum to remain open six days a week--Sunday afternoon has been added--and has permitted other services to continue at a high level. However, we must commence repaying the loan in year three and fund the part-time position ourselves after this initial two-year period. This makes our annual fall fundraiser, the Zin Hop, most important as it will be the primary event to fund this person.

Speaking of the Zin Hop, this year the event was again blessed by beautiful weather and two marvelous sponsors, Hop Kiln Winery and Mendocino Brewing Company, plus many local businesses. Unfortunately, less people attended; and we were only able to net a little over \$6,000, down from last year's \$8,000. Still, not a bad amount but more will be needed in the future. As advertised, this year's proceeds will be used to purchase a computer.

This year at our annual meeting, to be held in the Senior Center on January 29, we will present the first annual Preservation Award. This award will go to an individual or group who has done something significant to preserve our local heritage, be it architecturally or otherwise.

I personally wish to thank all of you for your support, both time and money, during the past year and look forward to at least as much, if not more, in 1991. See you January 29 if not before.

Annual meeting

The Historical Society will once again be holding its annual potluck dinner and meeting. This year the dinner will be on Tuesday, January 29, 6 p.m., Healdsburg Senior Citizen Center, 133 Matheson Street.

Our program will include the Back Roads film taken in Healdsburg. Please bring your own table service and one hot dish, salad, or dessert. If you have questions, call June Jones at 433-1920. Plan to attend!

A potluck pre-dinner reception at the Museum will be held January 29, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wine will be served. A special pre-opening showing of "A Stitch in Time: Sonoma County Quilts From 1840-1940" will precede the potluck.

THANK YOU

ZIN HOP SUPPORT

Safeway, Sweetpeas, Molsberry's, Willie Bird, Franco American, Elsie Passalacqua, Eleanor Zak, Calistoga Water.

Thank you

Auction items

Bits and Pieces, David Bynum Winery, Brite Cleaners, El Farolito Restaurant, Kilkenny Bakery, Salami Tree Deli, Touch of Rose, Healdsburg Inn, Evan's Ceramics, Five Oaks Farm, Molsberry's Market, Healdsburg Clothing, Bob Trowbridge Canoe, The Side Door, Singletree Restaurant, Winston Stanley Florist, The Sound Shoppe, Jacob Horner, Haydon House, Madrona Manor, Nancy Bauer, Vineyard Electronic, Cubby House, Shoffeitt Tasting,



Plasburg Wine, Conart Scientific, Northbay Savings, Palladio, Coast to Coast, Timbercrest, Vadnais, Tayman Golf, Toyon Books, Healdsburg Coffee, Rena Phillips, Norbert and Judy Babin, Sanderson Ford. Thank you for your help.

DOCENT PROGRAM

Thanks to many loyal volunteers, the Museum has had at least one docent on duty every day during the week and most Saturdays. We have lost a few, and some new people have joined us; so the overall number remains about the same.

Since the Museum now is open six days a week, including Sunday, we will be looking for new recruits. This is a chance to be a goodwill ambassador for our city as well as the Museum and at the same time explain a little to visitors about our very interesting history. If there are any volunteers out there, call the Museum and leave your name. Thanks again to everyone for helping.

GIFT SHOP

The holiday season is not far off. All of you will be thinking of gifts for family and friends. New merchandise is now arriving, particularly Christmas-oriented gift items and books. We certainly hope you will remember us when you

shop.

All proceeds from the gift shop are used to help maintain and improve the Museum. Your purchases enable you to be a part of that support.

IDEAS NEEDED

The need for the Society to have money-making affairs is an on-going matter which is of concern to all of us. While the city provides basic funds to keep the doors of the Museum open, it is up to members of the Society and the community to give not only time, but money in order to allow the Museum to continue to develop and improve. We need to give the community an incentive to donate money.

The Zin Hop, which has been held annually in September for the past four years, expanded the financial support for the first three years; but during the current year the money earned on the Hop showed a downward trend. With costs of operation of the Museum going up, the need for finances goes up, so we need to buck the current trend. In having the Hop, we have had to rely on large donations by individuals to make it as profitable as it has been; but those sources are not necessarily going to be available to us in the future.

This is an open letter to all of you to

request ideas. The Society needs your suggestions and recommendations as to how we can build on the Zin Hop theme or find another unique method of improving our money-making ability so that our Museum will succeed in our community and serve as a model of community effort which can be shared with other communities.

As individuals and businesses in our community, when you start preparation of your 1991 budgets, we would ask that you carefully consider a contribution to the Society for the benefit of your Museum. We recognize that all of you are inundated by requests from a multitude of worthwhile charitable organizations, but the cliché that "charity begins at home" should be applied here so that our Museum will be able to preserve the history of Healdsburg for future generations of residents and visitors.

We would ask that you sit down and write out your thoughts as to what we, the citizens of Healdsburg and members of the Society, can do by way of fundraising to continue to successfully operate the Museum in the future with the thought in mind that we want to raise the most money for the least expense. Please drop off your ideas at the museum.



IN MEMORY

We regretfully acknowledge the Society member who passed away since our last publication.

Margaret Luce memorial donations have been received from the following in her memory: Dave and Keith Lampson, Ira Rosenberg, Fred and Billy Haley, Rossaline Maher, Bertha Vranna, Dr. and Mrs. Gary Smith, Francis and Elsie Passalague, D. and Mrs. Emerson Meyer (Fern Naber). Life membership: Doris Clark.

MARGARET LUCE

Margaret Luce was one of my mother's best friends and a fellow bridge player. How they loved their bridge. They were charter members of a small group called The Wildcats who would meet one Saturday a month for lunch and an afternoon of bridge.

I had known Margaret for many years before I actually became one of her pupils; and because she was a close friend of the family, I wanted so much to please her and be the perfect student.

Margaret, "English," and I got along fairly well, but Margaret, "sewing," and I did not get along at all. Years later we had many a laugh remembering how frustrated she had been with my apparent inability to learn to sew. I almost caused her to give up teaching.

Margaret was a strict teacher, but she was devoted to her students. How fortunate for me to have known this remarkable person as a teacher and a life-long friend.

by Mary Brandt



Eighth grade • Mrs. Luce

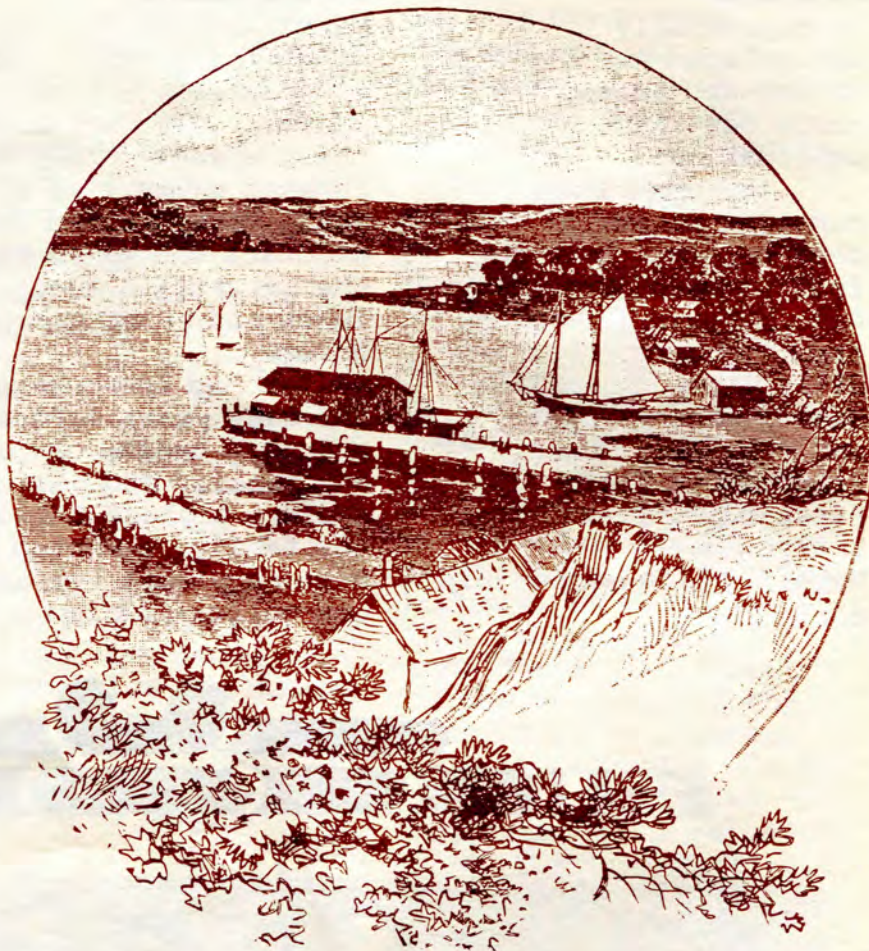


A CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE

The Matheson Letters

Diane Johannsen, Editor

Part IV



After sailing for about six months from February to July, 1849, Rod Matheson has arrived via the ship Pacific in San Francisco. His first letter written in San Francisco expressed his disappointment at finding no letters from his wife, Netty, awaiting him. Following are some highlights from his letters written that fall and winter.

5th August 1948

I am at present writing this under our large tent where we have been living for one week. Shall I give you a description of the first nights? I shall proceed accordingly. Mr. Fulger and I were fetched upon to take a small tent and go down to Excelsior Valley and in the name of the Club take possession. We did

so and stayed that night on shore. We got the tent pitched, built a fire and cooked our supper "a la gypsy." Mr. Fulger then proposed that he go out for the purpose of ascertaining who our neighbors are and promised that he would be back by dark. But he forgot his promise and did not make his appearance until I had turned in. I was fast asleep when I heard someone entering the tent. I instantly was on my feet; and if he had not spoken, I might have given him a pill that would be hard of digestion. When I think of the degree of caution and fear that had possession of us that night, I have to laugh outright for I never was in a place where I have seen so much property exposed in the open. The streets are lined with

goods, the wharves or landings are in the same condition. My trunks have been out ever since I have been here. Our tools and cooking utensils are in the same way; and there is no more feat of anyone taking anything, for every person has more than he knows what to do with. If a man wants a clean shirt, he can buy one cheaper than he can get it washed. If anyone is caught stealing, he is either shot or has his ears cut off and whipped. The last is the most common method, I believe, so you see that the penalty is so high that it is a great risk. And all our things are quite safe.

Number 2

You must not believe one half of

Eight



what you see in the newspapers with respect to the state of success here. I read an editorial in the N. Y. Herald which quite upset my former good opinion of the correspondents of that paper. He speaks of there being so many more of Mexicans, Chileans, etc., than of Americans, when as it is the other way. The Spaniards are as frightened of us as can be. Let me give you an idea of their timidity. I was on my way to the Mission a Dolores (or grief) about three miles back of San Francisco in company with a gentleman from New York. As the road was through the woods, we took our guns in hopes of killing a deer. The person that was in company with me strolled off; and I lost track of him, but seeing a road up above me, I made up the sand hill as fast as possible. The gun was sitting on my shoulder rather uneasy so I shifted it on the other; but while engaged in doing so, two Mexicans with pack mules turned an angle in the road, and seeing me, put spurs to their beasts and whipped up those that they were driving. Instantly they stopped short, for my companion was coming toward them. They did not know what to do. He advanced toward them and in Spanish asked (yonker like) what they had in their packs. "Nothing, nothing!" was the reply. "We are going after cargo!" When they were passed, they put spurs to their mules and soon scampered out of sight.

Number 3

One thing you may rest assured of is that I will not stay a moment longer than I can help, for there is nothing to entice a man to stay here. The climate is most disagreeable. In the morning and evening it is cold and foggy, and we have to wear thick woolen and winter clothing. In the middle of the day it is so hot that the thermometer is sometimes

up to 100 in the shade; and as a general thing, 80 or 90 and up at the mines. It is so hot that they cook their victuals on the rocks heated by the sun. Society: There is none, so you may be sure that I am back as soon as conscience and my pocket will let me.

Number 4

My dearest Netty: Be sure and write me by every steamer, for I shall not be satisfied unless I hear from yourself. Only think I have not had but one letter since I left New York from you. I expect that you have written; but the mail is lost, for I hear that the postmaster burnt two letter bags in Panama because they did not come the right way.

Number 5

31st August 1849: P. S. This morning I was passing the back of our tent and this enclosed rose was growing. I could not resist sending it to you as it is the only wild flower I have seen in this country.

Number 6

10th September 1849: Shall I give you a description of the church and ministers of this place? The Baptists are the only ones as yet that have a regularly build church and an organized congregation. They have a first-rate preacher. In fact, he is the best in the place. His name is Mr. Wheeler. I believe he is from Jersey and belongs to no nation.

Their church would hold, I would think, from 10 to 12 hundred people and is pretty well filled morning and evening. The next in importance are the Presbyterians. They occupy the schoolhouse built upon one corner of the plaza or square and have a very good congregation but a very poor preacher. He is an Englishman and resided in the Sandwich Islands for a number of years. I tried to make his

acquaintance, but he was so cold and formal I could not. I am somewhat surprised that he keeps such a congregation, but perhaps I am to blame in not appreciating his sermons. Next comes the Episcopalians. They hold their church in a private (or rather public) house. It is one of the largest houses in San Francisco and is owned and kept by Mr. Merrill as a boarding house. The room which on Sabbath is used as a church serves through the week as a dining room. Three weeks ago I paid it a visit for the first time; and although I am acquainted with the Episcopalian form of worship and church government, yet upon my first entrance I was struck comical by beholding the preacher dressed in pontifical robes giving out the psalm. Almost instantly I heard the sound of an organ but for some time could not tell from whence the sound came. At last I found that it proceeded from a small adjoining room. This appeared absurd to me that I could scarcely refrain from laughing. I know the feeling was wrong, but it presented itself in so singular a manner that I had no control of myself. But we had a pretty fair sermon, and I should have liked it very much if he had not read it from a paper. (There I saw for the first time three females in a public assembly in the place. Only think of it, my Netty, a whole tribe of men assembled together in a church to hear a sermon without a sprinkling of ladies.) On the next and last, namely our own Methodists, we have as yet no house built. But being on good terms with our friends, the Baptists, they kindly lend us their house every two weeks, which is the time our circuit preacher comes around. But it will not be many weeks before we have the place. We have the lumber all framed out and the foundation laid of quite a large house. We have also established a



class meeting on Sunday mornings.

Number 7

The state of society here is quite different from what I expected. It is true that there is a great deal of gambling going on, as well as drinking; but I think that the general state of society in this place will compare favorably with any other place that I have seen. For example, my trunks have been on the dock now for over three weeks; and I am not the least afraid of anyone hitching them. When we go up into town, we all leave our tent with our money and stay perhaps all day. When we come back everything is just as we left it. There is no use for Towie knives and revolvers in this place, although everyone carried them. Perhaps this is the cause of such good order among the disorder-loving population; for if a man is caught stealing, they put a ball through him without ceremony.

Number 8

Yesterday George Stout and myself purchased a boat for which we paid \$100. It is our intention to make sails and sundry other things requisite for her completion. expect to start for the mines in her on Tuesday morning. We take five passengers up to Sacramento City at \$10 each. This pays for one half of the boat. I have told you in one of my former letters that the Excelsior Club was no more, that it had departed this life immediately upon arrival. We settled up and George Wiggins, Henry Stout, and myself joined together for the purpose of getting GOLD! the best way we could (honestly!). Henry is one of the best fellows for this country that can be imagined, for he can do anything from sailing a boat to mending a shoe and can eat his share of pork and beefsteak equal to myself. He began to improve in his health almost immediately upon

leaving New York, and now he is in the enjoyment of as good health as ever he had in his life. He is one of the drollest fellows I ever saw, full of spirits and fun all the time. The only thing that seems to trouble him is at not having any word from his wife. He wants me to tell you that if you see her, that when he returns, he will raise the Sancho with her for not writing (this his own words).

Number 9

On the 10th Miles Carpenter came down from Sacramento City where he left Thomas and the greater part of the Cordelia Company. You, I suppose, know that they have all broken up and sold everything but the brig, which they keep as a storehouse. Miles, Thom, and three others formed themselves into a company for the purpose of mining. They packed up their duds, bought a span of horses and a wagon, and started. But had not proceeded far before they found that they had been shaved. For the horses proved to be balky, and that would never do in this mountainous country. Of course they had to make the best of their way back again, but they had to commence a lawsuit and unfortunately lost the first case by the nonappearance of their principal witness. But they tried it again and won the suit and got the money back. But part of their company being a little sick, they proposed to recruit by staying a few days in Sacramento City while Miles came down for letter and see what had become of Rod M. While he was down here he had an offer from an old friend of his, Mr. Halleck, who is in the business here, for \$150 per month, which he has accepted. He started up (to Sacramento) on the 12th for his clothes and to let the rest of his company know what he is going to do.

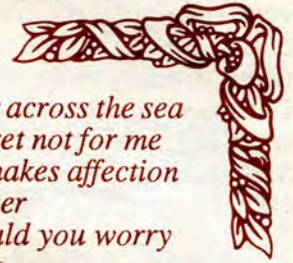
Number 10

For the last week we have been

busy preparing for the mines and have just completed a CRADLE for the purpose of washing the earth separate from the gold.

Number 11

*Altho I am far across the sea
Neety dear, fret not for me
Tis absence makes affection
stronger
Oh why should you worry
longer
For I'll haste me back
to thy sweet smiles
Nothing hear, my heart beguiles
Every ounce and lump I get
Takes me a full mile nearer Nett
--R.M.*



Now you see what folly I have run into. I have penned the above by way of a Valentine, which you can imagine came on the 14th of Feby.

Number 12

17th September 1849: Only to think that a few months ago this was a wilderness and the place where now stands the portable city of San Francisco was occupied by a few mud huts. I can scarcely believe my own eyes that I am in the same place where I landed a few weeks ago. For the City has three-fourths of it been built since I came here or perhaps I ought to say, put up; for the present City was built in the United States and China and floated around the Horn or across the Pacific. Talk about Aladdin's wonderful lamp, and wonder ye who have never seen a California city rush into existence.

Number 13

I promised to introduce you to a California family. Well, jump up on one of the native horses and take a trot with me through happy valley into town (for all the ladies of this country ride horseback). We will stop at the largest and most fashionable house in the city;



namely, Mr. Merrill's. At the door we are met by the old gentleman who greets us very cordially and perhaps assists you to alight. We enter the dining room right from the road without being troubled with a walk through an entry. This is a large room, about nine feet high, and would just suit Brother John. Two tables run the whole length, which cannot be short of 30 feet and perhaps 15 wide. But we are not permitted to stay and make observations, for we are hurried into the parlor. Now you must make good use of your eyes or you cannot tell what it contains or who is in the room. (Or closet, for it seems that the whole house must be taken up with the dining room, which is very sparsely furnished.) For the person who had the furnishing of this room must have had the idea in his head that a room could not have too much in it. The room itself is not more than from 15 feet long by 12 wide and 9 high. Into this there is crowded a sofa, 24 chairs (for I counted them), a large center table, two side ones. Upon the floor is a carpet (I believe ingrain) and is the only one I have seen in this country. But it's high time you were introduced to that prim old lady sitting dressed in the black alpaca and white satin shoes. As we enter she makes an effort to rise, but it is either too much exertion, or sober second thoughts, of it maybe mussing her dress, induces her to keep her seat and smooth down the front of her dress with both hands as a child would its apron that had got a little soiled. But we must speak to her, for we hear her husband's voice, "Mrs. Merrell, here are some neighbors who have come to pay us a visit." She now extends her hand mechanically with "Welcome, and how DOO; won't you sit down." And she waits for the next customer to come along, which is very soon; for women are a scarce commodity

in this place.

Number 14

I forgot to tell you of the luck I had today. I found a silver ring. Here it is. I had a notion to dig and see if there is not a silver mine of rings, for this California is a mighty queer place.

Number 15

If you should not receive letters from me regularly every steamer you must not be uneasy. In fact, there is less to fear in this country than in the States, for the mines are perfectly healthy during the winter season; and as to robbery and murder for gold, it is of far less occurrence than in the States. So, my dear, do not be uneasy; and I will try and pick up enough rocks to build a house and fence a potato patch with this winter and haste me back to Netty.

Number 16

We shall write John Cowell from Sacramento City giving all the particulars of our voyage up the river that they sing about in N. Y.: Bound for Sacramento with my washbowl on my knee."

Number 17

19th September 1849: We have just completed the rigging up of our boat and are all ready to start up to Sacramento City. It is our intention to start for that place tomorrow about noon, and we expect to reach it in about two days. There we intend to dispose of the boat, if we get an advantageous offer, and immediately push for the mines. But where or to which mines to go is more than we at present can determine. You can hardly believe how little news there is in this place about the gold diggings. I learn about them from N. Y. papers.

Number 18

You say that you are not troubled

with the visits of Dr. Wiggins. Oh, I would I could say as much about his brother, for he is the greatest ass that ever lived. But I think we will not be long together, for I can hardly tolerate his conduct. He is so frightened that he is going to do more than his share of work. Stout is just the other way. He is ready and willing to do anything that is to be done and is one of the most handy fellows I ever knew. He has been so busy preparing the boat to sail that he has put off writing until we get to Sacramento City.

Number 19

I send this by Mr. Fredk. Griffin. If he should call with this himself you must treat him well, for although he is the person that acted so mean to New York (for he is one of the owners of the Ship Pacific); yet he has been very friendly with me all the way out. If you will remember, his wife accompanied him. She has been very ill since she came out here. This is no place for American women. They die off amazing fast. Poor Frank Ward lost his wife just before we arrived here.

Number 20

Tell Elspet not to let William come to California, for there is as much humbug afloat as gold. He must not believe one half he hears. Toby, dear brother, say that he is the only one that I regret that is not along with me. I think he would do well, but I am afraid he could not stand the fatigue of a seven-months' voyage; and I would not have him come across the isthmus.

Number 21

11th November 1849: (written from Sacramento City) Perhaps you expected by this time to hear that I had at least started for the mines. In fact when I last wrote you, I thought that I would have started in about a week; but circumstances which I am going to



explain have delayed us until today (and how much longer I know not). On the 17th of last month we bought a couple of mules, and on the 20th George Wiggins and Mr. Puffer (a friend of mine from Brooklyn) started on what is termed here a prospecting trip, while I remained behind to take care of provisions, etc., until they should find a suitable place to winter. On the 31st Mr. Puffer returned after an absence of 11 days. He reported that they found a rich canyon (or gully) not far from Sutter's Mill, and a little further on there is another rich canyon. But it is so narrow and deep that the sun never shines into it; and as we should have to walk in the water, we thought it best to wait until spring before we went into that one. Consequently, we preferred the first one, as it had another advantage

appended to it: that of being nearer to the City (which is quite an advantage I assure you). In the small item of expenses, they only charge from \$30 to \$40 for a hundred pounds. From this place to Sutter's Mill the distance is about 30 miles! For the 11 days that Wiggins and Puffer were on the road, it cost for mule feed alone \$52! So you see that if wages are high and gold to be had for the picking up, that there are corresponding expenses which are like so many rats in a corn bin. But there is money to be made in this country by me if providence but continues his blessings of life and health. The very next day that Puffer returned, it commenced raining and has rained almost every day since, making the roads almost impassable for foot passengers. We began to give up almost "persuaded against our

wills" that the rainy season had set in and that we would not be able to get up to the mines this fall or winter. But upon inquiry we found out from Capt. Sutter that it was no unusual thing for it to be as juicy as we have had it for the last few days and then for it to come off fine weather for a fortnight or three weeks.



A
CALIFORNIA
ADVENTURE

•
Concludes
next
issue

Twelve



HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Post Office Box 952
Healdsburg, CA 95448

Third class
Address correction

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Healdsburg, CA
Permit No. 149

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE