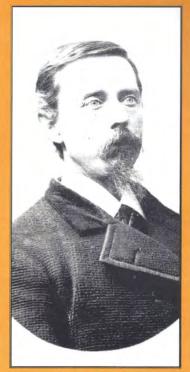


RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Spring 2009 • Issue 104

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society



William Mulligan

A HEALDSBURG RENAISSANCE MAN: WILLIAM MULLIGAN

by Daniel F. Murley • Page 13



Margaret Alexander Mulligan

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

THE LYTTON EXPERIENCE

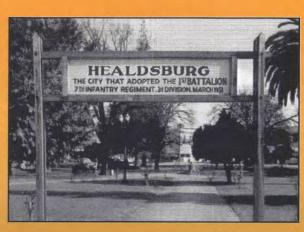
by Loren Abbey • Page 7

THE SILVER RIBBON

by Dorothy Sawyer • Page 4

HEALDSBURG: THE TOWN THAT ADOPTED A BATTALION

by J. Bruce Campbell • Reprinted from the December, 1953 Reader's Digest. Researched and found by Research Curator Holly Hoods • Page 17





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RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

The Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society

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In This Issue

e were so saddened to learn of the sudden passing of our good friend and colleague Charlotte Anderson, who devoted many volunteer hours to the Museum. As a member of the Recorder staff she supplied us with many great ideas for articles and those she wrote were well researched and written. She always seemed to come up with an unusual but historically fascinating subject.

Charlotte excelled in many fields and spent many hours helping at the Museum - chair of the Volunteer Association, writing articles for the newsletter, doing research, photographing events, serving as an administrative assistant, and helping to promote the Museum and many of its special events, always willing to "man" a booth and sell tickets and help with refreshments.

She'll be missed but she will be long remembered by her family, friends and the Museum personnel. She had agreed to research and to write an article for this issue about the Russian River Riders to acquaint our readers with another aspect of Healdsburg's history. Some day, in her memory, the Recorder will publish an article about the Riders to fullfill her last commitment and assignment.

In this issue, our first for 2009, we welcome back our curator Dan Murley who has been on a leave of absence because of an injury incurred on the job. Dan has chosen to spotlight a Healdsburg Renaissance man, William Mulligan, a rancher, musician, artist and merchant who became a part of the pioneer Cyrus Alexander family by marrying Cyrus's daughter Margaret.

Loren Abbey of Santa Rosa, who came into the Museum one day to do some research on the Salvation Army's Lytton facility when it was a home for boys and girls, revealed to Research Curator Holly Hoods that he and his brother spent the World War II years at Lytton. Sons of a Japanese father and Caucasian mother the boys were fortunate to be sent to Lytton instead of an internment camp. Holly urged him to share his story with our readers. We are pleased to publish his well written reminiscences in this issue. Retired since 2002, Loren, a graduate of San Jose State, was in the electronics business for many years in the Silicon Valley.

Dorothy Sawyer of Carmichael wrote a history of her family which she presented to the Museum and her essay, The Silver Ribbon, appeared as part of that publication, written in 2007, and is now part of the Museum's collection. She indicated that she wrote the essay for her grandson who grew up in an urban area. She hoped that after reading this part of the family history he would better appreciate his heritage. Those who grew up along the river or spent summers enjoying the river will appreciate the author's recollections. Her lyrical prose reflect her appreciation of the Russian River. "What delighted me most." she says, "was the changing nature of the river - sometimes smiling and sometimes it had a very angry look to its face."

In going through the many artifacts in the Museum, our Research Curator Holly Hoods came across a December, 1953 issue of the Reader's Digest in which appeared the article about Healdsburg adopting the First Battalion during the Korean War, a finely written article by J. Bruce Campbell. It not only pays tribute to the Healdsburg community but more specifically to one of Healdsburg's leading citizens, Smith Robinson , who managed to get the whole town involved in the adoption process. We were pleased to learn that Holly, as a part of the Museum's outreach program, will be making a presentation about Smith Robinson and the adoption of the battalion at a number of local organization in May.

Arnold Santucci Editor



Contents

RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Spring, 2009 • Issue 104









4 The Silver Ribbon: Reflections of the Russian River

by Dorothy Sawyer

This essay written by Dorothy Sawyer as a part of a family history will evoke special memories of those who grew up along the river or enjoyed its beauty as summer visitors.

7 The Lytton Experience: The Salvation Army's Home for Boys and Girls

by Loren Abbey

Loren Abbey recalls his and his brother's time spent at and experiences when they were luckily sent to Lytton Home instead of an internment camp as 12 and 7 year olds because of their Japanese ancestry.

13 A Healdsburg Renaissance Man: William Mulligan

by Daniel F. Murley

Curator Daniel Murley tells the fascinating history of William Mulligan, a successful merchant, rancher, musician and talented artist who married the daughter of pioneer Cyrus Alexander.

17 Healdsburg: The Town That Adopted the First Battalion

by J. Campbell Bruce • Researched by Holly Hoods

Reprinted from the December, 1953 Reader's Digest, a part of the Museum's extensive collection of artifacts researched and found by Research Curator Holly Hoods. This is the wonderful and heartwarming story of how Healdsburg came to adopt the the First Battalion during the Korean War and the role Smith Robinson played in making this town wide venture the outstanding success it was.

THE SILVER RIBBON REFLECTIONS OF THE RUSSIAN RIVER

by Dorothy Sawyer

If you were to look at it from a Boeing 747 cruising 30,000 feet up on the sky, it would just be a silver ribbon glistening among the green vegetation and the brown hills. It would hardly be identifiable. The whole scene would look something like a plaster of Paris model of a National Park - totally unreal. It is a graphic example of truth's many facets. Yes, it is a Silver

Ribbon, but it was so much more to me.

During my "acquaintance" during the later 1930's and 1940's, the Russian River was the best place to spend a lazy summer afternoon. The days were almost always pleasantly warm, so it was easy to pursue one's pleasures in the water. The water temperature was perfect - cool enough to make your body comfortable, but not piercing cold such as the Pacific Ocean or rivers which were fed by melting snow.

In comparison with all the other rivers of the world, the Russian River is quite short and although it created a valley, it is of little consequence to the state of California. Although it wandered slightly it was usually fairly straight until it came to the Healdsburg area where it made a big loop before finally circling Fitch Mountain. It then took a sharp right turn towards Jenner where it entered the ocean combining its warm waters with the cold waves of the Pacific. Some geologists believe it is a very ancient river which originally emptied into San Francisco Bay before the coast range was born as a result of the clashing of two North American Tectonic plates colliding.

"... the changing nature of the River ... sometimes smiling, sometimes angry ..."



What delighted me most was the changing nature of the river. It was alive - sometimes smiling and sometimes it had a very angry look to its face.

Every summer the town of Healdsburg built a temporary dam just south of the old Highway 101 automotive bridge. This structure would provide deep water for many yards

providing better swimming, diving, boating and fishing for the town's people.

In addition the beach area would be graded to about the middle of the river and tons of sand would be dumped to create a great swimming area free of unexpected deep holes and pleasant under foot. By the time you were getting close to the highway bridge, the natural loam and weeds were underfoot which created a rather yucky, unpleasant sensation. The area would gradually slope so that it would be safe for the many small children who enjoyed swimming or attempting to swim. There was a string of floats warning everyone that beyond this point, it would be dangerous for non-swimmers to go.

Included at the beach were slides, swings, monkey bars and other play "machinery" including a round carousel appearing piece of equipment with several rows of steel. The object was to push the machine while running as fast as you could. You then jumped on the rails. About ten or so kids could be on the "carousel" at the same time. In addition there was a snack bar and bathrooms. Later on a skating rink was built on higher ground where it would not be in danger of flooding.

A pier was built into the water almost to the square diving board. Boats which could be rented were tied to the pier. The diving board had two levels for diving, so the water must have been over 10 feet deep for the higher board divers. Some of the teenagers believed this

board was very much of a challenge, so they would very foolishly jump off the top of the highway bridge. If they survived, they would be "folk heroes" to the younger kids of a similar nature. One of my second or third cousins was among this group of teenagers.

The most daring adventure for me was to swim across the river to the western side where the water was deepest. It wasn't really that far (only about 100'), but I was not really a very good swimmer. In addition there were large boulders which must have been wedged very deeply in the river because they appeared year after year. The water was very dark, dark green here. Above the river was the saloon/cafe called the Ark which had large windows overlooking the river. The piers holding up part of the building were possibly cantilevered. On the other side of the highway an old house was clinging to the bank. I don't know if anyone actually lived in the house [the former Joseph Fitch house].

Some of the town's people tried to start a new tradition by sponsoring a water festival on the river. There were floats with pretty girls and boats decorated with crepe paper and flowers, but the festival did not continue for more than a year or so. Perhaps the war derailed the experiment.

Almost immediately after going under the highway bridge the uniformity of the public beach was lost. Now the river was more unpredictable, more dangerous and more free.

Many years before there were probably willows and sand bars along this stretch of the water, but during the 30's and 40's the commercialization of the river changed the environment. On the right hand side going north was the Basalt Sand and Gravel Pit, and though there were beaches, the trees were gone and mounds of sand and gravel took their place. Very, very few tried to swim in this area because there were many holes and hazards which could be most dangerous. This was the beginning of the boating area of the river. There were just a few motor boats used for fishing, but many people also enjoyed canoeing.

One enterprising man actually purchased and operated a miniature Mississippi River Style Steam Boat. It even had the traditional whistle. He charged a dime for a twenty minute (more or less) ride which included a ride up past not only the Highway Bridge, but the Railroad Bridge. For a couple of years there was a narrow island, and the water around it was deep and wide enough to handle the boat. It was a lot of fun, and we could dangle our feet over the side into the dark green.

My great grandmother's property [Riverside Villa] was on the western side of the river, and it was included on the tour. I suppose "Old Timers" in the 1930's could probably imagine it as it was in the early 1900's with ladies in white dresses (some with parasols) laughing while being rowed around the slick river. There was no island then, but as I said before, the river would and could change each year.

Our river boat captain's business did not last for many years for I believe his little boat was destroyed during one of the High Water years. Not only was his boat gone, but the island disappeared too. If you rowed or paddled northward, the many complexions of the river became more evident. Along the edge where the trees remained, it was almost black with a pungent smell of decaying vegetation and possibly fish. Then, just a few yards away, you could look overboard and see millions of rocks covered with a yellowish algae, so the water appeared gray yellow, while in the distance it would reflect the sky color - blue, peach, gray and gold. If you were lucky enough to see the sun set on the water, it could be a brilliant gold or red. As the summer vanished, there were small pools of water separated from the river where the algae was bright green, adding another color to the pallet. On sunny days the water was filled with thousands upon thousands of diamonds brilliantly sparkling in the distance.

Now we were past the gravel pit, and several of the founding families of Healdsburg had homes along the river. My memory might fail me, but I think the houses were on Bailhache Ave. which by the 1930's had extended far beyond its length shown in the 1877 map of the Healdsburg region. (Now there is an Indian School at the end of the road , but during the 1930's the Briggs Ranch was located here. (Ann Briggs had been a member of one of the many Foppiano families who lived in Healdsburg at that time.)

Finally all the effects of the Little Dam were spent, and the river was so shallow that you could not row anymore. You had to pull the boat over the gray rocks by the time you were in the shadow of Fitch Mountain.

As you pulled the boat farther north, you entered a new environment. Now on the west (or probably north side) of the river were many trees and houses of various sizes. Some of the homes belonged to permanent residents while others were summer or weekend homes of people living in the San Francisco Bay Area. Many were from the East Bay or Piedmont area of Oakland. We all thought that the kids from these families were super sophisticated and certainly beautiful. Their summer was over earlier than the native teens because their school started after Labor Day weekend

Continued from page 5

while ours started at least two weeks later.

This was the fashionable area of the river where the "in kids" had their summer fun. They snubbed the beach near the dam in favor of this higher brow swimming hole. There was Camp Rose and other beaches which I can't remember. I think at one time there was a dance hall. Also there were redwood trees in this area. I don't know if they were natives or planted by earlier settlers. However, this area could not compete with the many resorts plus famous dance halls and even a very famous retreat called Bohemian Grove.

At the time I lived in Sonoma County I thought the Russian River wound around Fitch Mountain before moving north to Geyserville, Cloverdale, Hopland and Ukiah to its birth place. I didn't realize until many years later that the river actually turned southward to form a loop before moving north. My personal relationship with the river ended before it turned into the loop.

Juxtaposition the giggles, laughs and screeches of children having a wonderful time in the river, in the winter the complexion of the body of water took on its sinister face. During the 1930's rainfall in Sonoma County was much heavier than it has been recently. I don't know exactly how many inches it rained, but it was necessary for my mother to purchase new rain boots and possibly rain coats for us every year while our bodies were still growing. We almost always walked to school regardless of how hard it was raining. There were plenty of mud puddles to wade through, and I now remember it as fun!

The point is that with this heavy rainfall, the river level could raise very quickly. The water would become brownish and the whirling water would be quite noisy as the water hit the banks of the river and any obstacle that was in its way. There would be no pretty reflections, diamonds or anything, but the trunks of the trees and shrubs caught in the path of the river. Many times the water would be so high that traffic would be stopped on the railroad bridge and maybe the Highway 101 bridge. As you stood on the auto bridge and looked down, it would appear that the water was only a few feet from the highway.

While I never saw such an event, we were told that whole cabins had come down the river, and when the building hit the railroad bridge it exploded into thousands of pieces. The cabins were located in the Fitch Mountain part of the river, and they were probably summer homes of some family. Actually, Healdsburg itself was not flooded by the Russian River, but instead one of the river's contributors, Dry Creek, could cause some problems on the west

side of the town. The flood waters that flapped at our back door were from Dry Creek. However, downstream the river really caused havoc robbing many people of their homes and livelihood.

"... It can be deceiving to novices and also to the arrogant who do not respect it"

The other evil aspect of the river could happen at any time. It was somewhat reminiscent of the position certain elements of the land(mountains, etc.) primitive people revered as gods. The river needed its sacrifices! While the Russian River has many wonderful assets such as warm mostly friendly waters, it can be deceiving to novices and also to the arrogant who do not respect it. Hundreds of people have drowned in its inviting atmosphere, and hundreds more have taken a foolish dive to become paralyzed.

Both of these — drowning and horrible diving accidents — have given me great respect for the river, and these tragedies also add a dark shadow to my list of reflections of the river. I have been personally touched by both.

"I am drawn to the river because of my heritage"

In conclusion perhaps I am drawn to the river because of my heritage. My father lived along the river when he was a child, one set of my grandparents (John and Rose Turner); two sets of my great grandparents (Mary Odell Walker and Oscar Walker) and (Henry Clinton Turner and Ellen Eiler), and one set of my great, great grandparents (Simpson Odell and Susana Boggs Odell), and finally one set of great, great, great grandparents (A.B. Boggs and Mary Friend) lived along the banks. They too, must have loved (and feared at times) the river for the rich soil it gave them and they perhaps marveled at its beauty in all its dimensions.

THE LYTTON EXPERIENCE:

THE WAR YEARS IN THE IDYLLIC CONFINES OF THE SALVATION ARMY'S LYITON HOME FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

by Loren Abbey



Loren Abbey

was one of the lucky ones. Of the thousands of West Coast children born of Japanese ancestry who, when war broke out with Japan in 1941, had been hauled away to the American gulags (euphemistically called internment camps) my younger brother Wayne and I had been allowed – at least so far - to remain at home with our mother.

As a symptom of the racially charged atmosphere of the time, regardless of age or circumstance, all persons living on the West Coast born of Japanese descent were to be hereby classified as potential spies, rounded up and shipped off to concentration camps and there to be imprisoned under armed guard and behind barbed wire fences for the duration of the war.

But Wayne and I caught a huge break.

Inasmuch as our 100 percent Caucasian mother had not a single drop of Japanese blood coursing through her veins, we presented a somewhat awkward problem for the authorities. Our father — though a naturalized American citizen — was by ancestry a full-blooded Japanese. This meant that Wayne and I were 'half'-Japanese and so in keeping with the prevailing racial tensions of the day, we still qualified for a long, hot bus ride to the Manzanar concentration camp.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manzanar_internment_ camp#Wartime:_1942.E2.80.9345>

But instead of being bussed to that dreary, dust-blown piece of hell in the desert and stuck in the California wasteland of Owens Valley with 100,000 other imprisoned Japanese Americans, we got the break of a lifetime. Thanks to our mother, we had the incredible good fortune of being able to while away the war years in the idyllic confines of the Salvation Army's Lytton Home for Boys and Girls.

Lytton Home was located smack-dab in the middle of Sonoma County's world renowned wine country. During the years prior to and during WWII, Lytton became the permanent residence of hundreds of boys and girls ranging in age from as young as seven - like Wayne - all the way to young adulthood.

The bucolic rolling countryside just due north of the City of Healdsburg could very well have been the place Alan J. Lerner had in mind in when he composed his great 1960 Broadway musical *Camelot*. Here is where he probably first composed his line, "there is simply not a more congenial spot."

Here . . . in the morning shadow of Mount St. Helena, the "mother mountain of the Sonoma hills", as another writer put it. The 'Hand of God' was at work when the Salvation Army chose to settle their home for boys and girls in this "congenial spot".

Although it's sometimes referred to by outsiders as an orphanage - or even a "reform school" - both are misnomers because Lytton was neither. These children were mostly the products of fatherless homes whose moms had just plain run out of resources. A few had gotten into trouble with the law, but usually for relatively minor offenses such as chronic truancy, shoplifting or fighting. I recall a couple of twin brothers who were there due to a penchant for driving around their hometown in borrowed cars, which I found to be more than a little fascinating since these kids were only a couple of years older than I, yet here they were, going around stealing cars when I hadn't even learned how to drive one yet.

In 1959, long after I had left Lytton, it was converted to the Salvation Army's Adult Rehabilitation Center and serves that purpose still today. However, besides your standard room, board and rehab facilities, today's visitors to Lytton will find a bustling row of thrift-shops selling everything from clothes, house-hold goods, furniture, electronics, tools and practically anything and everything in between. It's like a giant garage sale or flea market. There's even a used car, boat and trailer lot occupying the centerpiece circle where once grew a fruit-bearing vineyard.

There are still more second-hand stores in the buildings at the top of the south hill. The gymnasium, movie-theater and the artscrafts cabin have become retail outlets for clothes, housewares and knick-knacks.

But in the 1940s and 50s these grounds and structures served an entirely different community and purpose, one of which thankfully, was to provide a permanent home for Wayne and me when the war broke out.

Our Lytton Experience began in early 1942 when the US Census Bureau informed the FBI of our Japanese ancestry, at which time we were placed in a San Francisco orphanage for Japanese boys, which was then owned and operated by the Salvation Army.

The idea that anyone in his most advanced state of paranoia could have been worried that Wayne 7, and me 12, could be security threats is testimony to the level of irrational hysteria that had infected the country in those tumultuous years.

We didn't stay at this facility very long because, unbeknown to us, the bureaucracies' wheels had already begun to turn. The President's Executive Order had been issued on February 19,1942, and that meant that these potentially dangerous spies and saboteurs hiding out in this orphanage - all between the ages of 5 through 17 - would have to be removed, quarantined and kept isolated from society under lock and key surrounded by miles of barbed wire, at least for the war's duration.

Wayne and I were settled comfortably on the bus that was there to carry us off to Manzanar when someone suddenly realized that the two of us were somehow there without legal guardianship. Our stay at the SF Salvation Army orphanage had been only stop-gap and, by necessity, had lacked the official approvals and stamps that normally accompany such processes.

When this oversight was discovered - luckily for us, just in the nick of time - we were quickly off-loaded and returned to the orphanage and then from there, home with our mother. But the odyssey was not yet over.

After a few days at home, and with Mom working feverishly to convince the authorities that her two sons were really not dangerous enemy agents; that neither of us could even spell saboteur, let alone, actually be one - someone finally decided that okay, we probably weren't actual spies, but since we still carried that dreaded Japanese gene, we had to be sent - somewhere.

Soon we found ourselves on our way to the Salvation Army's Lytton Home for Boys and Girls. It was a turn-of-events for which, over a lifetime, we've been, profoundly grateful.

We were checked into the infirmary, cursorily examined for who knows what and in a matter of an hour or two we were out on the grounds making new friends. San Francisco, home and Mom seemed like years ago and miles away.

Much to my glee we discovered the indoor swimming pool, the gymnasium and the field, though a bit weed-worn, still served as the athletic field. There was even a house next to the gym where kids could learn to draw and paint and build model airplanes and do other crafts stuff. The place resembled a YMCA summer camp.

We were led to a row of cottages that ran alongside the creek and Wayne was assigned to the cottage housing the youngest boys. He would be housed in Sotoyome while I would be put up in Sonoma, one of two cottages for 12-15 year old boys, the other being Sequoia. The older boys were housed at the Oaks, the cottage at the far end of the row. The Oaks boys were usually the boys who had passed their fifteenth birthday and having outgrown their preadolescence, would probably be leaving sometime within the next year or two, ready and anxious to join society as young adults.

In no time at all we had become comfortable with the regimen and the daily routine. It was as though we'd been there for years instead of days.

I joined the swimming and boxing teams while Wayne was busy checking out some of the indigenous 'wild-life'. He discovered potato bugs, tarantulas, salamanders and lizards. To a couple of city kids this was all completely brand new. Never having seen a salamander before, Wayne, with his new friend Johnny Freitas, who was about his age and whom he called 'Beetle', would examine the creek beds looking for salamanders and lizards or any other crawlies they could find hiding in the rocks and crevices.

Continued from page 8

Weeks turned into months and months to years. The war ground on but the minor inconveniences suffered by the civilian population impacted us only in a small way. We had become aware of nationwide commodity shortages, but the rationing that came out of those shortages, as far as we could tell, affected us very little. There always seemed to be enough gas in the trucks to take us to town to see a movie or to the river for a swim. We never ran out of butter, sugar or meat in the kitchen. As far as us kids were concerned, life was good.

But there was a war on and we were constantly reminded of it. In those early years, things were not going well for our side, especially in the Pacific where bad things were happening. Japan had attacked the United States without warning and now Americans were being killed by Japan's overwhelming military superiority.

In America, this was not a good time to be Japanese. Throughout the country, public enmity against all things Japanese had grown to a fever, almost hysterical pitch. This national agitation was evidenced, not only by the attitudes of the private citizenry, but in many official forms as well.

For example, in 1912, as a gift from the people of Japan, 3,700 Japanese Cherry Blossom trees had been planted along the Tidal Basin in our nation's capital. Over the years, these trees had become a virtual national landmark and a huge tourist attraction, but in 1942, so bitter was America's hatred for anything even remotely tied to Japan, these trees would now be referred to as 'Oriental' Cherry Blossom trees.

These same irrational reactions were taking hold in every corner of the country. San Francisco, a city always known for its tolerance and its acceptance of unpopular causes, couldn't escape it, even when it would have been to its advantage to do so.

The Japanese Tea Garden had been a San Francisco landmark ever since being built in 1895. Designed by Makoto Hagiwara, a Japanese immigrant, landscape gardener and inventor of the fortune cookie, it's probably the most visually stunning five acres of sheer natural beauty of any similar plot of ground in the entire Western Hemisphere.

The Hagiwara family lived in, maintained and enhanced the Japanese Tea Garden from 1895 until 1942 and the beginning of World War II, when they were forced to evict and relocate to concentration camps with other Americans of Japanese descent. The garden was renamed "The Oriental Tea Garden", many structures were demolished or moved from their original locations,

sculptures disappeared and plants died or were relocated. (http://www.inetours.com/Pages/SFNbrhds/Japanese_Tea_Garden.html)

But at Lytton, despite the fact that Wayne and I bore the stigma of Japanese ancestry, those same public attitudes were nowhere in sight. Not one kid or staff member ever mentioned it. It's not as if they weren't aware of what was going on. Even as kids, we were kept abreast daily of how the war was progressing on every front. Every morning at breakfast, head man Major Collier would announce the latest war news. By the end of '42, things seemed to be getting better and the dining room would erupt in applause and cheers whenever he told us that Americans had just captured another island or there had been another successful bombing raid over Germany. I particularly remember his announcement of the 1945 detonation of the first atom bomb in New Mexico. I doubt that any of us, at that time, could imagine what a historically momentous occasion that actually was.

But never once, in all of the four years we were there, to the best of my recollection, did we run into the slightest hint of racial prejudice or intolerance, and that I think, is a loud testament to the tolerant attitudes that were fostered at Lytton by its Salvation Army administrators.

In our early years at Lytton we attended William Booth Elementary School (named for the founder of the Salvation Army). The schoolhouse was a small white stucco building resting atop the gentle incline at the northwest corner of the grounds. The school area lay adjacent to the Old County Road (now Lytton Springs Road).

There was (and to the best of my knowledge, still is) a natural mineral water spring (from which 'Lytton Springs Road' gets its name) near the base of that school incline, and while we referred to this spring as a 'seltzer' water spring, looking back on it, I'm not sure 'seltzer' was all that accurate. According to a Google source, seltzer water is water that isperfectly clear when fresh and well preserved, it is said to sparkle when poured in a glass. To the tongue it offers 'a gently saline and decidedly alkaline taste' which is 'sweet' and 'somewhat pungent and conferring exhilarating effects..., on the spirits.

Whatever. It was the most rancid, most metallic and most thoroughly disgusting stuff I had ever put to my lips. But we'd drink it anyway because someone had told us it 'was really good for you'. As best as I can recall, those 'exhilarating effects on our spirits' never happened.

My grades at William Booth were decent, and on Graduation Day, I remember winning a plaque with a cast bronze medallion telling the world that I was the school's number one student. The presentation of this award however, produced a couple of awkward moments. With all the confusion in our lives brought on by the war and the turmoil in our particular situations, Mom had changed our surnames from the Japanese 'Abe' (pronounced 'ah-bay') to the more Caucasian-sounding 'Abbey'. She did so, of course, for a couple of obvious reasons: i.e., ease of pronunciation but, not least, to disguise our Japanese ancestry.

Apparently, the name change had not reached school administrators, so when the awarder pronounced my name as 'Abe' as in 'Honest Abe', everybody had a good laugh and instead of being proud to accept an award praising my scholastic achievements, I was embarrassed that people thought it was funny. I still have a warm spot in my heart for Mrs. Gail, the kindly gray-hair-in-a-bun lady; my 7th and 8th grade teacher who, in her own inimitable fashion, scolded the others for snickering. What a wonderful woman she was.

In 1944, after graduating from elementary school 'with honors' I was now qualified to join the group of about a dozen other boys and girls waiting in front of the gym to be picked up by the Healdsburg High School bus and driven into town. At first I had thought that the 5 mile unsupervised trip would be an opportunity for some of the more boisterous among the group to engage in a bit of typical teen-age horseplay, but, alas, it was never allowed to grow into a full-blown party mode, because HHS senior Bob Bledsoe, our regular driver, kept a watchful rear-view eye on us. I remember thinking at the time that, after graduation if he should decide to go into police work, with that look, he'd have made a pretty good cop.

What a thrill it was to now be one of the 'Big Guys'. Going to school in far-away Healdsburg meant a giant step toward adulthood for most of us. A couple of years earlier, I had begun smoking cigarettes. It was the thing 'big guys' did. We'd pick up discarded butts off the ground whenever and wherever we could find them, strip the tobacco until we had a pile and then roll the tobacco into cigarettes. Occasionally, one of the 'big guys' would score a whole pack and we'd sneak out behind Oaks cottage where we'd light up and puff away. Since Oaks was at the far end of the row, there was little chance of being caught by Staff.

So now, since I'd be going into town to school every day, I'd have a great opportunity to beg, buy, borrow or steal cigarettes or tobacco without having to worry about Al Sanders, the head dean or any of the other supervisory staff members.



Wayne Abbey

Every day the boys lined up in rows, short ones in front, tall in the rear. The door to the dining hall would swing open and Al would exit and begin his walk between the 4 columns of boys. He'd select a boy at random and bend down to smell the boy's breath. If the slightest aroma of tobacco was detected (and it was a rare occasion when it wasn't) the kid was in big trouble and now he could expect his pummeling. It's how he caught me so often.

My 1944 enrollment at Healdsburg High School turned out to be my indoctrination into an alien society where, as a member, I'd be expected to interact with others — even those among my own peer group - in the same way grown-ups relate to each other; that is, with deference and respect. It suddenly dawned on me — I was growing up.

One of my first experiences as I tried to absorb this new school environment I witnessed a conversation between one of my new teachers and a girl who, as it turned out, was to be one of my new classmates.

I was struck by the grown-up way Lorelei conducted herself using adult expressions, mannerisms and, I assumed, even proper grammar. I was witnessing a back and forth conversation between two grown-ups. I watched in awe and I still remember asking myself, "Is this how I'm supposed to talk now?" I'd have to say that one of the more enjoyable features of Lytton living was the opportunity to have girlfriends. Since there were fewer girls than boys it was possible to house the entire population of girls on the top floor of the main building. This also was the building where the main administration offices as well as, toward the rear, the dining room and kitchen facilities were located.

From the front windows on the top floor, the girls enjoyed a commanding view of the entire living and play areas. They could monitor the goings-on in front of the gym, the ball fields or the arts and crafts shop.

A small vineyard grew at the base of the building through which ran a shortcut from the cottages to the gym. The girls could watch the boys coming and going through the vineyard, and depending on which boys were coming and which were going, they could decide whether or not to join them at the gym, which had become a popular trysting spot.

That vineyard is gone now, long ago having been uprooted and turned into a used car lot. In fact Lytton visitors today might find a boat or two for sale with their trailers or a truck, or even an occasional RV - all at bargain prices.

The girls ranged in age from about twelve up to eighteen, and if I'm remembering correctly, among the older ones, there were some dazzlers. At different times I had three favorites, and if other aspects of my stay at Lytton are a tad fuzzy because of a faulty memory, the faces of Inez Dikeman, Rose Thayer and Barbara Fair are not.

The girls at Healdsburg High didn't interest me. My romantic interests never strayed beyond either Inez, Rose or Barbara. Inez and Rose were beauties by any measure but Barbara was something special. She had what anyone would call movie star looks. Tall, olive-skinned, curvy (if anyone thinks a 15 year-old girl can't be 'curvy', he hasn't seen Barbara) she had the blue-green eyes usually seen only in glamour magazines.

Not too many years ago I happened to be in the lobby of the Mark Hopkins Hotel in San Francisco. As I stepped into the bar to chat with the piano player entertaining the cocktail hour crowd, I could not help but notice a stunningly beautiful woman sitting at a table across the room. She was deep in conversation with her escort as they sipped martinis. Dressed to the nines and sporting a huge white, wide-brimmed hat, she could have been doing an ad for Vogue Magazine.

That gorgeous woman with the knock-out figure; the olivetoned skin and the haunting blue-green eyes - that was Barbara Fair. To this day, to my everlasting sorrow, I regret the fact that I wasn't able to muster the courage to just walk over to her table and say 'hello'. And I'll never know whether she recognized me or even if she saw me. But I digress.



Art McCaffrey

I ran the low hurdles on the 'C' track team at Healdsburg, and played a little football even though I was too small to really be any good. My good buddy, George Trotter, another Lytton boy, was about my size. He was a tough little guy who impressed football coach Art McCaffrey with his guts and his willingness - even eagerness — to mix it up with other players nearly twice his size.

Healdsburg didn't field a JV team since the school had a student enrollment of only fewer than 500 only a few of which came out for football so Trotter got to play in several games and as best as I can recall, he acquitted himself pretty well.

Art McCaffrey was one of my favorite teachers at Healdsburg. Besides football, he coached the baseball team, the 'B' basketball team and while teaching several classes as well. He would always be there with a word of advice or counsel and I never saw him play favorites. Football stars like Johnny Hassenzahl, Woody Wattles and Willie Battasso, though heroes with everybody else, never got the 'star treatment' from Coach Art - not any more than lowly players like George Trotter and me.



Laura Destruel

But my favorite teacher of all time — not only at Healdsburg but at any of the other schools I attended after leaving Healdsburg - the teacher whose lessons have stuck with me through all the intervening 60 or so years, was my Freshman English teacher, Laura Destruel. She was simply the best.

When I decided to move back to Healdsburg to spend my retirement years, one of the first things I wanted to do was to say hello and thanks to a wonderful teacher. When I tried to call her I learned to my great sorrow that I had missed her by just a few weeks. She had recently passed away. I told her nephew that Ms. Destruel had been my favorite teacher of all time and he informed me, not at all surprisingly, that many of her former students had told him the same thing.

It was 1945 now. The newspapers had been filled with stories about the deployment of a new American weapon - a horrific bomb had been dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and how an estimated quarter of a million people — most of them women, children and old people — had been incinerated in the blasts.

I vaguely remembered hearing the name 'Hiroshima' years ago from my mother when she informed me that 'Ojee-san' (my grandfather) would be stopping in San Francisco to visit us on his way to Japan. His ultimate destination was to be Hiroshima. I think I was about 6 or 7 at the time.

After the visit, having gathered at dockside and waving our last good-byes, his boat sailed and that was the last time we ever saw him. We never heard from him again and we never learned if he had survived those last nightmarish days of the war. We didn't know it at the time of course, but the Lytton chapter of our young lives, which had begun in 1942, was now coming to a close. We were almost four years older than when we first got there, meaning life — at least for me - was starting to get serious. It was time to start thinking about becoming an adult. The 'grown-upness' and maturity that I had witnessed during that conversation between the teacher and Lorelei Holbrooke - all of a sudden wasn't as far-fetched now as once it had seemed to be.

It was 1945 and in a few months the wars on both fronts would be over. According to those whose job it is to worry about such things, Wayne and I were no longer 'security threats'. America was safe; the threat of mortal danger we once represented had been removed and we could now rejoin our mother in San Francisco.

So on a hot Sunday in July, 1946, each carrying a small suitcase, Wayne and I walked the gravel road to the two stone pillars guarding the main entrance and fronting what is now the US101 Freeway, only then it was just a two lane highway. The bus that would take us to our new home in San Francisco would be stopping here.

The stately eucalyptus trees lining each side of the road waved their final goodbye, and after catching a final over-the-shoulder glance at the sprawling grounds that had been our home for the past quarter of my life and a third of Wayne's – four years almost to the day – we clambered aboard the bus, awash in waves of mixed emotions. Our excitement was tempered somewhat with traces of sadness and we couldn't help thinking of all the friends we were leaving, many of them almost family, because we knew we'd never see them again.

But that was a long time ago. The eucalyptus trees are still there. The twin stone pillars still guard the entrance but the two lane 35mph US101 is now a high speed interstate freeway. Many of the other landmarks have disappeared over time.

I'm enjoying my retirement in Santa Rosa. In later years Wayne became a pilot in the Air Force serving in Laos and Vietnam. Attaining the rank of Major, he earned the distinction of being named the most highly decorated Air Force officer of the Vietnam War. He was awarded a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart, Five Distinguished Flying Crosses and 43 Air Force Air Medals.

Wayne passed away in 1996 at the age of 62.

Whenever I go back to Lytton - to browse around what has now become a cross between a flea market and a giant garage sale, or maybe just to visit - I secretly bask in a hard to describe real sense of belonging - knowing that Wayne and I will always be a part of that magnificent environment.

A HEALDSBURG RENAISSANCE MAN: WILLIAM MULLIGAN

by Daniel F. Murley



William Mulligan image by brother-in-law Andrew Price

hen he stood before the blank canvas and finally executed the first tentative brush strokes, it was unlikely that young William Mulligan knew the importance of this particular composition. More than likely he was using a miniature or small porcelain likeness of his subject.



Henry Delano Fitch, painted by William Mulligan circa 1872

That subject, California and Sonoma County pioneer Henry Delano Fitch, had died in January of 1849 and this portrait was painted in the 1870s. Undoubtedly Mulligan knew the Fitch family here near the small frontier town of Healdsburg. Cyrus Alexander had helped Henry Fitch tame the Sotoyome Rancho and begin the construction of the famous Fitch house on the Russian River in 1840. Alexander married the young Rufina Lucero at a ceremony officiated by John Sutter at his New Helvetia settlement, near what is now Sacramento.

Cyrus, the trapper, trailblazer, and northern California pioneer, settled down to raise a family in the valley which now bears his name. It is quite likely that the Cyrus Alexander family and the widow and family of his former employer Fitch, had relatively close ties. So, when Margaret Alexander, the eldest child, married William Mulligan in 1868, the Fitch family probably asked the painter and now neighbor Mulligan to paint the Fitch portrait.



Margaret Alexander Mulligan - 1864

In the early days of this area large land owners, regardless of their past lives, stuck together against a seemingly never ending stream of frustrated or even successful gold seekers. Gold seeking adventurers without a permanent residence here in the new state

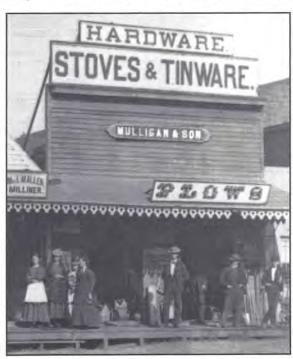
looked to the large land holdings of Rancho grantees to finally settle in the western territory which they now called home.

William Mulligan had come to California from Saint Louis, Missouri in 1862 at the onset of the Civil War.



Top row: John C., Arthur Mulligan. Front row: George V., Mercy Mariab, Florence, John Mulligan (father) and Laura Mulligan Price

William, the eldest of nine children and his father John, with the rest of the family, came by way of ship from New York to Panama then by land across the isthmus to the Pacific and then by ship again to San Francisco. After a short stay in San Francisco the Mulligans moved north to Healdsburg. Here John and William



The Mulligan Store West Street, Healdsburg, 1873

opened a highly successful hardware store on West Street across from the plaza and both became prominent upstanding members of the growing community.



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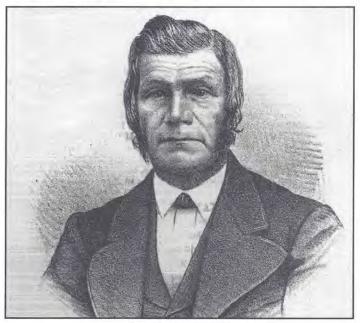
In our line doub on satisfactory terms,

Healdsburg Tribune, October 1873

Continued from page 14

In fact father John was one of the first city mayors of Healdsburg and coincidentally having John N. Bailhache, the son-in-law of the Henry and Josefa Fitch as his City Clerk.

According to Mulligan family lore, "William was very popular socially, as he had so many cultural assets. He met Margaret Alexander who was then the best dressed woman (in Sonoma County); her sister Caroline was known as the best horsewoman." William may have acquired these "cultural assets" in his youth. He spent four years in the seminary and later after leaving "the calling" traveled to Europe where he studied art and music. He was an accomplished violinist and studied the art of the masters



Cyrus Alexander - 1877

while in Antwerp, Belgium. So when William met lovely and wellconnected Margaret Alexander, he was a successful merchant, an accomplished musician and a talented budding artist.



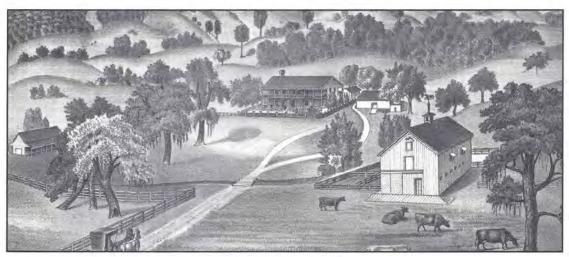
1877 Sonoma County Atlas

One can only imagine a night in early courtship when William would come to call at the expansive Alexander ranch house in Alexander Valley.

While the aging and stoic wizened patriarch Cyrus sat silently in his favorite chair, and the ever attentive, protective, "very Catholic" mother Rufina, stood in the kitchen doorway, William may have gracefully bowed the strings of his violin accompanied by Margaret with her light touch on the ivory keys of the family piano. Though the home was isolated and the setting rustic, the Alexander children were well schooled and music was always part of the picture. With a sense of pride the parents might have listened as not only had they brought in a music teacher to the remote ranch, the Piano had traveled by ship "around the horn" from Boston and then taken the tedious and treacherous wagon journey from San Francisco Bay to



Rufina Lucero Alexander circa 1868



The Alexander Home - 1877

the Alexander household. The duet must have produced pleasing harmony for William won the hand of Margaret and won the hearts of the frontier family.

With his marriage to Margaret on July 30,1868, William took over the business affairs of the growing Alexander businesses from the now ailing Cyrus. He soon found himself running the hardware business with his brother George in Healdsburg the ranching and farming operations in the Alexander Valley and raising a growing new family. William Alexander Mulligan was born on July 15, 1869 and was followed rapidly by Margaret Cecilia 1870, Leo Vincent 1873, Genevieve 1875, Rufina Inez 1877, George Julian 1878, Francis Joseph 1880, Theresa Irene 1882, Louis Bertrand 1884 and Frederick Stephen 1887.

William and John sold their hardware business in Healdsburg in September, 1878 to Misters Bloom and Cohn thus ending a 16 years career in that trade. With the sale William concentrated on the ranch where he lived. His production of grapes increased until by 1883 he had approximately 400 acres of vineyard dedicated mostly to Zinfandel and Reisling. As noted by family members throughout his life William did not really fancy himself "a farmer," and for reasons which are not quite clear in 1891, he packed up the family and moved first to Aberdeen, Oregon. The family then moved back to Healdsburg briefly before finally settling in Selma, California in Fresno County where he continued farming.

During all his time in California, until his death in 1956, William Mullligan pursued his talent and considerable skill in painting. Many of the images he painted both in Healdsburg and Selma were of religious topic and many of those were either sold to churches and rectories in California or sent to the East Coast for sale. Some art critics consider him one of early California's finest painters.

The Healdsburg Museum has received a generous donation of two of the early works of William Mulligan from his great granddaughter, Colleen Mulligan Merickel who now lives a in Santa Rosa, and her parents, Fred and Alice, who still live on the family property in Fresno County.

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Margaret Alexander Mulligan, 1931



ARTIFACT

Reader's Digest, published December 1953

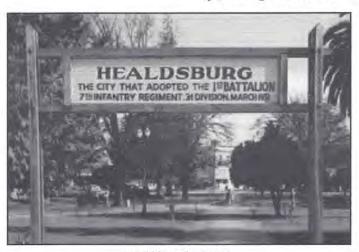
Donated to the Healdsburg Museum by Norma Maffei in 2006

Holly Hoods will be speaking about Smith Robinson and Healdsburg's adopted battalion to Sons in Retirement (S.I.R.S.) and Kiwanis in May 2009

his December issue of the well-known, highly-circulated publication, *Reader's Digest*, foccused the national eye on Healdsburg in 1953. J. Campbell Bruce's article, "Healdsburg: The Town that Adopted a Battalion," in the 13-article issue, showcased Healdsburg as a small town with a big heart. The article described the community-wide efforts of Healdsburg to rally to provide practical and spititual support for the 1000-man army battalion as its "adoptive home town." This feel-good story was picked up by Associated Press and the word spread; several other towns were inspired to "adopt" their own military units. Shortly after this article appeared, Smith Robinson and Healdsburg were featured on the popular television show, *This is Your Life*. 1953 was a big year for Healdsburg and its residents!

HEALDSBURG: THE TOWN THAT ADOPTED THE FIRST BATTALION

by J. Campbell Bruce • Researched by Holly Hoods



Healdsburg Plaza, 1953

The story of the adoption of the First Battalion, Seventh Infantry Regiment, by the town of Healdsburg is, in its way, a capsule explanation of the strength of America. It has a stirring, inspirational quality which makes one proud to be an American, and makes us in the Army grateful for our chance to serve.

--F.L. Parks, Major General, General Staff

In the spring of 1951, Lt. Col. Fred Weyand, commander of the Seventh Infantry Regiment's First Battalion, wrote his wife in Healdsburg, Calif., about the scarcity of nonmilitary items on the Korean battle front. Couldn't Healdsburg, he wondered, "adopt" the battalion?

Mrs. [Arline Langhart] Weyand talked it over with fellow townsmen. It was an ambitious foster parentage indeed, but Healdsburg (pop. 3184) was willing to try. Mayor O. H. Price issued a proclamation of First Battalion Week: "Whereas, the men of said battalion are in need of stationery and other personal articles of comfort not usually furnished them..." [Mrs. Weyand was the twin sister of Edwin Langhart, founder of the Healdsburg Museum - editor]

The City Council appropriated \$50. Rotary and other clubs set up "snack bins" in stores, and customers quickly filled them. Various groups sponsored benefit dances, a variety show, a baseball game—price of admission: anything the boys could use.



Congressman Herbert Scudder, Arline Langhart Weyand, Smith Robinson, 1954

The town's first shipment to Korea that spring carried tinned snacks, washcloths, combs, mirrors; a sewing kit and two boxes of stationery for every man in the 1000-man battalion; a Brownie camera for every squad; and addresses of local girls who would welcome correspondence.

The First Battalion's reaction was one of amazed delight. Colonel Weyand wrote his wife: "We'd had a rough week and everyone was down in the mouth. The first packets arrived and our spirits soared!"

Except for the Colonel, not one soldier of the First had ever set eyes on Healdsburg—a lovely town north of San Francisco, nestled among the apple orchards of a fertile valley. But the shipments continued, and to date Healdsburg has sent its adopted soldiers enough gifts—books, magazines, candy, pipes, fruitcake and other delicacies—to set up a mail-order house. This year's shipments included a dozen boxes of clothing for Korean children.

The First Battalion became the envy of every combat outfit in Korea. It got by far the most mail, for each man had two home towns—his own and Healdsburg.

Modest fame came to the foster home town, first in press stories out of Korea, then in the official praise of Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, and an extolling speech in Congress. This inspired nearby communities to adopt fighting units, but their projects soon petered out. They lacked the temperament of Healdsburg—and, more important, perhaps, they lacked a Smith Robinson.

Smitty Robinson, colored janitor at Healdsburg's small hospital, did more than anyone else to bring off the successful adoption of the First Battalion.

He had wanted to be a minister. And so he is—a minister without frock, who goes about Healdsburg visiting the sick with a bouquet and a batch of fresh biscuits, cheering the discouraged, working tirelessly on community projects.

Smitty should have been dead long ago—except that he had too much to do. He was a sophomore and all-round athlete at the University of California in 1930, when doctors discovered he had a bad heart. They predicted an invalid's life, and a short one, for him. So Smitty went home to wait for the end. While he waited, he took the job as janitor at the Healdsburg General Hospital. After 23 years—still waiting—he has become the busiest man in town. He coaches football, gets out a monthly journal of the high school alumni association; is founder-director of his church's Chancel Choir.

It was to Smitty that Mrs. Weyand had turned when she first received her husband's plea from Korea. Close to ten percent of Healdsburg's own boys are in the service, and Smitty had kept them



Photo: 1954 Healdsburg 1st Battalion visit Col. and Mrs. Fred C. Weyand
(1st Battalion committee members and friends).
Home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Towle for "This is Your Life" T.V. show.
Back Row L to R: Harold Sullivan, Earl Osborn, Byron Gibbs, John McGill, S.
Robinson, Frank Towle, Dee Walker, Lesly Meyer, Col. Fred Weyand.
Front Row L to R: Margaret Towle, Mildred Walker, Florence Emy Wheeler,
Mrs, Elzora Robinson, Miss Joyce Johnson, Doris Lutz Meyer,
Arlene Langbart Weyand, Jo Osborn, Mrs. Albert York



Packaging boxes for First Battalion, Korean War, early 1950's. Smith Robinson, fifth from left.

in touch with their home town through "Smitty's Scoops," a chatty newsletter. Now he added the fighting men of the First Battalion to his mailing list.

Smitty told the men of the First all about their foster town, its people, its life. In turn, Healdsburg learned the distinguished history of its adopted battalion. The Seventh Infantry Regiment, to which the battalion belongs, is the second oldest in the U.S. Army. Organized in 1798, it had its baptism of fire in the War of 1812; in Korea, the First Battalion added to its laurels with the Distinguished Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism.

Soon the town and the battalion were corresponding regularly. At first with a cautious reserve, then in the folksy vein of men writing home, the soldiers fired back the gift stationery, loaded with warm words of gratitude. "You brought the men what they needed spiritually," Colonel Weyand told Healdsburg. During one attack, the "Healdsburg Line"—as the battalion called its sector—was the only sector that held when the rest of the line gave way. Wrote the Colonel: "I have never seen the equal of the spirit that prevails throughout the unit. Above all things is your remembrance of us in your prayers that gives us that extra bit of go when we need it."

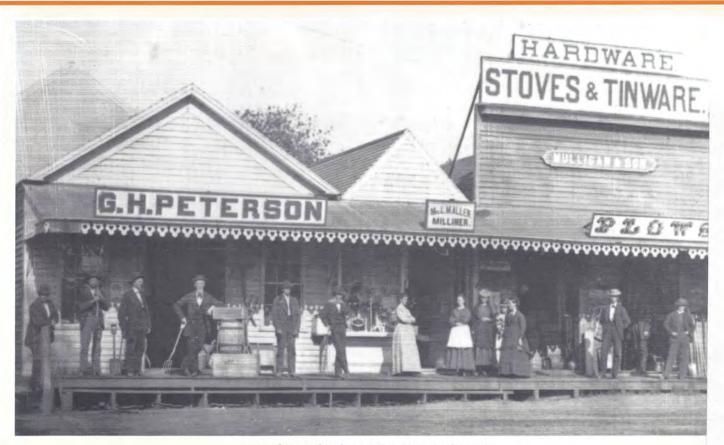
All Healdsburg has helped make the men feel that Healdsburg is their second home. At the home-economics kitchen of the Healdsburg High School the lights burn late; teams of women—the doctor's wife, the grocer's, the cobbler's—grease cookie tins, mix batter, bake; a shoe clerk cracks walnuts, a teacher chops them; teenagers pop popcorn. This assembly-line activity went on three nights a week for the month of each big operation. In one evening

50 volunteers turned out 180 dozen cookies and the next day the eighth-grade girls packed them for shipping to the lads in Korea.

Word that the men lacked electricity set off feverish activity; every candle in Healdsburg and the stocks in nearby towns were bought up. But Smitty decided that the long tapers—even if they arrived unbroken—were too fragile for use in a tent or hillside bunker. So at a community melting bee the lot was melted into 96 dozen half pint milk cartons, with candle stubs inserted for wicks. These squat, sturdy candles proved a tremendous hit. Wrote Captain Constantine Lagakis: "They are perhaps the most practical and sought-after item in Korea today—except rotation, of course!"

The gratitude of the men of the First Battalion has not been limited to bread-and-butter notes. Individual companies have lavished gifts on the town: \$175 to the 4-H Club for a club project; \$700 as a trust fund for needy children; \$1400 to buy school playground equipment. And they sent money to install disk-like radio receivers in patients' pillows at the hospital where Smitty works.

The armistice brought an end to the shooting in Korea, but not to the cookie bakes in Healdsburg. The boys are still over there, at the silent front—and still in need of cheer from home. "Now, with time on their hands," Smitty pointed out, "the boys will be lonelier than ever." The bonds of good will forged between Healdsburg and its adopted battalion will long endure.



Corner of West and Matheson Streets. 1873 Joseph Downing