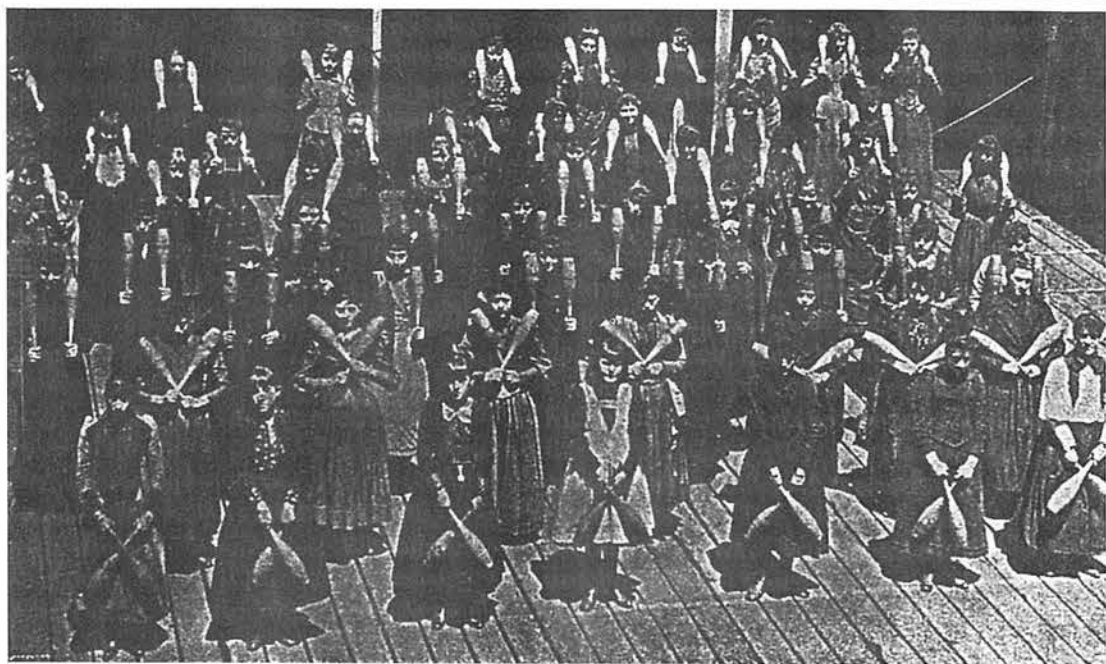




SUMMER 1996

LOS ANGELES CORRAL

NUMBER 204



Indian Club Drill in the Yard of the John Swett Grammar School. Courtesy of the John Swett Collection, Hill Girt Farm, Martinez, California.

Early California Frontier Education - The Foundation

by Nicholas C. Polos

Education at any given time or place is in large measure the product of the civilization of which it is a part; however much it may be influenced by custom and tradition, it is always sensitive to contemporary social

forces. In its early days San Francisco was a "city in transition," and there was a high element of instability in its mobile population. This is well described by one writer who
(continued on page 3)

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THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

JUNE 1996 MEETING

Corral member Tom Tefft traced the fortunes of Sam Brannan, controversial Mormon missionary, goldseeker, and entrepreneur. Born in Maine in 1879, Brannan moved to Ohio as a young man and learned the printing trade there. He knocked around the Midwest and in 1842 converted to the Mormon faith. Despite his avowed religious commitment, Brannan was always on the lookout for opportunities. Although married, he fell in



Photograph by Frank Q. Newton

Tom Tefft June meeting speaker

love with another girl and found the Mormon acceptance of polygamy congenial to his desire to have a second wife.

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 1)

said:

Every year brought its changes to San Francisco. The tents and shanties of '49 and '50 had given place to blocks of three-and-story (sic) buildings along Montgomery Street by the end of 1854. Revolvers at the hip were no longer 'de rigueur' for the well-dressed gentleman, but a slight bulge in the waistcoat might suggest the outline of a pocket derringer.

The emphasis upon individualism often raised problems about the relationship between public means and private ends. The looser organization of California society made it difficult to formulate clearly the objectives toward which the whole community could strive.

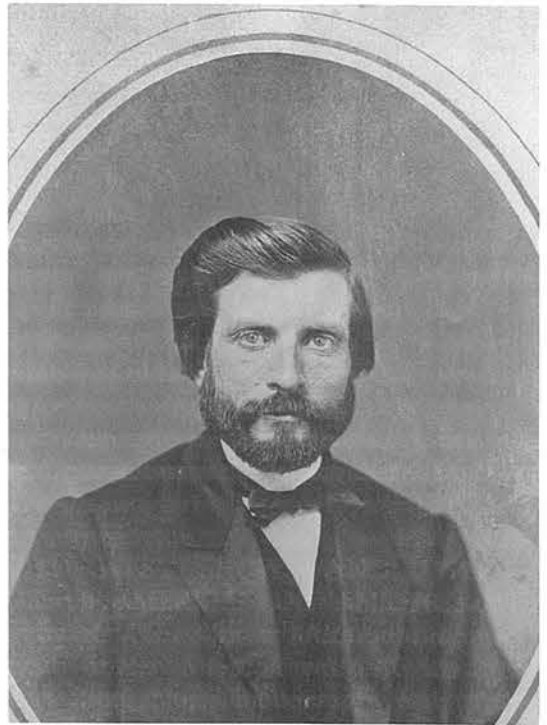
There was no previous pattern of education to build upon. The story of formal education in California begins with the Franciscan missions. For pupils other than Indians, Bancroft lists fifty-five schools of the Spanish and Mexican Periods. Rockwell Hunt claims that:

Diego de Borica, Spanish Governor from 1794 to 1800, has been called the real founder of secular education in California. It is well understood however, that the education of the schoolroom was much neglected throughout the period preceding the American occupation.

Except for W.E.P. Hartnell's *Collegio de San José*, all of the early schools were elementary, and most of them functioned very briefly; thus no pattern of education was established in California. It is understandable that when it could be afforded, boys were sent away to Honolulu, Valparaiso, or even to Paris for their schooling.

The upsurge of population, wealth and more gradually of stability gave momentum to the demand for schools. Organized religion lent its support; several of the missionary pastors engaged in teaching as well as preaching. Other schools were opened under private auspices.

The first school in San Francisco was a private enterprise opened in April 1847, by



John Swett at age 44. During the Rincon School period. Courtesy of the M. Plummer Collection, Hill Girt Ranch, Martinez, Calif.

William Marston, "a Mormon, who was qualified for only the most rudimentary instruction, and apparently, poorly qualified for that." The school was opened in a shanty on the block between Broadway and Pacific Street, west of Dupont, now Grant Avenue. The total enrollment during the year of its existence did not exceed twenty-five.

The following year, on April 3, 1848, the first public school in San Francisco was opened. This school was supported by tuition fees; it was free only to indigent pupils. Thomas Douglas, a graduate of Yale College, was the schoolmaster. He had studied for the ministry at Andover Theological Seminary and was a licensed but not an ordained Congregational minister. He had taught at the Young Chief's School in the Sandwich Islands (Oahu, Honolulu). From the time the public school was opened, the private school lost pupils, and by May 1848, the school which had opened with six pupils had thirty-eight — or one-half of the number of school age children in San Francisco were

in attendance. It is difficult for us today to picture this situation, as Laura E. King wrote:

Only pioneers or children of pioneers can understand the difficulties of obtaining an education in the early days of any state, particularly California; stranded thousands of miles from civilization upon an almost unknown shore, surrounded by dangers, forgotten by friends and neglected by relatives; with no hope of returning home, for the thought of facing the dangers and hardships of crossing the plains for a second time would have appalled the strongest heart.

Before the Douglas School was fairly under way, gold was discovered at Coloma. Schoolmaster Douglas, left with only eight pupils in his charge, joined the general stampede for "the diggings," and the school came to an end. Except for a few weeks late in the year 1848, San Francisco was without schools until the latter part of April 1849.

The gold fever did not become virulent at once. During the month of May rumors of "huge fortunes quickly made," drifted into San Francisco. San Francisco soon felt the effects of the gold excitement when evidence of the precious metal began to appear in the city. The effect was catastrophic. San Francisco and many of the surrounding towns almost became ghost towns. John Caughey's vivid description explains that hectic era in this way:

Army pay of seven dollars a month did not suffice to keep men in the ranks; and ships which put in to San Francisco were quickly stripped of their crews and often their officers as well...Business, except in picks, pans, shovels, and mining outfits, was at a standstill; labor was not to be had, construction stopped, and real estate tumbled to give-away prices...mining equipment rose to fantastic prices and transportation to the mines was at a premium.

The accessibility of possible wealth in the new state of California meant that men were not to be fixed in the stations into

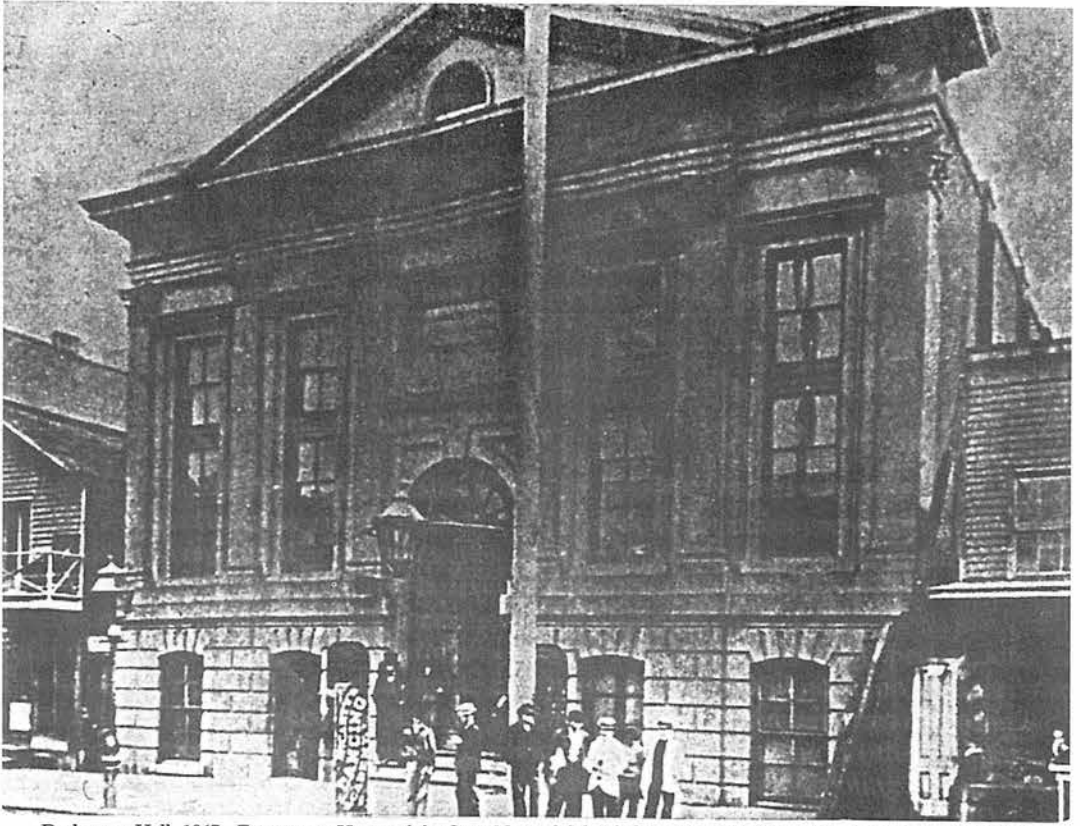
which they had been born and opened up the possibility of improvement through mobility both geographic and along class lines. At the outset mobility was not via the educational ladder, especially in San Francisco, since education was neglected until the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. John C. Pelton, from Boston, on October 11, 1849. John Pelton was a trained educator having served for several years as principal of the Phillips Free Public School at Andover, Massachusetts. The Peltons brought with them a sizable library of school books and school apparatus. A short time after their arrival the Peltons opened a private school in the basement of the Baptist Church on Washington Street near Stockton. The Pelton School was a free private school, without tuition fee, and maintained by voluntary contributions.

On April 1, 1850, Pelton's school was made a public school by an ordinance of the town council and was free to every child. Mr. and Mrs. Pelton were then employed at a combined salary of \$500 per month. The public school soon had 150 pupils and required additional teachers. Since no provision had been made by the Town Council for the salaries of the extra instructors, Mr. Pelton paid them from his own pocket. This school was conducted until September 25, 1851; it was suspended by the adoption of a new school ordinance.

In 1851 the State Legislature laid the foundation for the beginning of a State school system. The school law of 1851 was rather cumbersome and imperfect in many of its provisions, but it served its purpose. The first district to take advantage of the new law's provisions was San Francisco. On September 25, 1851, the Free School Ordinance was passed by the City Council. It conformed both to the new State school law and to the act of the Legislature incorporating the City of San Francisco.

In speaking of securing the passage of this ordinance in San Francisco, Samuel Willey said:

To demonstrate to the business men and to the Common Council that there



Dashaway Hall, 1865. Temporary Home of the State Normal School, San Francisco, California. Courtesy of the John Swett Collection, Hill Girt Ranch, Martinez, Calif.

were children in the city needing school, some of us got up a procession of all we could get together and marched them through Montgomery Street. We were proud to show 100 little people, rank and file, and there may have been twice or three times that number, all told, in San Francisco at that time. The city free-school ordinance was passed, and became a law, soon after, on the 25th of September, 1851.

The ordinance was prepared by Colonel Thomas J. Nevins who had come to California in 1849 as the representative of the American Tract Society and had taken a prominent part in all matters relating to the schools. This ordinance (Ordinance No. 189) provided for the establishment, regulation and support of the Free Common Schools in and for the City of San Francisco. It divided the city into five school districts and established a five-member board of education,

whose powers included appointing a superintendent of schools, purchasing school property, building schools, prescribing a course of study, hiring teachers and examining the schools at least twice a year. The board consisted of one alderman, one assistant alderman and two citizens who were not members of the common council. The mayor served as an *ex officio* member. The superintendent was made executive officer of the board, to carry out its orders in regard to the schools and to keep a record of all progress made. The members of the board were to be elected by a joint ballot of the common council, to hold office until replaced by a new election or removed by the common council. In explaining the making of city schools John Swett wrote: "San Francisco may be taken as a type of all the larger cities of California, such as Sacramento, Marysville, Stockton, Oakland, San Jose, Los Angeles and San Diego."



John Swett's Ranch - Hill Girt Farm Alhambra Valley Martinez, California. Courtesy, M. Plummer Collection, Hill Girt Ranch, Martinez, Calif.

The first Board of Education was elected by the Common Council on October 8, 1851. The Honorable C.J. Brenham, Mayor of San Francisco assumed the presidency. Colonel Thomas J. Nevins was the unanimous choice of the Board for Superintendent. Mr. John C. Pelton, the pioneer teacher, had been the other candidate, and he was greatly disappointed. Four years later, however, he was to serve as Superintendent of Schools.

On November 17, 1851, the system of free schools was inaugurated. At that time the city had very poor schoolhouse accommodations. Even up to 1853 school facilities were poor. Swett wrote in his *Recollections*:

In 1853 the City of San Francisco did not own a single school-house, the schools being held in rented buildings. There were only 1,510 children in school; now there are 8,800. Then there was only \$35,000 a year expended annually for school purposes; now the amount is \$134,000.

No taxes for schoolhouse purposes had been previously levied. Benefactors of the schools like William Davis Merry Howard, a merchant prince, concerned about the wel-

fare of the children of the pioneers, built a frame house in Happy Valley and gave it rent-free to Colonel Nevins as a schoolhouse. This was a generous donation in the gold-rush days of high rents. He also donated funds with which to buy supplies and pay teachers' salaries for all the city of San Francisco, at least until a tax could be levied and collected. Mr. Howard's donated school in Happy Valley (located not far from the present-day Palace Hotel) was opened as a public institution on November 17, 1851, with James Denman as principal. He was the first public school principal in California. He served in this capacity for six years, when he was elected City Superintendent of Schools. The Happy Valley School was later called the Denman School. From 1851 to 1852 the San Francisco School System expanded from Happy Valley School to six other schools. These early schools were: The Powell Street or North Beach School (Joel Tracy, principal), Washington Grammar School (F. E. Jones, principal), Rincon School (Silas Weston, principal), Spring Valley Grammar (Asa W. Cole, principal), Union Grammar (Ahira Holmes, principal), and

Mission Grammar (Alfred Rix, principal). John Swett pointed out that the average daily attendance in all the schools for 1852 was 445; in 1853, 703 pupils.

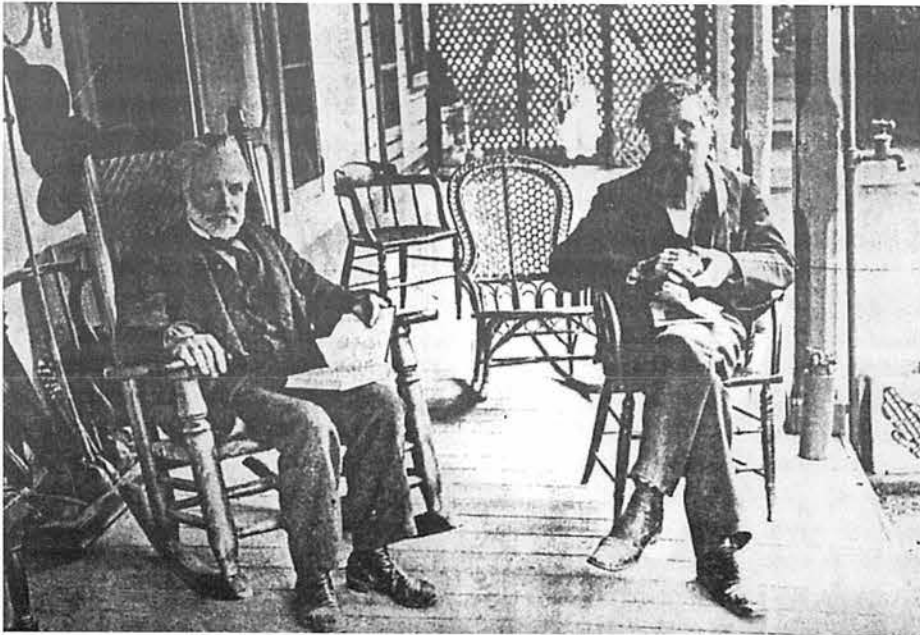
The first school reports published in pamphlet form by the Board were those of Superintendent O'Grady in 1854 and 1855. The Superintendent reported the average number of pupils to a teacher to be 87; that a uniform series of textbooks had been adopted; and that a Teachers' Association had been formed. Superintendent Theller in 1856 reported there were thirty-nine teachers and 3,347 Pupils in the schools of San Francisco.

In December 1852 Superintendent Marvin recommended that schools maintained by the Catholic Church be allowed their *pro rata* of the public fund. In 1853 the legislature adopted this recommendation and allowed all religious and sectarian schools a *pro rata* share of the State School Fund, subject to the proviso that the denominational schools be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Act of 1852, namely, that they be kept open at least three months of the year and that the money

received from the state be used exclusively for the payment of teachers' salaries. As soon as the ward school law of 1853 was enacted by the State Legislature, petitions were circulated in San Francisco asking for financial assistance for church schools. Ward schools were established as a result of this in the Second Ward (connected with St. Francis Church), the Sixth Ward (connected with the Cathedral), and in the Second Ward (connected with St. Patrick's Church). For the maintenance of three ward schools the city appropriated \$36,690.50, a very large sum for school expenses at that time. In his "Special History of San Francisco," John Swett wrote:

In the Ward Schools there were educated 1421 pupils. . . The school law of 1855 abolished the separation of the school fund, and all these schools have been mingled into one uniform system. Since the 5th of May last there has been no religious, sectarian or denominational doctrine taught in them.

In May 1855, when ward schools were discontinued, the city public schools assumed control of the religious institutions.



John Swett on the porch of his Hill Girt Ranch with his lifelong friend, John Muir. Courtesy John Swett Collection, Hill Girt Farm, Martinez, California.

About the same time that the ward schools were abolished, San Francisco's teachers discontinued the religious exercises which had been kept up since the founding of the free common schools. This practice, i.e., prayer and reading of the Scriptures, was discontinued because of the general opposition to any tie between the Church and the State. This issue was to harass California for many years and, indeed, remains one of the problems in present-day America.

The founding of early California schools, after statehood, suffered greatly due to the economic instability of the period from 1850 to 1860. Following the Gold Rush of 1849 and 1850 there was an economic depression during the years 1850 and 1851. Ira Cross, in his *Financing an Empire*, refers to this period as "the Uncertain Fifties." He paints a sharp, lucid picture of economic conditions, explaining them in this way:

With every encouraging bit of information regarding the mines that filtered through to the East, additional supplies were shipped into the state. The market again became overstocked, business was depressed, prices and wages were reduced, and the outlook appeared to be most discouraging. The situation was further complicated by the refusal of the eastern shippers to extend credit to local merchants. The state again experienced extremely dry weather in 1850, so that the placers could not be worked satisfactorily. It was not until the fall and winter of 1852 that market conditions steadied themselves and that the merchants and bankers of California again looked forward hopefully to the future.

The years 1852 and 1853 were normal years, but the years between 1854 and 1858 were again years of severe economic depression. Banks failed, industry was at a standstill and real estate dropped in value and in number of sales. Between 1855 and 1857 there were no less than four hundred and seventy-one bank failures in California. Some indication of the low ebb reached in economic conditions may be had from a description of the

availability of money. The writer painted a dismal picture of financial depression in these words:

Times have never been so hard in California from the day of the discovery of gold until the present (April 1855), as they are now. It is almost impossible to negotiate loans on any terms, even on the best of paper, and securities which would have attracted capitalists are not to be had. . . Real estate is at its lowest ebb. . . It is beyond cavil or dispute that money is tighter today than it has ever been before in San Francisco.

In March 1857, Congress made a drastic reduction in the tariff, which resulted in that economic tragedy known as the Panic of 1857. John Swett speaks of the heavy business failures and financial collapse which began in 1854 and 1855. Strangely enough, he makes no mention of any effect on the schools. That there was an effect which manifested itself cannot be questioned. One writer wrote: "The total amount of state aid did not return to its 1856 level until 1861-62, although the maximum county tax rate was increased in 1860." The effects of the economic depression caused an enormous reduction in state expenditures and influenced the expansion of the public school system throughout the state. Adequate provision for public education was out of the question during this crisis. Fortunately, the economic depression and its influence on the schools was short-lived. Emerging from the depths in 1858-59 the State of California entered a period of wholesome prosperity which endured for many years. In many ways the depression of 1854-57 proved to be a blessing in disguise. It forced a temporary abandonment of the rash and reckless spirit of speculation inherited from the days of '49 and brought about sounder methods of conducting commercial enterprises.

It was during this period that Colonel T.J. Nevins presented his resignation as City Superintendent of Schools. The City paid high tribute to his work. His successor was a practical schoolman, William H. O'Grady, a graduate of Middlebury College, Vermont.

William H. O'Grady had been principal of the Rincon School and had worked very hard to expand the "common-school spirit." John Swett explained this when he wrote:

As might have been expected in a city with a cosmopolitan population drawn from every state in the Union and from most of the European nations, the common-school spirit was weak, and it required heroic work on opinion up to a liberal support of the common schools, which were for a long time regarded by a strong minority of citizens as charity schools...

The elevation of Superintendent O'Grady soon made an opening for a young man who had come to California for his health from New England. That young man from New Hampshire was John Swett. He began his long career in education in California at the Rincon School in San Francisco and finished his career forty-two years later in San Francisco. His connection with schools of California was one of the most important factors in the history of education in the state. John Swett, whom Merle Curti called "The Horace Mann of the West," was more than just the "Father of Public School Education in California," he was the chief agent responsible for the many changes in California in the nineteenth century.

Fortunately he was helped by a fluid and rapidly changing economy with new ideas and new expectations. Because then California society was in flux it found it much easier to accept new concepts in education; Swett did not have to labor in a society that was traditionally bounded by the walls of established custom. Thus, from its early frontier days, starting in San Francisco, state educational leaders like John Swett helped to build the huge public educational institutions that serve the needs of California today.

John Swett began his educational career in California as the principal of the Rincon Grammar School in San Francisco, California (November 1853). His leadership in this school gained him a reputation as a capable educator. He served as California State

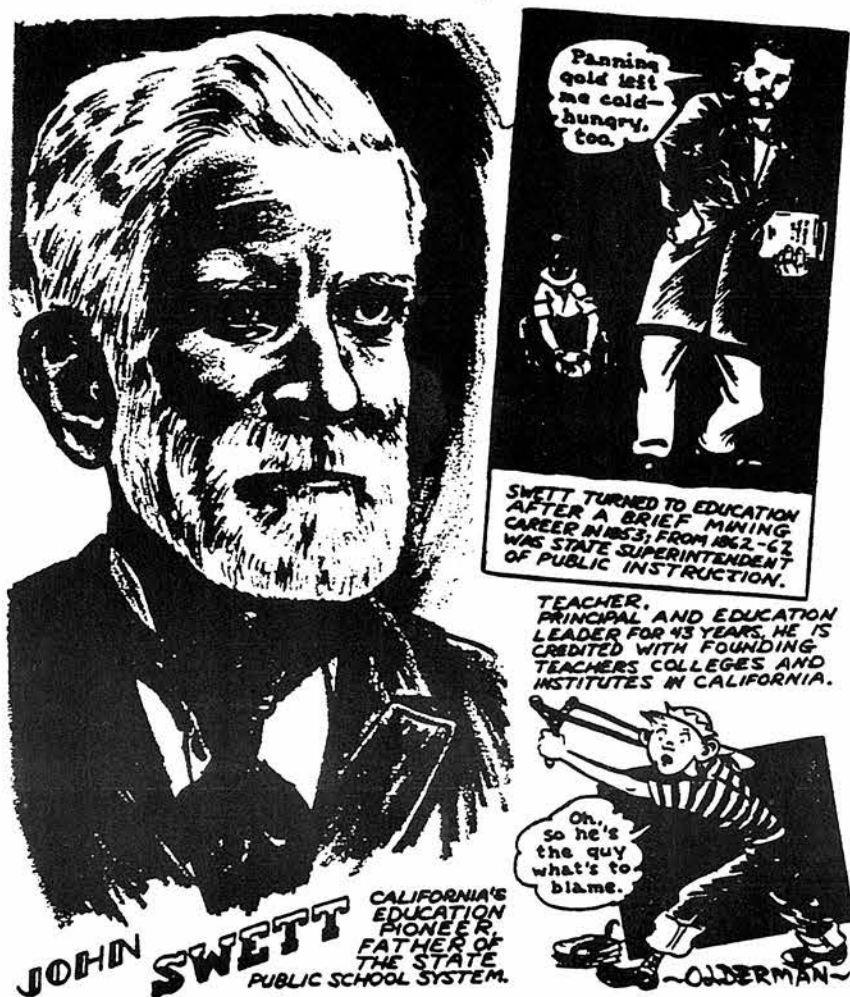
Superintendent (1862-67), and later as principal of the Denman Grammar School, the Lincoln Evening School, and the Girls' High School, all in San Francisco (1867-89). He was Deputy Superintendent of the San Francisco Schools (1870-73). He became City Superintendent (1892) of the San Francisco Schools and served for four years. Then he retired to devote his twilight years to the care of his Hill Girt Ranch near Martinez, California (Alhambra Valley), close to his friend John Muir.

John Swett developed the permanent foundation of public education in California. He was the leader in supporting physical education in this State and is indeed called the "father of physical education" in California. He edited the first educational journal, *The Bookseller* (1860), helped to found California's first normal school (1857), which later became California State University at San Jose and founded one of the first evening schools. He helped to found the Teacher's Institutes (1862), and organized the first successful state teacher's journal, *The California Teacher* (1863).

Under his patriotic leadership as the "Civil War" State Superintendent he rewrote the state school law (1863-66), campaigned through the press and legislature for the state school tax. It was through his efforts that the rate-bill for public schools was abolished. Always the teachers' champion he fought for professional standards and organized the California Educational Society (1863), the forerunner of the present California Teachers' Association.

John Swett was a "builder and former," not a popularizer or a reformer. There was little to reform in early frontier California education. His greatest contribution was his use of the democratic political processes to obtain public support of education. He used his talent as a poet, orator, author, journalist and educational statesman to further the cause of California's education. John Swett was to California what Horace Mann was to Massachusetts, and thus merits the title of "John Swett - The Horace Mann of California."

Centennial Vignettes



"Portrait Vignette," by Murray Olderman, *Sacramento Bee*, April 2, 1949.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Carr, William G. *John Swett: The Biography of an Educational Pioneer.*

Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly, XXXII (September 1949).

Hendrick, Irving G. *California Education: A Brief History.*

Polos, Nicholas C. *John Swett: California's Frontier Schoolmaster.*

Hunt, Rockwell. *California's First.*

Swett, John. *Public Education in California: Its Origin and Development, with Personal Reminiscences of Half a Century.*

Moore, Ernest C. "California's Educators,"



Nooning on trail, reprinted from Ezra Meekers; *Champion of the Oregon Trail*.

Traveling West (and East) with Ezra Meeker

by Abraham Hoffman

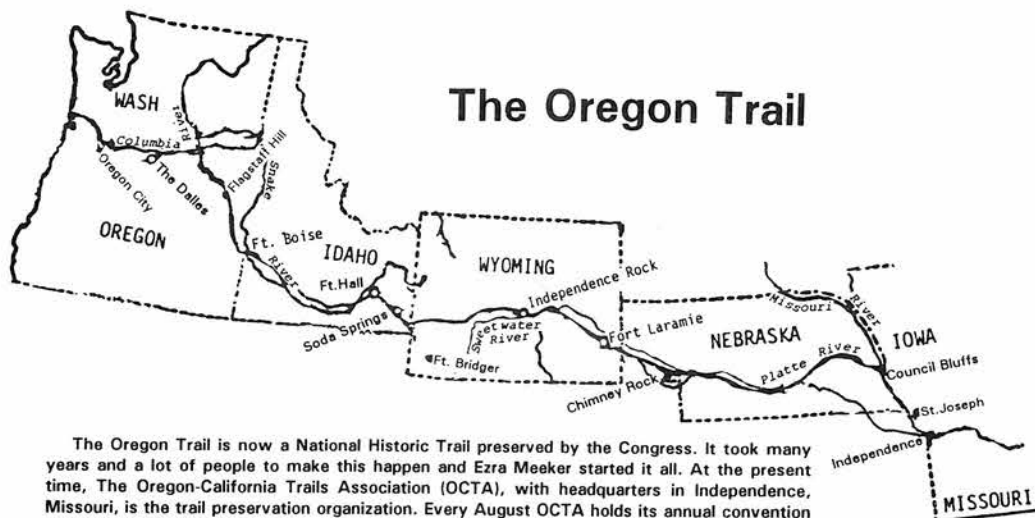
Of all the people who headed West on the Oregon Trail in the 1840s and 1850s, surely none was more unusual than Ezra Meeker. As a young man he participated fully in the famous overland migration, crossing the continent with his wife and child in a covered wagon pulled by oxen. Then, at an age when senior citizens stereotypically retreat to the golf course or move to retirement homes, Meeker did it all over again, not once, but several times. He returned to the Oregon Trail with a covered wagon, and he repeated the performance in an automobile and then in an airplane.

Ezra Meeker fit easily into the role of western pioneer. Born in a long cabin in Huntsville, Ohio, in 1830, he grew up with little formal education. His family moved to Lockland, a small village north of Cincinnati, and then to a rented farm in Attica, Indiana, in 1839. Odd jobs for Ezra included delivering newspapers in Indianapolis. One of his customers was Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, then at the start of his long and sometimes controversial career.

A thousand-dollar gift from Ezra's maternal grandfather in Ohio provided the means for the Meekers to buy an Indiana farm. Jacob Meeker, Ezra's father, certainly appreciated the gift, but there was a problem. How to get the money from Lockland, Ohio, to Attica, Indiana, a distance of 200 miles? Ezra's parents took a covered wagon back to Ohio to get the money. The thousand dollars was all in silver coins. They put this treasure in a box and brought it back to Indiana.

Still in his teens, Ezra took charge of the farm. At age twenty he married Eliza Jane Summer, a neighbor's daughter. News of good land to the West attracted the young couple. In October 1851 Ezra turned operation of the farm back to the family, and he and Eliza went to Iowa. A severe winter helped convince Ezra and his bride that Iowa wasn't for them. A new land beckoned--the Oregon Country. The offer of free homesteads was too tempting to resist.

In April 1852 the Meekers, with their seven-week-old baby son, traveled across



The Oregon Trail is now a National Historic Trail preserved by the Congress. It took many years and a lot of people to make this happen and Ezra Meeker started it all. At the present time, The Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), with headquarters in Independence, Missouri, is the trail preservation organization. Every August OCTA holds its annual convention somewhere along the trail where over one thousand trail scholars and trail buffs meet in study, listen to somewhat scholarly papers and enjoy directed field trips to nearby historical sites first written about by Ezra Meeker.

The Oregon Trail. Reprinted from Ezra Meeker; *Champion of the Oregon Trail*.

Iowa to Council Bluffs. For the next six months they crossed the continent, a small party of five wagons. They escaped the threat of cholera and made the journey with surprisingly little hardship. Graves along the side of the trail, however, showed that others were not so fortunate. Between June 14 and 22 the Meeker party passed 75 graves. They had more trouble with buffalo stampedes than with hostile Indians.

Fording rivers presented special challenges. The Missouri River required the services of ferry boats, and the ferrymen charged exorbitantly to move wagons and ox-teams across the river. One person in Meeker's party found a ferry boat half-sunken in the sand. The owner agreed that if the emigrants managed to get it afloat, he would take their wagons across the river without charge. After considerable effort, the men in Meeker's party succeeded in floating the boat. As they prepared to take their wagons across on the boat, the local sheriff appeared. He had a writ forbidding the use of the boat. Competing ferrymen didn't want to lose any business. Faced with this unfair action, the men responded quickly. Meeker recalled:

I never before or since attempted to

resist an officer of the law; but when that sheriff put in an appearance and we realized what his coming meant, there wasn't a man in our party that did not run to the nearby camp for his gun. It is needless to add that we did not need to use the guns The sheriff withdrew, and the crossing went on peaceably until all our wagons were safely landed.

After many adventures the Meekers reached Portland, Oregon, on October 1. They found lodging in a boarding house--the first roof over their heads since the previous April. Ezra and his brother Oliver had three dollars between them. After looking over several prospects, Ezra located a claim in the fertile Puyallup Valley, and there he stayed for the next 41 years.

Ezra Meeker became a prosperous farmer, known especially for hop growing. In 1882 his hop crop grossed \$70,000. At harvest time he employed more than a thousand people. Side trips were made to London and San Francisco. Ezra took the transcontinental railroad from San Francisco to New York shortly after its completion. While in New York he attended Plymouth Church to hear his old customer, Henry Ward Beecher, deliver a sermon.

Hard times came in 1892. The hop louse destroyed the hop crop in the Pacific Northwest, and Ezra's fortune along with it. He went north to the Alaska gold rush and marketed potatoes at \$36 a bushel, but the expense of the trips he had to make canceled out any profit. In 1901 Ezra was 71 years old, and at that age it seemed improbable he would try a new career. But he had his own ideas about this:

Since I was then past my allotted three score years and ten, it naturally seemed that my ventures were at an end. But for many of these years I had been cherishing a dream that I felt must come true to round out my days most satisfactorily. I longed to go back over the old Oregon Trail to mark it for all time for the children of the pioneers who blazed it, and for the world.

It took several years to prepare for the trek, and each passing day brought greater urgency to his task. Farmers had already plowed under some parts of the trail. Where the Oregon Trail had crossed plains and prairies, town and city streets and buildings had buried some spots. Meeker was determined to make the trip the same way he had done it in 1852: by covered wagon and ox-team. Along the way he would place markers or convince townspeople to commemo-

rate it with their own monuments.

Meeker was no longer a wealthy man. Friends contributed money to buy a wagon and an ox-team. Finding oxen broken to the yoke posed a problem. The automobile age had begun, and railroads provided the main means of cross-country transportation. After some difficulty Meeker obtained two oxen. For the wagon, the best he could do for an authentic wagon was to collect parts. A firm in Puyallup assembled the wagon for him. Old friends gave money to cover the cost of the wagon assembly. Hardware store owner Charlie Hood donated a yoke he had kept for years.

At age 75, Meeker was ready. He hired a driver, Herman Goebel, who drove the team to The Dalles on the Columbia River. A second driver, William Mardon, went all the way across the continent with Meeker. The old man also brought a dog, "Jim," for companionship. On January 29, 1906, they started out from Puyallup, going whenever possible on the Oregon Trail route or by historic highways. His neighbors questioned his judgment; the local minister predicted he would die from exposure. It took Ezra 22 months to prove them all wrong, but on November 29, 1907, he reached Washington, D.C.

Along the way the white-haired and



4. On the Street, Terre Haute, Ind. 1910.
On a street in Terre Haute, Indiana, during 1910 trip. Reprinted from Ezra Meeker; *Champion of the Oregon Trail*.

bushy-bearded Meeker placed historic markers and persuaded towns along the trail to raise funds for monuments. Caspar, Wyoming, was an early contributor, spending \$1,500 for a marker. Meeker had an additional idea in making the trip. He hoped to create interest in a transcontinental highway to parallel the trail as much as possible. He kept a diary, took pictures which he made into postal cards. Selling the cards helped pay for the expenses of the trip.

Although the Oregon Trail ended historically at Omaha, Nebraska, Meeker continued eastward, counting the miles with an odometer and numbering his encampments. His trek attracted considerable public attention. Many city officials greeted him warmly, but in some towns he met with apathy and suspicion. Meeker was always concerned with projecting the correct image. He had no wish to be confused with snake-oil hucksters driving medicine wagons from one town to another. He recalled,

Already I had been compelled to say that I was not a "corn doctor" or any kind of doctor; that I did not have patent medicine to sell; and that I was not soliciting contributions to support the expedition.

Meeker usually managed to persuade some townspeople to form a committee to raise funds for a monument. School children contributed pennies and dimes for his project.

On August 9, at Brady Island, Nebraska, Meeker met with an unfortunate tragedy. One of his oxen died. How to replace it? Meeker remembered that in 1852 many emigrants had used cows, not steers, to pull their wagons. He bought two cows, one of which refused to move when yoked. The new arrangement was not to Meeker's full satisfaction, but the ox-cow team was still better than giving up on the trip.

Meeker passed through Indianapolis, Dayton, and Cleveland. In Columbus, where he stayed for two weeks, he spoke to the chamber of commerce on his idea for a transcontinental highway to accommodate the recently invented automobile. This

vision of the future was accompanied by his plea for monuments on the Oregon Trail to remember the past.

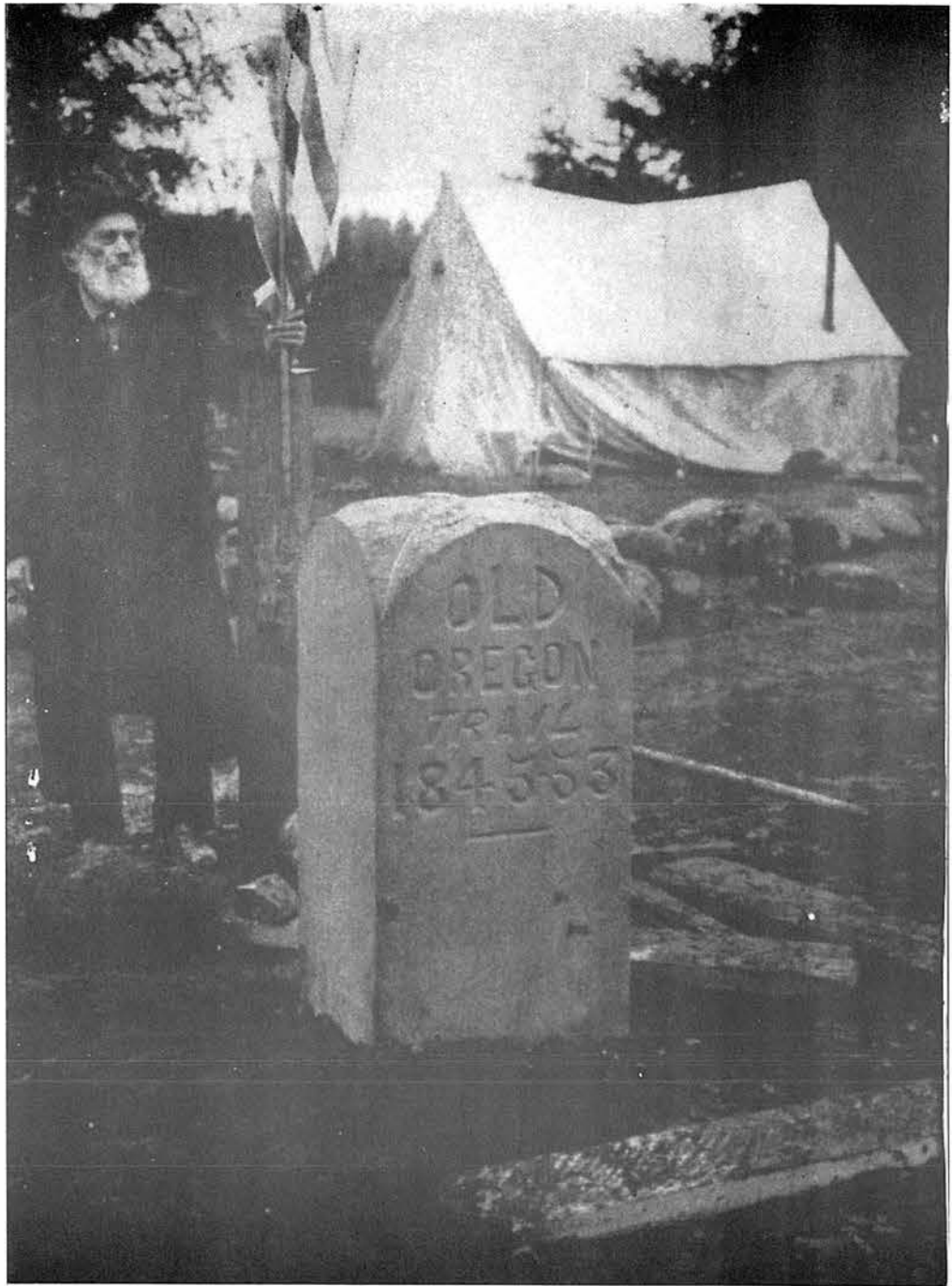
Leaving Ohio, Meeker went through Buffalo to Albany along the towpath of the Erie Canal, an act which wasn't legal, but done by everyone anyway. In New York crowds of people greeted him; so did the police who arrested his driver and tried without success to take the ox team to the city prison. No one knew how to drive an ox team, and Meeker refused to help. His driver was at last released, and the team was put in a hotel stable.

Meeker's New York problem stemmed from an old law prohibiting loose cattle on the city's streets. The oxen weren't loose, but the police read the ordinance narrowly. New York newspapers picked up the story, and the aldermen quickly passed an ordinance permitting him to drive his team while in the city.

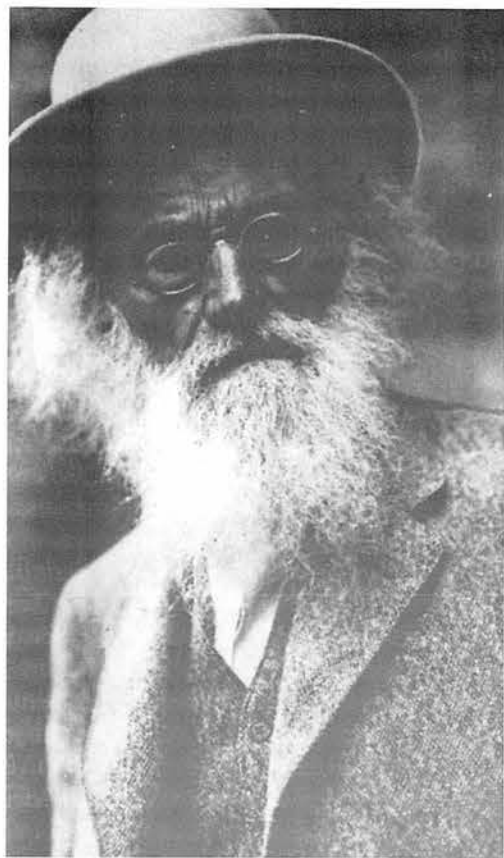
At last Meeker reached Washington, D.C. He met President Theodore Roosevelt who strongly endorsed the idea of marking the Oregon Trail. "I am in favor of this work to mark this trail," he said to Senator Samuel Piles of Meeker's home state of Washington. "If you will bring before Congress a measure to accomplish it, I am with you and will give my support to do it thoroughly." Roosevelt then asked to see the ox team and fired a barrage of questions about the trip. A bill introduced in the House of Representatives in 1908 called for \$50,000 to place markers on the Oregon Trail. The bill, however, did not pass.

Meeker continued on his way, taking his time on the return trip, and using waterways to get to Cincinnati and St. Louis. He also went to Independence, considered the starting point for the Santa Fe Trail. When he at last returned to the Pacific Northwest, in June 1908, Portland and Seattle gave him an enthusiastic welcome.

Now in his late 70s, Meeker wasn't through with his projects. He published his experiences in his book *The Ox-Team; or the Old Oregon Trail*. In 1910 he made another wagon trip across the continent, this time for



Erza Meeker and first Oregon Trail Monument installed in 1906. Reprinted from *Erza Meeker; Champion of the Oregon Trail*.



Ezra Meeker in his later years. Reprinted from *Erza Meeker; Champion of the Oregon Trail*.

the purpose of authenticating the actual trail route. Meeker well knew that the actual "trail" included many wagon tracks and ruts heading in the same general direction. Thus he sought the most commonly used route for marker placement. This second trip, which stretched into 1911, at times found Meeker at locations far from the Oregon Trail. He, his wagon, and his oxen appeared--of all places--at the Los Angeles Aviation Meet in January 1910 where the covered wagon dramatically contrasted with the airplanes.

Over the next fifteen years Meeker revised and updated *The Ox-Team*; published--and again, later revised and updated--*Ventures and Adventures of Ezra Meeker*; *Story of the Lost Trail to Oregon*; *Seventy Years of Progress in Washington*; and other writings. In 1916, at age 85, Meeker went back over the Oregon Trail again, this time in an automobile "piloted by a typical American youth,"

as historian C.B. Galbreath put it. Meeker made this trip, which was endorsed by President Woodrow Wilson, to once again promote his idea of coast-to-coast automobile travel.

The trip was sponsored by the Pathfinder Company of Indianapolis which supplied him with a new touring car at no charge. This car was even equipped with a covered wagon top, giving it the appearance of a somewhat unusual convertible. The company also gave Meeker \$15 a week for expenses. Meeker and his driver set out from Washington, D.C., on May 5, 1916, and reached Olympia, Washington, on September 12. Unfortunately, Meeker found that making such trips in the 20th century differed in one crucial respect from the 19th century. His sponsor expected him to visit Pathfinder dealerships along the way and show off the car.

Meeker quickly realized that towns with Pathfinder dealers weren't necessarily on the Oregon Trail. On the other hand, Meeker dared not stray too far from Pathfinder dealers. The firm was not a large company, and replacement parts were needed when the car broke down. Meeker and the Pathfinder publicity people exchanged heated letters over the route Meeker took.

In 1922 Meeker formed the Oregon Trail Memorial Association, Inc., with an office in New York City. Congress authorized the issuance of six million fifty-cent memorial coins, to be sold by the Association for a dollar each, the proceeds to go for marking the trail.

Having crossed the continent by wagon, automobile, and (several times) by train, Meeker looked to yet another form of transportation. In 1924 he tried following the trail in a way which would have been thought inconceivable in 1852. He took an airplane from Vancouver, Washington, to Dayton, Ohio, the site of the International Air Races meeting. Thousands cheered his arrival; Meeker sat in the reviewing stand next to Orville Wright. Publicity about the trip persuaded the War Department to have Kelley fly Meeker on to Washington, D.C. While

there the old man met with President Calvin Coolidge to discuss the idea of making the Oregon Trail a national highway. The air trip had taken 23 hours and 30 minutes of flying time and covered 2,560 miles, much of it over the old Oregon Trail. The pilot, Lt. Oakley G. Kelley, noted, "This is a remarkable comparison of the improvement in travel to the six months required by you to make the same journey seventy years ago by ox team."



"Jim" the Scotch Collie that accompanied Meeker on his 1906 trip. Reprinted from Ezra Meeker; *Champion of The Oregon Trail*.

For all the times he had crossed the continent, the travel bug kept biting Meeker. In December 1926, shortly before his 96th birthday, Meeker took another train ride across the continent. At age 98 he tried to take another automobile trip along the Oregon Trail, this time in a Model A Ford provided personally by Henry Ford, but finally the stress of such a trip proved too much for the old man. He was taken to Seattle where he died on December 3, 1928.

Few people would have undertaken such an ambitious project as Meeker did in old age. The entry about him in *Dictionary of American Biography* notes, "His persistent efforts, in spite of many discouragements, to popularize the study of pioneer history have borne fruit, and to him more than to any other person is due the credit for the nationwide celebration of 1930 of the first use of wagons on the Oregon Trail."

Meeker could claim direct credit for sixteen monuments placed during his 1906 trip. At least eighteen more were erected by towns through which he passed on that trip, and in the years that followed many cities supported the placing of additional markers. By the late 1920s more than 200 historic markers had been placed on the Oregon

Trail.

In 1992, in the 140th year of Meeker's first journey across the continent, 400 people gathered east of Baker City, Oregon, to recreate, in period costumes and covered wagons, a small portion of what it might have been like to take the Oregon Trail. Meeker would not be surprised today to see the network of interstate highways crisscrossing the continent. After all, it was an idea he pioneered, a fulfillment of his dual vision of preserving he past while planning for the future.

C.B. Galbreath, in a profile of Meeker in the *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly*, included a tribute by an anonymous poet that summed up the vibrancy and relevance of Ezra Meeker:

Over the hills and plains by oxen team,
Across the states by the power of steam,
Over mountain grades by election train,
Exploring clouds in a soaring plane--
That's Ezra Meeker!

Well! When I'm old I'd like to be
Full up pep and energy,
Out with the young to set the pace,
A credit to the human race--
Like Ezra Meeker.

Conclusions as to the Origin of the Word "Gambusino" in the Gold Rush Days

by Raymund F. Wood

At the risk of converting this excellent historical journal into a forum for etymological pedantry, I would like to make some additions to the Fall 1995 issue of *The Branding Iron*, regarding the origin of the word *Gambusino*.

After a lengthy perusal of some twenty scholarly dictionaries of the Spanish language at UCLA, including etymological, historical, and popular ones, as well as some of Mexicanisms and Americanisms, I have come to the following conclusions:

First, that the word has in the past been used far more extensively, and with quite different meanings from the one used in the California gold rush days. Second, that there may well be some merit to the popular Cuban saying that "to fish for *gambusinos*," with the implied meaning of wasting time in a futile occupation, was not altogether out of place in 1849. Not all miners struck it rich! Third, that we shall probably never know, or be able to trace, the true origin of the application of the word to miners from Sonora.

Now, to discuss these three conclusions in detail -- first, earlier usages. The most scholarly and extensive analysis of the early Spanish language is that of Joan Corominas, with his multi-volume *Diccionario Crítico Etimológico Castellano y Hispánico* (Madrid, 1980). In Volume 2, p. 57-58, he derives the word *Gambaj* (as the origin of *Gambusino*) from an early Franconian (Rhine Valley) word *gambais* or *wambas*, probably derived from *wamba* and connected with the early English word *womb*, the lower part of the body, or the part to be protected. Hence *gambax* or *gamaj* is defined as "a quilted or padded doublet or jacket, designed to protect the more vulnerable part of the body," as in a duel or in combat. This meaning dates back to a period before 1300.

Corominas cites several uses of it in medieval times; for example, about 1300, in Aragón, we read that a certain leader in bat-

tle wore a "*gambax* of padded cloth, and over it a coat of mail." He also says that in ancient times it passed from Spanish into Arabic, appearing often as *gunbaz* and is so found in Arabic writings at Granada prior to 1492. Passing across the Straits to North Africa it appears as *gunbaz*, *gunbax* and *kambus*, with meanings changing from the medieval padded doublet, to a plain undershirt, and, in more recent times, to a dressing gown. But the basic meaning of something to protect the body and keep it warm was not lost.

To expand my first conclusion a little, I should add that, while most dictionaries define *gambusino* exactly as we understand the term, namely, a gold rush miner or prospector, some give additional meanings. In the Spanish Province of Murcia, for example, a *gambusino* is a species of local pear. In Cuba, as well as in other parts of Hispanic-America, a *gambusino* is a small fish, also called a *guajacó*, known for its voracious appetite for mosquito larvae. Finally, according to the *Diccionario Enciclopédico de la Lengua Castellana*, by Elías Zerola (Paris, 1890), the expression "*Gambusino!*", used as an interjection by Cubans, means that "one has been made a fool of, and that whatever he was looking for is not to be found." Another Cuban way of using the word *gambusino* to express futility.

Coming now to my second conclusion, that there may have been some merit to the Cuban expression of futility in "fishing for *gambusinos*," it should be pointed out that although the definition does appear in at least two dictionaries of Americanisms published between 1946 and 1966 (the latter using the word "obsolete" in its notes), it is still doubtful that there is any real connection between Cuban slang and Sonoran miners. The main objection is that even if, as is most likely, the term was first applied to miners in northwest Mexico, by local people, it is not very likely that they would have

been influenced in assigning this nickname by a slang or popular expression in Cuba, over a thousand miles away, and on the other side of a range of high mountains. Nor would the nickname, if it implied a waste of time, have been appropriate, as the Sonorans, and the earlier miners in the Durango area, appear to have been both industrious and successful. So, although the derivation may have some etymological merit, it is hardly practical, and should not be given serious consideration.

This brings us to the third conclusion, that we will probably never know the real origin of the term as applied in Alta California in gold rush days. One other lexicographer, however, made a stab at solving the problem and came up with the most unusual idea of all. Francisco J. Santamaría in his *Diccionario General de Americanismos* (Mexico, 1942), Vol.2, p.548, offers an etymology of the word *Gambusino* which runs to 33 lines of very fine print. However, it can be boiled down to the following: first, the word *gambusino* was pronounced *cam-busino* in Baja California, and derived from "can" and "buy," inaccurately associating "buy" with "busy," and that the infinitive form "to busy" became a common word among the uneducated natives of Baja. Unfortunately, the word "to busy" hardly ever occurs in English, and it has almost no connection with the word "to buy." Santamaría then leaves this etymology unsupported, and turns to another. He suggests that the Hispanic miners later became *aventureros* and ultimately turned to gambling. That is to say, they formed large enterprises, assembling some of their compatriots into groups, and paying them wages or percentages, and in this sense "gambling" that their large claims would pay off. (This is historically true. Fremont, for example, passing

along the Gila River route in 1849, did indeed hire a gang of *gambusinos*, and sent them to his claim in Las Mariposas). But to have branded Fremont with the social term "gambler" would have been unthinkable. "Gamblers" were card-and-dice sharks who worked in the tents and dives in the lower part of town among the diggin's. So it is extremely doubtful that, as Santamaría would have us believe, the term arose from two unlikely English words, "gamble" and "business."

The final conclusion is, then, that although we may never know for sure, the most likely derivation is as first, suggested, from an old Franconian word that developed into Spanish *gambaj* in the the 13th century, and in North Africa under various spellings, but always with the same basic meaning of a padded doublet, or a warm pullover, worn to protect the front part of the body from danger, and from cold. A *gambusino* would have found his *gambaj* very useful during the chilly winters of '49 and '50, in the cold-running, gold-bearing streams of the Sierra.



(Monthly Roundup continued from page 2)

After the murder of Joseph Smith, Brannan had a falling out with Brigham Young but settled their differences. When the Mormons were expelled from Illinois in 1846, Brannan went by ship with a group of Mormons to California. He loved California's climate, soil, and water and decided the region would be ideal for Mormon settlement. When he went to Utah to tell Young about the new Eden, Young informed him that Utah would be the promised land. Brannan went back to California and went into business at Sutter's Fort.

At the end of January 1848 an agitated John Sutter told Brannan that James Marshall had discovered gold at the Coloma sawmill. Brannan said not to worry--he'd keep the secret. Brannan offered to bring Mormons out to dig the gold. The Mormon miners would be tithed, and 10% of the gold would go to the Church. When Young sent out emissaries to collect the tithe, Brannan refused to turn the money over to them and for a second time was excommunicated by Young.

When news of the gold strike became known, due in some part to Brannan's failure to keep his secret, Brannan located and thrived in San Francisco, becoming one of its first millionaires. He promoted the town of Calistoga and went into a number of businesses. His downfall came with marital tensions. His wife divorced him in 1869 and demanded a cash settlement which left him broke. Never again was he able to rebuild his fortune, and he died a pauper in 1889.

JULY 1996 MEETING

Corral member Willis Blenkinsop showed the Corral that much of what is believed about famous sharpshooter -Annie Oakley is more folklore than biography. Born August 13, 1860, Annie Oakley grew up in very poor circumstances in Ohio. Her personality was quite different from the way Ethel Merman played her in the Broadway hit musical "Annie Get Your Gun." Five feet



Photograph by Frank Q. Newton

Willis Blenkinsop July meeting speaker

tall at age ten, she never grew taller; her personality was a winning one, and she had a good figure as well, as shown in the slides Willis presented.

By 1881 Annie was an expert shooter with pistol, rifle, and shotgun, weapons familiar to anyone living in rural surroundings in the 19th century. In that year she entered and won a shooting match in Cincinnati. Her opponent scoffed at the young girl, but she won by 1 point. The opponent, Frank Butler, married her a year after they met. They had a happy, compatible, and scandal-free marriage that lasted almost fifty years.

In 1883 Annie applied to Cody's Wild West Show but was at first turned down. She offered to work for nothing for three days. She was hired after her showmanship possibilities were recognized, with husband Frank as her business manager. He helped Annie with her reading and writing skills and in the publication of her autobiography.

The Cody show advertised Annie as a star. She used horses in her act and became an excellent equestrienne. Annie even designed her side-saddle. Annie was also an all-around athlete. In one act she jumped over a table to get a rifle, picked one up, and blasted eight or nine glass balls before they hit the ground. Another trick was to use a polished hunting knife as a mirror for shooting backwards. In 1885 the show went to England. There Annie enjoyed even greater

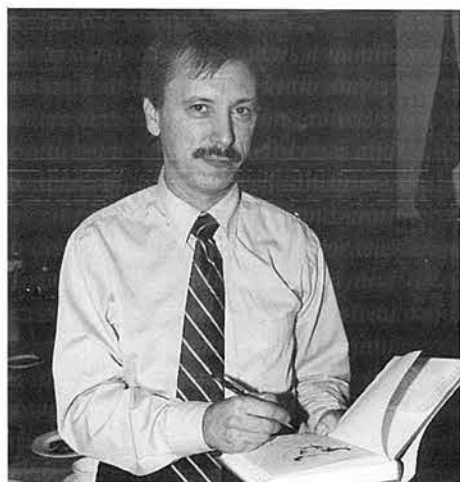
success, and she was introduced to Queen Victoria.

In 1901 Annie was injured in a train wreck from which it took years for her to recover. She earned money in this period of her life by teaching girls and women to shoot. During World War I she volunteered to be an instructor, but the army said no, even to Annie Oakley. So she entertained the troops instead, a new generation to be enchanted by her skills. Much of the money she earned went to children's charities.

Over the years books, movies, TV shows, and musicals continued the Annie Oakley story, and after her death in 1926, her accomplishments became legend. Her own epitaph said "At Rest," but she became a part of American culture and the favorite of everyone from bootblacks to royalty. Willis noted that Annie also deserves mention as a pioneer of women in the workplace.

AUGUST 1996 MEETING

Corresponding Member John Langellier spoke to a large and enthusiastic audience on the U.S. Army in the West from the 1840s until the 1890s as "agents of Manifest Destiny." At the time of the War with Mexico, the standing U.S. Army was very small and was a mix of regular Army officers and men with "frontier savvy." During the war U.S. Troops penetrated far into Mexico



John Langellier August meeting speaker

Photograph by Frank Q. Newton

and won battles against a somewhat disorganized Mexican army. Taking California was more difficult since the Californios offered a more capable resistance. At the war's end the U.S. acquired the Mexican Cession and all the region's facilities and forts.

The U.S. Army was now charged with patrolling this vast area. In 1855 U.S. Cavalry units succeeded the earlier Dragoon regiments and mounted riflemen. When the Civil War began, many officers left to join the Confederate Army. State and local units of varying quality supplemented U.S. Army units in the Western territories while most Army units fought in the Civil War

After the Civil War ended, the Army had 54,000 troops, five times as many as before the war. Soldiers included Irish, German, and Italian immigrants, as well as black, "buffalo soldiers." Although they operated in segregated units, black and white soldiers were often stationed at the same outposts. Most of the time they fought monotony rather than Indians, with privates getting paid \$13 a month and eating an unvaried diet of bacon, beans, and coffee. They patronized "hog ranches" and sutler's stores, and, as Langellier, noted, were "no plaster saints."

The Army also experimented with some interesting ideas, including the famous Camel Corps and the lesser known Bicycle Corps. Indians were enlisted as scouts in the Army rather than as auxiliaries. Pawnees were noted scouts, and the Army used Navajos to track Apaches, and one Apache band to track another. In 1891 all-Indian units were formed with white officers. By the Spanish-American War, however, these units were disbanded.

Civilians often hated the Army except when they demanded protection--and the soldiers were always welcome on payday. Cities thrived on Army fort economics which included orders for forage and supplies. Overall, the monotony may have been worse than the danger. Desertion rates ran as high as 30%. One bored officer spent his time compiling the famous *Roberts' Rules of*

Order. Langellier concluded that although Hollywood has glamorized the Army in the West in hundreds of motion pictures, in reality the work was hard and not particularly envied at the time.



Corral Chips

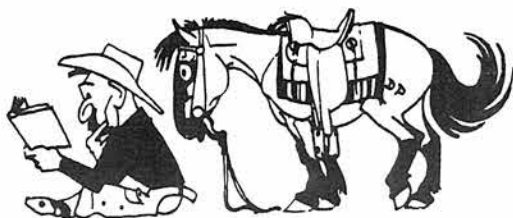
Several of the members were seen at the Western History Association meeting in Lincoln, NE. Among the members seen were **ROBERT CLARK**, **LARRY BURGESS**, and **MARTIN RIDGE**. Hopefully, no member was there and not seen.

ROBERT CLARK gave an address to the Whitman, (WA) County Historical Society at their annual meeting.

RAYMUND WOOD and his wife recently entertained the noted British actor, Clive Church, at their Encino home.

ROBERT V. SCHWEMMER recently visited the remains of the vessel *Montebello* which was torpedoed December 12, 1941, by a Japanese submarine off Cambria, Calif. Since the vessel sits on the sea floor at a depth of 900 feet, the visit required the use of the submersible, *Delta*.

WILLIS OSBORNE and **JOHN ROBINSON** led a bus tour of the Old Ridge Route for the Associated Historic al Societies of Los Angeles County. Among the sight-seers were **LARRY ARNOLD**, **NICK CURRY**, **STEVE BORN**, **RAMON OTERO**, **GLENN THORNHILL** and the trip organizer, **PAUL RIPPENS**.



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all.

--Oscar Wilde

WILD WEST SHOWS AND THE IMAGES OF AMERICAN INDIANS, 1883-1933, by L. G. Moses. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996. 364 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Cloth, 39.95. Order from University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd., Albuquerque, NM 87131-1591. (800) 249-7737.

I would like to use the pedagogical technique of presenting a vocabulary. The author uses words that some feel belittling or degrading. That is not his intent. *Show Indians* is used extensively to recognize a professional status. *Civilized* and *civilization* are use in historical context of late nineteenth century Indian policy reformers. *Sioux* often refers to *Teton Lakota*, but is also used in its popular context. The author makes no apologies for the term *Indian* since many of them referring to themselves find *First Nations*, *Native American*, etc. too cumbersome.

This book discusses much of the negative attitudes among reformers and government bureaucrats regarding Indians in traveling Wild West Shows. Should the Indians be viewed as noble or ignoble savages? The book is one of the best information sources concerning alleged maltreatment by Indian/Wild West shows. It quickly becomes obvious the author feels the rumors

of abuses stem from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Affairs and reformers waging negative propaganda campaigns.

Most Show Indians from shows returned home in good health, with a smile and money. Wild West Shows were perpetuating an image reformers and BIA/CIA wanted to suppress. Intended assimilation programs were not helped by Wild West Shows. Show Indians had lived traditional lives prior to the "assimilation" movement. Recreation of that life for public consumption distressed the BIA/CIA and protectionists.

Show Indians became self-sufficient, but the BIA did not see this as a sign of assimilation, feeling they were incapable of "civilization."

Regardless of BIA views, Show Indians left behind records, documents, interviews, and additions to their oral tradition. In the end, with the great Wild West Show exhibit at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in 1904, Show Indians probably won the battle for the image the people of the world would forever hold of the American Indian.

The cast of characters traveling with various Wild West shows is awe inspiring: Sitting Bull, Red Shirt, Samuel Long Bear, Eagle Horn, Geronimo, and many others. Parolees imprisoned for the Ghost Dance activities were featured on one tour of Europe. Most participated against the wishes of reformers and many bureaucrats trying to protect their wards.

This book is in a format making it usable in a study course. It follows the development and decline of Wild West shows in a chronological order. There are extensive footnotes, and for researching or building a collection covering Native American life/BIA relations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the bibliography is outstanding. The index is thorough.

Whether you agree or disagree with assimilation, reform, etc., this book is not only easy reading, but a resource worth holding.

Bill Davis

DRAWING THE BORDERLINE: *Artist-Explorers of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary Survey*, edited by Dawn Hall. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996. 156 pp. Illustrations, Notes. Paper, \$29.95. Order from University of New Mexico Press, 1720 Lomas Blvd., Albuquerque, NM 87131-1591. (800) 249-7737.

The boundary between the United States and Mexico was inexactly described in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, necessitating redrawing of the boundary by actual survey.

Both countries formed survey parties. The United States settled on John Russell Bartlett as its Boundary Survey Commissioner. Bartlett, a political appointee, was an accomplished amateur artist. The boundary in question ran more than one thousand miles, from El Paso to San Diego. The time period was 1848 to 1853.

Bartlett's efforts are described as a failed survey. The description of apportion of the boundary area, as contained in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, was based on what turned out to be an incorrect map. Bartlett's Mexican counterpart, Pedro Garcia Conde, disagreed on where the actual line should run. This resulted in a compromise. Following an investigation, Congress terminated the Boundary Survey and rejected Bartlett's compromise agreement. This conduct was viewed by Mexico as improper and illegal conduct by the Americans in failing to abide by the Treaty and in attempting to gain additional Mexican territory by false pretense and intimidation. Nevertheless, the Gadsden Purchase was the end result.

Despite the partial failure of Bartlett's survey efforts, the artistic accomplishments were a different matter. Artist Henry Cheever Pratt accompanied Bartlett on the survey. Following his return to Washington, Bartlett retained the services of Seth Eastman. These three artists provided Easterners with a vivid picture of, and appreciation for, the Southwest.

Drawing the Borderline is an exhibition catalog written in conjunction with a showing by the Albuquerque Museum of works of art accomplished by Bartlett, Pratt and

Eastman. The text of this book contains essays on the political atmosphere following the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the activities of the Boundary Survey, the Mexican viewpoint of the Survey and breach of the Treaty, biographical sketches of Bartlett, Pratt and Eastman, a rather extensive description of the works of art by these three artists, and an essay on the human and ecological evolutionary histories of the borderland area. The final forty-three pages of the catalog are devoted to photographic reproductions of the works of art themselves, accompanied by their physical description and provenance.

Drawing the Borderline is a beautifully-produced volume. It is not an exhaustive study of either the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo or of the Boundary Survey itself, but rather it whets the appetite for further reading about this fascinating historical episode.

Eric A. Nelson

DALTONS! *The Raid on Coffeyville Kansas*, by Robert Barr Smith. Norman:University of Oklahoma Press, 1996 237 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Cloth, \$24.95. Order from University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 73019.

What really happened on October 5, 1892 in Coffeyville, Kansas when the Dalton gang attempted to liberate two banks of the people's money and the people rose up to crush enemy deviants is the subject of this most interesting book. The Daltons were simply criminals who would rather steal than work for a living. The real heroes were the citizens of Coffeyville who put their lives on the line to stand against common street thugs. This is the stuff of history that Smith pursues with dogged research and searching inquiry.

Smith is explicit in his judgments and moves us away from the mythology of the Dalton gang. Too often we make outlaws into heroes rather than looking at their deeds and the carnage they left behind. Smith points out that John Brown was "a fanatic, shiftless failure of a man" who killed "unarmed men in the name of God." [p. 5] The Daltons and their ilk were no better. Sure, they were colorful. We can recall Black-faced Charlie Bryant, Bitter Creek George Newcomb, the Turkey Track crowd of William Powers, Bill Doolin, "Cockeye Charlie" Pierce, and Richard Broadwell, Bill McElhanie (The Narrow Gauge Kid), and Eugenia Moore, AKA Flo Quick. We recall Bob and Grat Dalton stretched out against a wall with Bill Powers and Dick Broadwell, dead as door nails. As memory serves we follow Emmett Dalton through trial, prison, pardon and baptism in the tabernacle of Aimee Semple McPherson in 1936. He died with his boots off on July 13, 1937, in Hollywood.

Smith dedicates this book to Lucius M. Baldwin, Charles Brown, Charles T. Connelly, and George B. Cubine. They died defending their town, but others also came to the defense of their community. Aleck McKenna recognized the Daltons and spread the alarm. George Cubine was the first to arm himself to defend his community. Store employees at The Boswell and Isham Brothers' hardware handed out guns to volunteers. John Kloehr, Parker Williams, Henry H. Isham, Lewis Dietz, Arthur Reynolds, Lucius Baldwin, Arthur Reynolds, Tom Ayres, George Picker, Carey Seaman, and Marshall Charley Connelly took up arms and fought in the streets and the alleyways to protect their collective lives and property.

This is a tale well-told and a history worth remembering. Armed citizens without government guidance stopped crime dead in the streets that day. Smith hopes that that heritage will be remembered and this book dearly establishes that pedigree.

Gordon Morris Bakken