



An Uncertain Shore: California's Changing Maritime Patterns

by A. C. W. Bethel

Beginnings

The first European contact with California was by sea and California's Hispanic settlements were supplied primarily by sea; at first by annual Spanish supply boats and later by American, Hawaiian, and European trading ships.

The Gold Rush disrupted the hide-and-tallow trading patterns of Mexican California and maritime trade focused instead on bringing people and goods to San Francisco, the only good harbor on the coast that gave easy access to the Central Valley river system and the Sierra Nevada foothills.

The Panama Steamers

Even before the gold rush, the United

States government awarded mail contracts for steamship service between newly-acquired California and the eastern states by way of the Isthmus of Panama. The contract to carry the mail on the west coast went to the Pacific Mail Steamship Company (PMSS), which soon added more big, well-appointed sidewheelers, comparable to contemporary North Atlantic steam packets, to meet the Gold Rush demand for passage.

Profits generated competition by cut-rate operators who often gave inferior service using poorly-disciplined crews. The most serious competition was a steamboat and stagecoach route across Nicaragua with steamer connections on both shores. Vigor-

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Editor's Corner

To get an impossibly-behind production schedule closer to possibly-caught-up, this issue is a combined one, putting the last three numbers of the 2012 volume of *The Branding Iron* together. It is also the last under a two-year tenure of this editor.

There are three feature articles here. The first, by Walt Bethel, is a companion of sorts to his earlier piece on beaches as frontiers and deals with coastal shipping in California. Walt provides a useful and informative overview to a vital part of the region's economic history. The second, by John W. Robinson, concerns an accusation of mass homicide against mountain man, scout and rancher Alexis Godey and John provides ample background on the fascinating life of Godey as well as discusses the refutation of the claim against him. Finally, the editor has penned another California land claims essay, this one dealing with the Rancho La Puente and its fifteen-year odyssey through the convoluted, completed and complicated process.

This issue also has summaries of the varied and interesting talks given by members and guests at the monthly Roundup; recaps of the Fandango and Rendezvous events; and a few book reviews to boot.

Finally, it is time to welcome a new editor. Steve Lech is an authority on the dynamic and diverse history of Riverside County. He will soon be issuing the Spring 2013 issue and is looking forward to receiving your contributions, whether they be articles, book reviews, news of your activities, poems, or whatever else he is on the lookout for. *The Branding Iron* can only thrive when corral members actively participate, so keep the material coming.

—Paul Spitzzeri

ously promoted by Cornelius Vanderbilt from 1851, the route was 400 to 500 miles shorter than the Panama route, but political instability closed it after 1868. After a railroad was completed across the Isthmus of Panama in 1855, the total trip was reduced from about thirty-five days to about twenty-one days. Incomplete statistics show that 409,997 people used the route westbound, and 232,138 eastbound between 1848 and 1869, the year that the first overland railroad was completed.

Sea Routes to California

About 1,400 ships arrived in San Francisco in 1849-50. Many had been chartered by companies of eastern seaboard gold seekers, but emigrants also arrived from Europe, Chile, Australia, and China. Most ships were immediately abandoned by gold-hungry crews. Some of the ships had been patched together for the voyage and never returned to sea, ending as improvised housing ashore or sunk as ad hoc improvements to underwater city lots.

The Gold Rush emigration overwhelmed pastoral California's economy. At first, all food and manufactured goods had to be imported and San Francisco merchants were willing to pay high freight rates for fast service in rapidly fluctuating markets. These were as much as a dollar a cubic foot or twenty five to even sixty dollars a ton in 1851-52.

American shipyards responded with fast clipper ships. These had sharp concave bows and V-shaped bottoms that left only about half the usual volume for freight and oversize sailing rigs that required large crews. Clippers were expensive to operate, but under good sailing conditions they could make as much as eighteen knots and average over 300 miles a day. Their supremacy was brief: by 1858 freight rates had dropped to half what the clippers needed to break even and no new clippers were built in America after the 1850s. Their replacements were less extreme Maine-built "Down-Easters," still sharp-ended but with fuller lines than the clippers, and nearly as fast when driven hard.

From the 1860s to the 1880s California was a major grain exporter and the "Down-Easters" had to compete against new British

iron-hulled square-riggers that were roomier, drier, had less deadweight, and were cheaper to insure. The late-ripening, hard-kerneled white wheat stood the long sea voyage well, and large numbers of ships were chartered annually to carry it off. Most of it was shipped from four miles of wharves, collectively called Port Costa, built along the south margin of narrow Carquinez Strait. This strait through the coastal hills drains the Central Valley river system into San Francisco Bay and its strong currents have created a deep channel close to shore.

Coastal Shipping

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company stopped calling at intermediate south coast ports the 1870s. The firm that thereafter dominated coastal service through several changes in ownership began as Goodall and Nelson; became Goodall, Nelson and Perkins; then the Pacific Coast Company; then after 1916, the Pacific Steamship Company. There were some well-financed competitors and independent cut-rate lines operating a patched-up ship or two appeared briefly, sometimes to be purchased for their nuisance value.

At first, service to isolated coastal communities was provided by dumping cargo overboard to be washed up on the beach and landing passengers through the surf in ship's boats, with sometimes fatal mishaps. Communities soon built piers into the open sea, unprotected from storms but providing berths where small coastal steamers, often weighing less than a thousand tons, could handle cargo. Lumber was by far the largest import and exports were mainly agricultural products. At Santa Cruz, Moss Landing, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Newport, local railroads met the ships, facilitating regional economic goals.

At San Pedro, south of Los Angeles, local enterprise dredged a shallow channel through tidal flats behind the sandspit that became Terminal Island and connected it to Los Angeles by a local railroad in 1869. Federal improvements began in 1871 with stone jetties that trained the tidal bore to scour a deeper channel. Coastal lumber ships could then dock at protected railway



An early 1900s photo of a train next to a docked vessel at San Pedro. Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

wharves, but ocean-going ships still had to anchor in open water and unload their cargoes onto lighters.

In 1892, when further federal improvements to San Pedro were proposed, the Southern Pacific built a rival pier a mile long at the north end of Santa Monica Bay, calling it Port Los Angeles and lobbied to locate future federal harbor improvements there. The political battle that defeated this effort in 1899 was an important victory for California's nascent progressivism.

At Redondo Beach, south of Santa Monica, a submarine canyon brought deep, calm water close to shore and piers built there in the early 1890s gave the Santa Fé Railway access to ocean-going ships. The canyon made a breakwater impossible at Redondo, and the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fé Railroad later obtained access to San Pedro, abandoning operations at Redondo Beach after 1926.

Many ships on the coast were old and second-hand, but the major carriers regularly built up-to-date liners for their major routes. By the early twentieth century half a dozen well-appointed ships of as much as 8,000 tons in size and capable of fifteen to twenty-five knots served various routes connecting San Diego, San Pedro, San Francisco, Portland and Puget Sound. The fastest competed effectively with train schedules between Portland and San Francisco, but advertisements for these ships emphasized the pleasures and amenities of ocean travel. 1915 proved to be the most successful year for the coastal steamship companies, a year when two expositions in celebration of the

Panama Canal drew large numbers of tourists. But, after World War I no new ships were built for Pacific coastal service, perhaps an indication of the inability of the industry to attract capital.

The decline of coastal steamship service has been attributed to a combination of factors: Hazards to navigation took their toll on shipping and press coverage of disasters undermined public confidence. Competition from improved rail and highway carriers drove down receipts, though rail and water carriers also cooperated by forwarding each other's freight and honoring each other's passenger tickets. Rate wars resulted in large operating deficits even during the prosperous 1920s and efforts to organize a cartel or obtain favorable state government rate regulation were unsuccessful. Losses mounted in the Great Depression when intercoastal lines also entered the market and bitter seamen's and longshoremen's strikes in 1934 and 1936 raised labor costs in a labor-intensive industry.

Intercoastal Shipping

Until the early twentieth century, sailing ships carried California's intercoastal trade around Cape Horn. Cargoes were now mostly eastbound wheat, and, from the 1880s, Hawaiian sugar. Westbound cargoes were chiefly coal. After 1900 the new American-Hawaiian Line's big freighters aggressively competed for the sugar trade and after the Panama Canal opened in 1914, the traffic grew steadily. For example, in 1927, the peak year, there were 176 steamers in intercoastal service. Some of the ships were impressive: Panama-Pacific built three 20,000-ton turbo-electric liners starting in 1928, though by 1933 they were withdrawn because of the Depression. The intercoastal trade revived after World War II, but inflation, high labor costs, and unfriendly ICC regulation made it economically unattractive. Luckenbach, the last major carrier, ended its intercoastal service in 1962.

The Coastal Lumber Trade

Gold Rush California's voracious appetite for lumber quickly exhausted the stands

of redwoods around San Francisco Bay and pine from the Sierra Nevada foothills could not be exploited until railroads were built in the 1870s. Pine and fir came from Puget Sound and redwood, valued for its fire-retardant properties, was logged at Monterey Bay and along the San Francisco Peninsula. Lumbering began at Humboldt Bay and along the north coast in the early 1850s. The bar at Humboldt Bay limited the draft of the ships that could enter it and the only anchorages along the north coast were narrow inlets, called “dog-hole” or “outside” ports, where lumber was skidded down chutes or wires from seventy-five foot bluffs to schooners moored fore and aft below.

From the 1850s until 1905 handy single-deck, flat-bottomed, two-masted sailing schooners of 170 tons or so with oversized hatches for quick loading were built on the west coast for the lumber trade. They carried as much of their cargo above decks as below, the deck load secured with chains to prevent dangerous shifting. But navigating narrow inlets under sail was tricky: ten schooners were lost in a single night in 1865. Beginning in 1888 steam-powered schooners were purpose-built for the outside ports. Steam schooners omitted sails but kept masts with oversize booms for cargo handling. They were larger than sailing schooners and they could make a round trip in about half the time that sail required. Steel hulls, introduced in 1908, were roomier and drier, enabling the ships to handle other cargoes, but they were adopted slowly. The last wooden hull was launched in 1923 and by the end of World War II steam schooner traffic had been eliminated by cheaper rail and highway competition.

Oil Tankers on the Coast

Union Oil constructed the first purpose-built oil tanker on the coast in 1889 in order to undercut Southern Pacific freight rates. In 1895 Pacific Coast Oil (not connected with the steamship company—it later merged with Chevron) built a steel ship having oil tanks integral with the hull, another first. In 1902, Union Oil introduced the lasting tanker silhouette with engines and boilers aft for



An H. F. Rile photo from the late 1890s showing docking facilities at the end of the Southern Pacific's Long Wharf at Santa Monica. This unusual view is taken from a vessel in the water nearby. Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

fire safety and the bridge located amidships. Early in the twentieth century, oil companies built large refineries on San Pablo Bay near the entrance to Carquinez Strait. Growing fleets of ever-larger coastal tankers delivered crude oil there or carried away refined product, which was often piped to coastal ports or anchorages from the San Joaquin Valley. Environmental politics have contracted tankering operations in recent years, but today's tankers are all that remain of coastal shipping: in 1992, there were over 2,300 oil tanker trips along the California coast, more than half of them carrying finished petroleum product rather than crude oil; some intermediate ports have closed since then. Much larger tankers bring oil from Alaska and foreign ports.

The Pacific Rim

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 dramatically shortened trade routes from Asia to Europe and the east coast of North America, frustrating the hope that the newly-completed transcontinental railroad would capture Asian trade. Late nineteenth-century trade with Asia was only about five per cent of total United States foreign trade and not all of that went through west coast ports, nor was all of it carried in American-flag ships. Moreover, California's economy was not integrated into the national economy, so California's exports to Asia were limited to materials produced locally, while imports

were limited to products that the local economy could utilize.

Cargoes for America included tea, silk, rice, sugar, and opium. Westbound cargoes were mostly low-quality flour, which Chinese markets preferred over the local product, as well as lumber, and treasure, especially Mexican dollars, which were then a standard medium of exchange in Asia. Eastbound cargoes generated more than two-thirds of freight revenue, and large numbers of Chinese came eastbound until American legislation limited Chinese emigration in 1882.

In 1867 the Pacific Mail Steamship Company began monthly trans-Pacific service to Yokohama and Hong Kong, using anachronistic 4,000-ton wooden-hulled side-wheel steamers. PMSS added eleven 5,000-ton, iron-hulled, screw propelled ships by 1875. They were comfortable, but even with auxiliary sails set, they took up to twenty days to cross.

When PMSS proposed to ship its Asian cargoes to the east coast by way of the Panama Railroad, the Central Pacific Railroad protected its freight service by organizing its own comparable Occidental and Oriental Steamship Company (O&O). The rival companies soon came to an agreement to divide the traffic. Southern Pacific acquired control of PMSS in 1893 and discontinued O&O in 1904. Meanwhile PMSS met competition from Canadian and Japanese steamship companies by building four new steamers in 1902-04, the last two being over 13,000 tons and capable of 21 knots, comparable to contemporary Atlantic liners.

Legislation that prohibited steamers owned by railroads from using the new Panama Canal and a provision in the La Follette Seaman's Act that required mostly English-speaking crews led Southern Pacific to sell PMSS ships in 1915, when wartime prices made the ships valuable. After the war, the W. R. Grace Company operated PMSS using new standardized passenger-cargo liners built for the government's wartime shipping program. Ships operated through the canal in intercoastal service and across the Pacific, but, in 1925, Grace lost its bid for the government ships, which then went to Dollar

Lines instead.

This enterprise had begun as a steam schooner operation to carry lumber from Robert Dollar's Mendocino mills. Dollar expanded into the trans-Pacific lumber trade in 1902 and began a westbound around-the-world route in 1924 because of the difficulty of finding suitable eastbound cargoes in Asia. By 1925, Dollar was the largest American scheduled shipping line, innovating radio communications and color-coded shipping manifests that speeded turn-around times in port.

The Great Depression found the company overextended and, in 1938, it was reorganized under government control as American President Lines (APL). APL returned to private control in 1952, upgraded its cargo fleet, and built three new 15,000-ton, 20-knot liners to serve rising passenger demand. Jet aircraft, rising labor costs, low profit margins, and the need to invest capital in modernizing ships and terminals soon combined to make the passenger business unattractive, though APL continued it until 1973, partly for sentimental reasons.

Meanwhile, new intermodal container technology revolutionized ocean freight. Containers reduced pilferage, stevedoring charges, and turnaround time. Containers also made waterfronts of narrow finger piers obsolete for cargo handling and created new harbor skylines of gantry cranes on moles big enough to receive entire freight trains. By the 1980s, APL served Asian ports with five 23-knot ships that could carry 2,600 twenty-foot containers, some of them stacked four-high on the deck. Its rival, Pacific Far East Lines, had gone bankrupt in 1978, but APL's efficient container operations raised its profits dramatically in the 1980s despite declining freight rates.

Hawaii and the South Seas

Hawaii's central location made it an important intermediate destination in the Pacific trades before the Mexican War. Once the tariff on Hawaiian sugar was abolished in 1876, Hawaiian sugar rivaled California grain as a Pacific export. By 1890 San Francisco's trade with Hawaii was nearly equal to that

with Great Britain and nearly twice that with China. Claus Spreckels carried sugar from his Hawaiian plantations to his California refineries in a fleet of wooden sailing ships built to his order in Benicia from 1879. His sons formed the Oceanic Steamship Company to operate a San Francisco—Hawaii—Pago-Pago—Auckland-Sydney service. British competition, a lack of expected freight business, and design errors in their ships combined to make this unprofitable.

Meanwhile Swedish immigrant William Matson had been operating sailing ships to Hawaii, at first on shares with Spreckels and others. In 1901 he formed his own steamship line and had five new steamers of 6,600 tons to 9,000 tons built between 1908 and his death in 1917. These ships pioneered oil-fired boilers, which Matson located at the stern, a design practice that Matson ships continued until 1927. The later ships emphasized well-appointed passenger accommodations. Tanks that carried fuel oil cargoes westbound were steam cleaned for eastbound cargoes of molasses, previously a waste product in sugar refining, and specialized ships were designed for the pineapple trade. Matson also operated smaller ships in inter-island trade.

The intercoastal American-Hawaiian Steamship Company had competed with Matson before World War I; after the war Pacific Mail and, later, Dollar Line steamers also called at the islands, though Dollar agreed to divide the trade amicably with Matson. Matson absorbed Oceanic in 1926, but new competition came in 1922 from the Los Angeles Steamship Company (LASSCO), which had been formed after World War I to operate fast steamers in overnight coastal service to San Francisco. By 1927 LASSCO had captured most of Los Angeles' Hawaiian business. Matson responded with a quartet of elegant, fast, 18,000-ton liners, and LASSCO, unable to finance new ships, merged with Matson in 1930. After World War II, Matson's reconditioned liners carried a record 75,000 passengers in 1959, but jet aircraft had made them uneconomical by 1963. Meanwhile, Matson had pioneered new freight handling techniques, including container ships, bulk carriers, and roll-on auto carriers. Matson



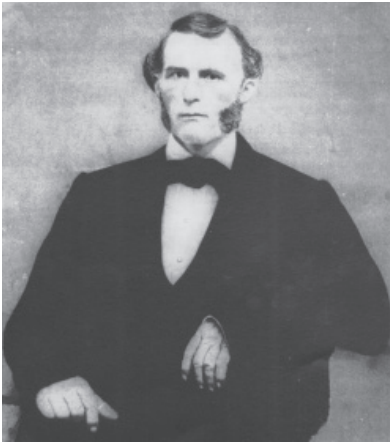
This rare stereographic photograph from the 1890s shows vessels anchored at Redondo Beach. Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

ended conventional break-bulk cargo handling in 1970.

Coda

Maritime trade made much of California's development possible. It was limited by California's geography, but it also shaped it, most dramatically in the changes in land contour at harbors. Some of these have been created by carving them out of the land, but even good natural harbors at San Francisco, San Diego, and Humboldt bays have been reshaped by jetties, seawalls, moles, and piers, and deep water channels have been cut through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to seaports seventy-five miles inland at Sacramento and Stockton, where container gantries rise over the valley landscape. At Port Costa, one has to look hard to see what used to be there. Only stumps of pilings and a couple of warehouses remain and these are now boutiques. Railroad cars were once switched onto San Francisco's then-busy finger piers by a belt railway whose tracks have now been recycled for light rail transit. But the coastal and inter-coastal steamship lines have vanished except for ephemera and images.

California's maritime commerce has been transformed as well. Trains of double-stacked containers roll by railroad crossings on their way to ships, or from ships to places that no ship could ever go and elegant cruise liners carry more passengers than the Pacific Coast Company ever did.



A portrait of Alexis Godey (ca. 1818-1889), taken about 1870, when he was living on the Rancho San Emigdio in Kern County. From the Frank Latta Collection.

Alexis Godey: Indian Friend or Indian Killer?

By John W. Robinson

"You ask me where they went, those last poor Indians, the few that were left of all the two thousand that lived in the Cuyama Valley when the first white men came? Ay, Senor, it is sad, very sad." The gray-haired ranchero shook his head.

"But tell me, where did they go," I insisted.

"They did not go, they stayed, los pobrecitos. Go to the Cuyama Rancho, my friend. Find the old adobe house of Alexandro Godey. The Indians are not far away."

I could hardly believe my ears. "You don't mean that they are still living there?"

"No, no, my friend, you do not understand. They do not live, they are all dead, every one. There they lie, in a little rise of ground, not far from the house of Alexandro Godey. Si, senor, there they lie, men, woman and little children, forty-two of them in all, dead of poison!"

"Poison!" I gasped. "Was. . . Was it an accident?"

"Ah, no, senor, it was no accident. On purpose, a proposito, he fed them poison, that shameless one, Godey . . . He and his two wicked vaqueros, especially that devil Ramirez, the one they call 'El Chihuahua.'"

The alleged mass murder supposedly occurred during a fiesta Godey provided for the Indian families, sometime in the 1860s. Godey allegedly plied them with wine, then fed them poisoned meat. After all forty-two were dead, Godey and his ranch hands supposedly buried their bodies on a knoll near his ranch house. The motive? Godey is said to have believed that the Indians stole some of his cattle.

So wrote Mark R. Harrington in his "Alexander Godey: Hero or Villain?" that appeared in the June 1933 issue of *Touring Topics*, an Automobile Club of Southern California monthly magazine now called *Westways*. The story of mass murder was repeated by Theresa Colwes in "The Man Behind The Cuyama Valley Indian Massacre" that appeared in *The Californians*, Volume 12, No. 3 (1995). Ms. Colwes used the Harrington article as her sole reference.

Mark R. Harrington (1882-1971) was a well-known anthropologist, most noted for his study of Native American sites all over the Southwest. He was also a storyteller, with several novels to his credit, as his widow Marie Harrington points out in *On the Trail of Forgotten People: A Personal Account of the Life and Career of Mark Raymond Harrington* (1985). Mrs. Harrington includes an extensive bibliography of all of his writings. It is interesting to note that not once did Harrington ever again write about the alleged Cuyama Valley massacre. This was despite the fact that he was seriously challenged to do so by Frank Latta.

The late Frank Latta was for many years a leading Kern County historian, with many books and articles to his credit. He was a friend of Native Americans and the author of *Handbook of the Yokuts Indians* (1949; revised 1977), an extensive study of the Yokuts of the southern San Joaquin Valley. Harrington's poisoning story caused quite a stir in the San Joaquin Valley, where there were still, in 1933, people who remembered Alexis Godey. Frank Latta set out to investigate the story. He interviewed everyone he could find, both whites and Native Americans, who might have knowledge of the incident. He published his findings in "Alexis Godey

in Kern County," which appeared in the *Fifth Annual Publication, Kern County Historical Society* (November 1939.)

Here is what Latta wrote about the Harrington story: "As this article was widely circulated and had led many persons to look upon Mr. Godey as a murdering monster of the lowest type, it has been necessary to present in this paper the statements of several pioneers who know that the accusations are entirely false, that there were no Indians in Cuyama to poison in the 1860s, and that Mr. Godey was not the person to poison anyone."

Among those interviewed by Latta was José Jesús López, for almost fifty years "mayordomo" (foreman) on the Tejon Ranch. López stated,

There is absolutely no truth, nor a particle of truth, in the story about Alexis Godey poisoning Indians in Cuyama Valley. My father had known Godey in 1847 and he was one of the first men in today's Kern County. I knew him from 1873 until he died in 1889. I knew almost every one of the Indians, Mexicans and Paisanos in the entire southern San Joaquin Valley, and if Godey had ever poisoned any Indians in that locality, I would have learned of it.

Latta journeyed to Santa Barbara during his quest to find the truth, interviewing César Lataillade, son of Césario Arnaud Lataillade, original grantee of Rancho Cuyama in 1846. It was on this grant in the Cuyama Valley where the alleged poisoning is said to have taken place. Lataillade told Latta that,

Until it was brought to my attention today I had never heard of anyone poisoning any Indians in the Cuyama Valley. Godey could not have poisoned anyone there later than 1865, to my personal knowledge. I know from statements made by my mother and Mr. Orena (ranch foreman) definitely that there were absolutely no Indians there to poison when they stocked the place with cattle many years before. No, that story about Godey poisoning Indians in Cuyama is absolutely wrong. Nothing like that could have been done, even

if there had been Indians there, without us knowing it or hearing about it. Latta learned that Godey was apparently well-liked by the Indians of the San Joaquin Valley and wrote, they were more friendly with him than they were with any other white person.

Who was this man accused of a heinous act of mass murder, but stoutly defended by those who knew him?

Alexander (or Alexis) Godey led a life of extreme adventure. He was born of French Canadian parents in St. Louis, Missouri, probably in 1818. Nothing is known of his formative years. In 1833, around the age of 15, young Alexis joined a fur trapping expedition into the Rocky Mountains led by Captain Benjamin Bonneville. From the trappers' summer rendezvous on the Green River in present-day Wyoming, Godey set out on one of the premier expeditions of the 19th century Far West. Bonneville dispatched Joseph R. Walker and a party of forty mountain men on a year-long trapping foray into the Mexican province of California (which then extended east into the Rockies.) Godey was the youngest member of Walker's expedition that traversed the deserts of the Great Basin, battled Piute Indians, and crossed the Sierra Nevada—where they are believed to have been the first white men to look down into Yosemite Valley from the north rim. After spending the winter trapping in central California, Walker's party journeyed south through the San Joaquin Valley and re-crossed the Sierra via a gap near the southern end of the great mountain barrier that later became known as Walker Pass. This was Godey's first visit to the southern end of California's great Central Valley that would later become his home. By 1834, at the age of 16, Alexis Godey was a seasoned mountain man.

Sometime in the late 1830s, after the golden age of fur trapping was nearing its end, Alexis Godey was employed as a hunter at Fort St. Vrain, a trapping outpost near the site of present-day Denver. Godey was known as an expert marksman with a rifle and his job was to supply fresh meat—bear, deer, and mountain goat—for the fort's garrison.

It was a warm July day in 1843 when Lieutenant John C. Frémont of the U.S. Army's Topographical Engineers Corps rode into Fort St. Vrain at the head of his second expedition. It was here that Alexis Godey first met Frémont, a man who would play an important part of his life over the next twenty years. Frémont was on his way to Oregon with a large party of scientists and adventurers bent on surveying the West. Godey and another young trapper destined for greatness, Christopher "Kit" Carson, were signed on to accompany Frémont's expedition.

It was on Frémont's second expedition that both Godey and Carson proved their boldness, their skill at scouting, and their loyalty to earn their place among The Great Pathfinder's most trusted associates. The expedition followed the Oregon Trail through South Pass to the Columbia River, turned south through central Oregon to Klamath Lake, and, as winter arrived, reached the site of today's Reno. Rather than spend the cold months in this bleak place, Frémont opted to cross the snow-bound Sierra Nevada in mid-winter. Godey and Carson scouted ahead and climbed nearby peaks to discover the best route westward. Battling deep snowdrifts and howling winds, the exhausted party finally reached the welcomed sanctuary of Sutter's Fort.

After a short period of recuperation, Frémont and his men headed south through the Central Valley to Tehachapi Creek, crossed Oak Creek Pass into the Mojave Desert, and reached the Old Spanish Trail near today's Victorville. They followed the trail northeast, along the Mojave River and through the arid lands east of Death Valley into Utah, and were back in St. Louis by August 1844.

A year later, in the summer of 1845, Alexis Godey again joined Frémont, ready to depart on another expedition, The Great Pathfinder's third. This would take Frémont and his men back to California and into the Mexican War. In his *Memoirs*, written years later (1887), Frémont considered his third expedition his best and praised Kit Carson, Dick Owens, and Alexis Godey as his most trusted trio: "The three, under Napoleon,

might have become marshals, Carson of great courage . . . Godey, insensible to danger, of perfect coolness and stubborn resolution, Owens, equal in courage . . . and in coolness equal to Godey."

Frémont was determined to take a more direct route to California. His third expedition, now sixty strong, crossed the Rockies to the headwaters of the Grand (now Colorado) River, followed the swollen watercourse until it veered south, continued west to the Great Salt Lake, and traversed the Great Basin via the Humboldt River to Walker Lake, directly below the eastern rampart of the Sierra Nevada. Here Frémont divided his party: Walker, Godey, Owens and Edward Kern went south through Owens Valley and crossed Walker Pass into the southern end of California's Central Valley. (Three of Frémont's southern party are remembered by important landmarks today: Owens Valley, Walker Pass, and the Kern River.) Frémont, with Kit Carson and the rest of his expedition, traversed the Sierra very close to Donner Lake.

After some confusion as to where the two parties would rendezvous, they rejoined and headed for Mexican California's capital of Monterey. Californio *comandante* José Castro ordered the interlopers to leave Mexican California. Frémont, after defying Castro for several days atop what he called Hawk's Peak (in today's Frémont State Park east of Salinas), led his force north up the Sacramento Valley to Klamath Lake. Here, on May 9, 1846, Marine Lieutenant Archibald Gillespie raced into Frémont's camp, reportedly with a message from President James Polk. The contents of Gillespie's missive has never come to light, but whatever was conveyed by the Marine officer caused Frémont to abruptly change his plans and hurry back to California.

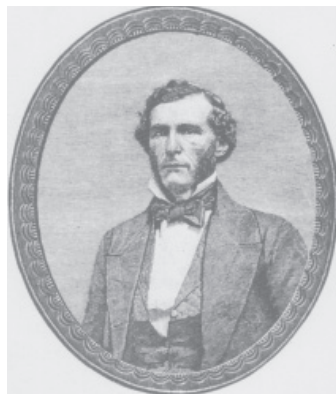
Frémont and his men hurried south to Sutter's Fort, where he learned of the Bear Flag Revolt. A group of Anglo settlers, trappers, and runaway sailors in Sonoma seized the town on June 14. They raised the Bear Flag and traveled to Sutter's Fort. Here Frémont took command of the Bear Flaggers and marched his unruly band of citizen sol-

diers to San Francisco (then Yerba Buena), where they met an American naval force and received confirmation that the U. S. and Mexico were officially at war.

At Frémont's suggestion, Alexis Godey was commissioned a brevet (temporary ranked) lieutenant and assigned to serve under the command of Archibald Gillespie. Gillespie's small force sailed south to San Pedro Bay and marched inland to capture the *pueblo* of Los Angeles. Several weeks later, the Californios, resentful of the Marine lieutenant's harsh restrictions, revolted and forced him and his men to leave the *pueblo* and debark from San Pedro. They sailed south to San Diego, the only southern California town still in American hands after the Californio revolt.

Meanwhile, Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny and his small "Army of the West" was marching west from Santa Fe, New Mexico via the Southern Emigrant Trail. Commodore Robert Stockton had assumed command of the naval and marine force in San Diego. Learning of Kearny's approach, Stockton sent a small detachment inland to guide the "Army of the West" into San Diego. Among those dispatched to aid Kearny was Alexis Godey and another young man soon destined to play a part in Godey's life, Edward Fitzgerald Beale. On December 6, 1846, Kearny's force was mauled by Andrés Pico's California Lancers at San Pasqual, a small valley about 28 miles northeast of San Diego. Nineteen of Kearny's men were killed, most of them victims of the long lances yielded so skillfully by the superb Californio horsemen. Entrapped on a small rise the soldiers called "Mule Hill," Godey, Beale and Kit Carson, the latter who had guided Kearny's force west, were dispatched to sneak through enemy lines to request help from Stockton's San Diego force. The threesome made it through, although Godey was captured by the Californios on the return trip.

Commodore Stockton sent a force of sailors and marines to rescue Kearny's men, who safely reached San Diego a few days later. But Godey remained Pico's prisoner and accompanied the California Lancers



A print of Godey from an article that appeared in Century Magazine, 1891.

north to Los Angeles.

By what might be called, using current military terms, a "pincer movement", the Californios were defeated. Frémont and his California Battalion of Mounted Riflemen came down from the north and Stockton and Kearny's joint army-navy-marine force moved north from San Diego. Pico's Californios were caught in the middle. On January 13, 1847, Andrés Pico, *comandante* of the Californios, signed the "Articles of Capitulation," surrendering to Frémont at *Campo de Cahuenga*, a small adobe home in what is now North Hollywood. Alexis Godey, who had been treated with the utmost courtesy by Pico, was released to Frémont.

Frémont was appointed temporary military governor of California by Commodore Stockton and appeared to be at the apex of his career. But such was not to be. The Pathfinder became involved in a bitter dispute with General Kearny over the administration of military affairs in California and was charged with insubordination (a brevet lieutenant colonel who defies the orders of a brigadier general does so at his own risk.) He was ordered to accompany Kearny east to stand trial in a highly-publicized court-martial. Alexis Godey, always loyal to Frémont, accompanied his mentor to the nation's capital where he testified in Frémont's behalf. Nevertheless, Frémont was found guilty of "disobedience of a lawful command by a superior officer." Although

immediately pardoned by President Polk, Frémont, in anger and frustration, resigned his army commission.

To rebuild his tarnished image, Frémont was determined to continue his explorations. However, the two ensuing expeditions would be privately funded. Supported by his father-in-law, Senator Thomas Benton, Frémont organized an expedition to locate a railroad route from St. Louis to California. As usual, loyal Alexis Godey would accompany his mentor, along with twenty-one other recruits. The old mountain man Bill Williams was hired to guide the party over Cochetopa Pass in the Colorado Rockies in mid-winter, even though Frémont had been warned that this would be an extremely hazardous undertaking. The expedition, Frémont's fourth, ended up a disaster. Ten of the twenty-two froze to death in blinding snowstorms and 20-below zero degree temperatures. The rest were saved, thanks largely to the heroism of Alexis Godey. He was "tougher and stronger than any man of the expedition," according to Frémont in his *Memoirs*. Godey, in a remarkable exploit, led a half-crazed Frémont out of the frozen wilderness to Kit Carson's home in Taos, New Mexico. Leaving Frémont to recuperate, Godey, retracing his route back into the icy-cold mountains, personally brought the eleven half-frozen survivors out of the Rockies.

Godey accompanied a chastised Frémont to California via the southern snow-free route, the Gila Trail, then north to Frémont's Rancho Las Mariposas, in the foothills west of Yosemite. Frémont had purchased the land grant in 1848, shortly before gold was discovered in some of its streambeds. Godey helped his mentor set up a sizable placer mining operation, working the watercourses around the present-day town of Mariposa. To this day, one of the ravines in the area bears Godey's name. Frémont appeared destined for great wealth, but such was not to be. Encumbered by debt and several poor decisions, The Pathfinder—in a pattern the bedeviled him throughout most of his later life—lost the entire grant.

By the year 1849, Godey was 31 years old, and in that time he crammed more adventure

and more harrowing excitement than most men twice his age. But, his wide-ranging travels now came to an end. The remaining forty years of his life were spent mostly in and around the southern San Joaquin Valley.

He briefly managed a hotel in San Juan Bautista and married María Antonio Coronel of the prominent Californio family. The marriage did not last. María Antonia Coronel had the bonds annulled after she discovered him "dallying" with a young Indian woman. If Godey had a weakness, it was his life-long fondness for women, both Indian and Hispanic. Over the years he had five legal marriages, all but the last ending in divorce, and at least eight common-law wives, some as young as 14.

1851 was the last year of Godey's long association with Frémont. The Pathfinder received a lucrative contract from the federal government to supply beef to Indian reservations in the San Joaquin Valley. Godey was assigned to drive north 3,000 head of cattle that Frémont had purchased in the Los Angeles area. Starting at Mission San Fernando, Godey and several *vaqueros* hired for the job drove the stomping, bawling herd over Tejon Pass and up through the San Joaquin Valley, depositing about fifty head at each native *ranchería*, then on to Las Mariposas.

After a brief episode operating a ferry on the San Joaquin River, Godey was contacted by Lieutenant Robert S. Williamson of the Pacific Railroad Survey. The survey was an effort by the Army Corps of Topographical Engineers to locate feasible routes for a transcontinental railway. Six cross-country routes were proposed for study. The party under Lieutenant Williamson was directed to explore possible routes through central and southern California to connect with a proposed 32nd or 35th parallel transcontinental line.

Williamson's immediate objective in August 1853 was to find a route suitable for a rail line from the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley over the mountains to the Mojave Desert. Williamson later wrote in his report to Congress, "Here I was fortunate enough to meet with Mr. Alexander Godey, a most excellent and experienced mountaineer who knew

more, perhaps, about mountain passes in the Sierra Nevada—which I was about to examine—then anyone in the country.”

Godey guided the Williamson party up the Kern River to Walker Pass and to several other notches near the south end of the Sierra. One of those examined was Tehachapi Pass, which Williamson recommended as the only feasible route for a railroad over the mountain barrier. (The Southern Pacific Railroad utilized Williamson’s report when they laid their rails over Tehachapi Pass in 1875-76.)

Godey accompanied the railroad survey party as far as the mouth of Tejon Canyon. Here he came in contact with Edward F. Beale, who was destined to influence Godey’s life for the next decade.

Edward Fitzgerald Beale (1822-1893), after participating in the Mexican War as a naval officer (although he more often worked with the Army), was most noted for carrying 23 ounces of California gold across Mexico and up the east coast to Washington, D. C., proving to President Polk that the discovery was genuine and igniting the California Gold Rush. In 1852, thanks to his friendship with John C. Frémont and Senator Thomas Benton, Beale was appointed Indian Superintendent for California.

One of Beale’s first actions in this post was to find land, away from American miners and settlers, for reservations. In early 1853, Beale proposed three sites in the southern San Joaquin Valley, then almost devoid of white land claims. Only one of the three was actually established. Beale named it the Sebastian Reservation, in honor of William K. Sebastian, chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. It was more commonly known as the Tejon Reservation, as it lay at the mouth of Tejon Canyon.

Beale hired Alexis Godey, first as “interpreter,” because of the latter’s rapport with the local Indian peoples. Godey quickly proved himself as a trusted lieutenant, as Beale later acknowledged in his Memoirs: “His wonderful knowledge of the country, and great influence with the tribes of the mountains enabled me, through him, to preserve the peace in the [San] Joaquin Valley.”

Alexis Godey had a unique relationship

with the local Indians. José Jesús López, later foreman of Beale’s great Tejon Ranch, knew him well and told Frank Latta:

In many respects Godey was a natural Indian himself. He would leave the best society to go to an Indian ceremony. I have seen him come to Rancho El Tejon and spend a week at the Indian rancharia there. While there he would take part in all the Indian activities . . . He was better liked than any other white man who ever lived in Kern County.

Godey soon had his hands full, not only working with reservation Indians, but also managing Rancho San Emigdio, located at the mouth of San Emigdio Canyon about twenty miles west of the Tejon Reservation. The San Emigdio land grant was awarded to José Antonio Dominguez of Santa Barbara by Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado in 1842. It consisted of four square leagues (17,709 acres) of cultivable land watered by San Emigdio Creek, at the extreme south end of San Joaquin Valley (then known as *Valle de las Tulares*). In 1851, the Dominguez heirs sold an undivided half-interest of the grant to John C. Frémont, who called on his longtime friend Alexis Godey to oversee the crops and tend the cattle and sheep on the rancho. Godey greatly expanded the livestock operation at San Emigdio. He was given a contract to supply beef and mutton to the army at Fort Tejon from 1855 to 1861.

When Edward F. Beale purchased Rancho La Liebre in the Antelope Valley in 1855, he hired Godey to oversee his livestock there. Cattle tended by Godey and his vaqueros roamed both sides of Tejon Pass, from the southern San Joaquin to Antelope Valley from the late 1850s into the 1860s.

About fifteen miles west of San Emigdio, at the extreme southwestern corner of the great San Joaquin plain, lies the Cuyama Valley. Sometime in the mid-1860s, after the federal land commission denied Rancho Cuyama to the Lataillade heirs of Santa Barbara, Godey laid claim to the northern end of the valley and brought in 1,000 head of cattle to graze there. He built a small adobe dwelling on a slight knoll and hired several *vaqueros* to tend the livestock.



A view of the Rancho San Emigdio, Godey's home from 1855 to 1883. From Tenneco West of Bakersfield, California.

An incident occurred in the Cuyama Valley that may have some basis for the later charge of mass murder, but Godey was not involved. A *vaquero* named Leonardo, known as *El Chihuahua*, sexually assaulted an Indian woman. While the rape was in progress, the woman's husband appeared. Leonardo killed both of them to prevent his crime from being revealed, then fled to Mexico, never to return. The intriguing part of the story is the name *El Chihuahua*, mentioned by Harrington in his poisoning tale. Could the rapist and murderer *El Chihuahua* have been the one who years later confessed to the crime and, to cover his involvement, implicated Godey?

Edward F. Beale was appointed Surveyor General of California by President Lincoln in 1861. Over the ensuing five years, through methods bordering on fraudulency, Beale combined his La Liebre grant, obtained in 1855, with three other adjacent grants to form his massive Rancho El Tejon, stretching from the southern San Joaquin Valley over the Tehachapi Mountains through Antelope Valley to the Liebre Mountain foothills—203,000 acres in all. In 1863 he formed a working partnership with Alexis Godey, who became a trusted associate, first to supervise the ranch Indians and, later, to oversee the livestock operation and help manage the crops.

Godey spent most of the 1860s and 1870s on Rancho San Emigdio. He was

most responsible for developing *Pueblo de San Emigdio*. By 1872 the population in and around the village included some fifty *paisanos*, persons of mixed Mexican and Indian blood, and about 150 full-blooded Indians, most of who were employed as cattle and sheep herders. Edward Beale had purchased Frémont's half-ownership in the rancho in 1869, and Godey subsequently obtained, probably with Beale's help, some proprietary interest.

An amusing incident involving Godey's use of Indian labor was related by Frank Latta:

Godey was using Indian labor to improve the grounds and vicinity of the San Emigdio ranch house. He had employed a foreman who used a glass eye. When the foreman would leave, the Indians would do only about one-half as much work as when he was watching them. He tried in every way to keep them moving, but all to no effect. They would idle away their time as soon as he was gone. At the suggestion of Mr. Godey, the foreman took out his glass eye and placed it on top of a nearby post. Then he spoke a few words to it in an undertone and left the place. Those Indians worked like mad while he was gone. When he came back and placed the eye where it belonged, they were tremendously relieved and begged him to not leave it to watch them again. He did not need to.

They worked harder when he was gone.

Alexis Godey's appearance and mannerisms were described to Frank Latta by one Z. T. Blankenship:

When I lived at San Emigdio in the 1870s, Alex Godey used to come down to my cabin and stay a day or two at a time. He would talk for hours of old times. He was not a braggart, but was rather quiet and retiring about his exploits with Frémont . . .

When I knew Godey he was a man well along in years. He was very careful of his personal appearance and was quite proud of his popularity among the ladies.

A man above medium height, Godey was broad of shoulders and as lithe and active as a cat. I remember so well his long fingers and slender hands and wrists. He spoke very good English, having only a slight French accent. He had, in addition to a determined mouth, very dark deep-set piercing eyes that could almost burn a hole through a person. Brave as could be, he had a determined streak and was dangerous when he thought he was being imposed upon.

Godey was a very generous man. If he liked a person there was no limit to his generosity. He used to load up a wagon in Bakersfield with provisions and liquor and drive to the various adobes and give food to each of the Mexican and Indian families. He was a good-hearted fellow in many respects, but he always would have his own way.

José Jesús López described Godey as "one of the most remarkable men ever I had known. He was modest and quiet-spoken, but spoke with a determination and positiveness that left no room for question of any sort. His one weakness was women, and he had from time to time possibly six to eight common-law wives."

Alexis Godey lived at and managed San Emigdio until 1883. In that year the 19,000-acre rancho was sold to Kern County developer J. F. Haggin by its several owners. Godey received \$2,000 in gold coin for this share of the rancho and moved to

Bakersfield.

He married his fifth wife, 14 year-old María Jimenez and built a large home on 19th Street, which he called Belmont Grove. Now a man of some means, he subdivided the surrounding eighty acres, which became known as the Godey Tract.

By late 1888 his health began to fail. He was taken to Los Angeles, where he died at the Sisters Hospital, at 71 years of age, on January 19, 1889. He was buried at the Union Cemetery in Bakersfield beside one of his three sons, Alexis Godey, Jr., who had died in 1877.

Alexis Godey had been deceased forty-four years when Mark Harrington published his article in *Touring Topics* accusing him of mass murder.

Harrington and, later, Theresa Colwes in her article in *The Californians*, "set up" Godey as an Indian killer by describing a recorded incident during Frémont's second expedition, when Godey and Kit Carson tracked down a band of Paiute horse thieves in the Mojave Desert, killed two of them, and brought their bloody scalps back to camp. This was, indeed, an unfortunate act, but not mentioned is the fact that these renegade Indians had raped, killed and horribly mutilated two kidnapped Mexican women.

Also mentioned is another incident that took place in southern Oregon during Frémont's third expedition. After a night attack on Frémont's camp near Klamath Lake that killed three sleeping men, Frémont allowed Kit Carson to lead a retaliatory raid on a nearby Klamath village. Some twenty, probably innocent, Indians were killed. Whether or not Godey was a member of this raiding party is not known. Frémont's act of vengeance is impossible to justify. All that can be said is that atrocities were committed by both sides.

Alex Godey was certainly not without his faults. He was known as a "Squaw Man" for his romantic involvement with many young Mexican and Indian women. But neither his fondness for very young women nor his actions, real and supposed, under Frémont's command should be used as evidence that he was a mass murderer of innocent men,



Godey's burial plot at Union Cemetery, Bakersfield, as it appeared when taken by Frank Latta in 1931. Godey erected the monument and fence after his namesake son's 1877 death and then was buried there after his passing a dozen years later. From the Bear State Library.

women and children.

The story itself strains credence. Harrington supposedly heard it from an unnamed "gray-haired ranchero." Did the old ranchero witness the crime? No, he learned it from a priest, who got the story from an old man known as *El Chihuahua* in confession. Would a priest reveal to others what he heard in confession? To do so would violate the sanctity of the confessional. It's possible, but seems highly unlikely unless it might save a life, which was not the case here. The alleged confessed crime occurred many years before. To give substance to the story, more evidence is needed than what appeared in the 1933 *Touring Topics* and 1995 *The Californian* articles. Who was "the gray-haired ranchero" who supposedly told the story? Even better would be an attempt to locate the alleged mass grave. If it exists, it should not be hard to find. Harrington's story says it was on a knoll not far from Godey's Cuyama Valley ranch house, near the north end of the valley. Numerous archaeological digs have been undertaken in the Cuyama Valley over the last sixty years. While ancient Indian village and burial sites have been located, no mass grave has ever been found.

An intriguing possibility involves the vaquero named *El Chihuahua*. Could the *El Chihuahua* mentioned in Harrington's story be

the same who, in the Cuyama Valley, raped an Indian women, then killed her and her husband to cover his crime and fled to Mexico?

Otherwise, this tale must remain a mythical will-o'-the-wisp, which Webster's Dictionary defines as something, "that deludes or misleads by luring on." Enough real injustices have been committed against Native Americans without resorting to fanciful tales.

Suggested Reading

Mark R. Harrington, "Alexander Godey: Hero or Villain?", *Touring Topics*, June 1933.

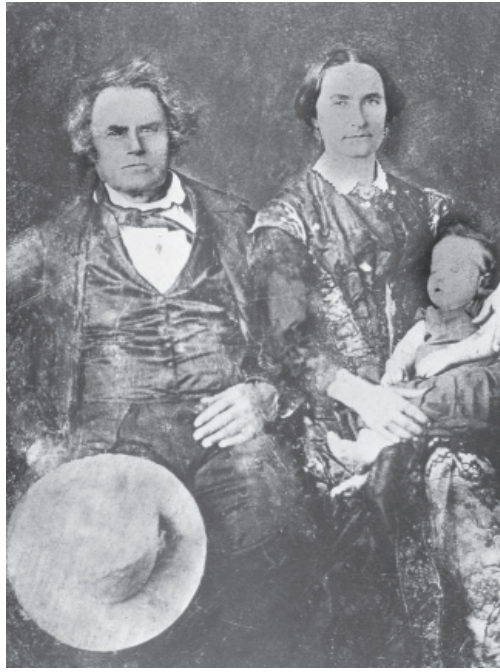
Theresa Cowles, "The Man Behind the Cuyama Valley Indian Massacre," *The Californians*, Vol. 12, No. 3, 1995.

Frank F. Latta, "Alexis Godey in Kern County," *Fifth Annual Publication*, Kern County Historical Society, November 1939.

Frank F. Latta, *Saga of Rancho El Tejon* (Santa Cruz: Bear State Books, 1976).

John C. Frémont, *Memoirs of My Life* (Chicago: Belford, Clark and Co., 1887,) Vol. 1 (Vol. 2 was never published.)

Frank F. Latta, *Handbook of Yokuts Indians* (Santa Cruz: Bear State Books, 1949, rev. 1977.)



John Rowland, original grantee of Rancho La Puente in 1842 and co-owner with William Workman on the amended grant of 1845, with his second wife Charlotte Gray and their unidentified child, ca. 1850s. Courtesy of the Historical Society of La Puente Valley.

“Hire an Agent and Give Him Plenty of Money”: The Rancho La Puente Land Claim

by Paul R. Spitzzeri

In the 2 February 1848 draft of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War, the tenth article specified the preservation of the land grants made in California under the Spanish and Mexican regimes. Nine days later, James Marshall made his astonishing discovery of gold that, far more than the war, radically transformed California. Many of the thousands who flocked to the new American possession and then state in coming years found little or no luck in the gold fields and many of those who stayed cast their eye on the enormous amount of land that had, as yet, been largely undeveloped.

A great deal of the coveted property, however, was held under the Spanish and Mexican land grants. There were over eight hundred of these issued between 1784 and 1846. All but a couple dozen of these however, were granted after 1833, when the missions were secularized. In fact, American

policy was that 7 July 1846, the day the U.S. Navy seized Monterey, was the official date of conquest and any grants by Pico after that date were considered invalid.

Moreover, President James K. Polk and Congress, wishing to investigate the matter of land grants in former Mexican lands seized by the United States during the war, had Article X of the treaty stricken before it was ratified by both the United States and Mexico, which happened later in 1848. The following year, two reports were made about the nature of California land grants. One was by Henry W. Halleck, secretary of state for the military regime governing California and the other was by William Carey Jones, charged by the Secretary of the Interior for his work. Whereas Halleck questioned the validity of many grants, particularly those issued by Governor Pío Pico in 1846 as the war was being prosecuted in California, Jones opined that the majority of them were

sound.

Not long after California was granted statehood in September 1850, Congress turned to creating legislation to deal with the question of the new state's land grants. On 3 March 1851, it passed an act, which determined that a commission was needed to hold hearings, view maps and grant documents, and interview witnesses, to conclude whether a grant was valid.

Over several years, the commission, mainly meeting in San Francisco, with a short period of hearings held at Los Angeles in the fall of 1852, deliberated upon the hundreds of claims. The vast majority, about two-thirds, were confirmed as valid. There was, however, a provision in the legislation which allowed for the federal government to appeal any confirmed claim as far as the United States Supreme Court. This proved, in fact, to be a formidable obstacle for successful claimants, who needed superior legal talent, official surveys, ample funding and substantial reserves of patience.

It was also notable that, when the land claims process started in the early 1850s, California was fully in the throes of the Gold Rush. Ranchers holding Spanish and Mexican grants were usually making more money dealing in the beef trade to feed the incoming hordes than they could have dreamed of previously and, while times were good, pursuing a claim likely did not seem problematic. This was true as most commission decisions were made by the mid-fifties.

By the latter half of the decade, however, conditions changed mightily. The tidal wave of the Gold Rush subsided. In 1857, a national depression erupted. Imported cattle, often of better breeds like the Texas longhorn, cut into the market dominance of the local animal and California's ranches, consequently, were overstocked.

Then came climactic disaster. At the end of December 1861 the first of a staggering array of rainstorms pummeled the state and did not let up for weeks. The Central Valley was a vast body of water and the Los Angeles region, the catalyst of the cattle industry, was inundated as water rushed

down the steep slopes of the Sierra Madre (later San Gabriel) Mountains and overfilled the rivers, creeks and streams of the area.

What we know as the El Niño effect then segued into La Niña. From 1862 to 1864, rainfall virtually ceased as a crippling drought killed off many of those animals who had survived the flooding of 1861-62. The results for the region's stock raisers were catastrophic and whatever recovery ensued in the post-Civil War years and into the 1870s, as Los Angeles entered its first growth spurt, was largely fueled by the rise of agriculture as the cattle industry receded from dominance.

It so happened that, with the federal government's policy of automatically appealing any successful claim before the land commission, regardless of reason or merit, the ensuing slog through the federal court system took an average of between fifteen and twenty years. While ranchers were enjoying the salad days of the Gold Rush in 1852, when the land claims process began, by the late 1860s and early 1870s, when it was finally winding down, the wave after wave of troubles, as discussed above had dramatically changed their lot.

Consequently, there were very few original land grant owners who survived the lengthy period of land claims with the properties intact and certified by a patent issued by the authorities in Washington, D. C. Too many had died or encumbered huge debt, and, therefore, had lost their lands to lawyers taking interests in the property as fees for pursuing claims, to speculators, or to new settlers. Because most ranchers were Spanish-speaking Californios and they not only used their property for their livelihoods but their lifestyle (in other words, built societies and cultures out of the rancho environment), the loss of land grant holdings was not merely an economic question, it was also social, political and psychological.

Among those who survived the challenges of the land claims process and the broader economic and social transformations of the 1850s and 1860s were John Rowland and William Workman, owners of the massive Rancho La Puente in the San Gabriel

Valley east of Los Angeles. Rowland, a native of Maryland, and Workman, born and raised in northern England, came to the area in 1841 from New Mexico, where the two were successful merchants and where they had become naturalized Mexican citizens, thus enabling them to obtain a grant in California.

Likely because of political problems stemming from the aim of the Republic of Texas to annex most of New Mexico, Workman, who seemed to be more involved in this intrigue, laid low upon arrival in the Los Angeles area. Rowland was the one who secured the La Puente grant in the spring of 1842, receiving confirmation for four square leagues (just under 18,000 acres) of land from Governor Juan Bautista Alvarado, while Workman obtained a document that provided him the right to use the property as if an owner.

In 1845 after Pío Pico, the head of the departmental assembly, was successful in overthrowing Governor Manuel Micheltorena, after a brief skirmish north of Los Angeles with the signal assistance of Workman and Rowland, a change was made at La Puente. In what might be viewed as a "spoils of war" decision, Pico, in July 1845, added Workman's name to a new grant to La Puente.

On 4 March 1851, the day after the land claims act was passed in Washington, D. C., Ygnacio del Valle, the Los Angeles County recorder, certified that "John Rowland deposited the foregoing documents [pertaining to the land grants of 1842 and 1845] in this Office for record."

When the land claims commission came to Los Angeles in September 1852 to hold its hearings for claims from southern California, the proprietors of La Puente, represented by A. P. Crittenden (later murdered by his lover in a notorious 1870 incident), duly filed theirs on 9 October. In July 1853, federal Surveyor General Samuel J. King certified the correctness of all documents pertaining to the rancho's history, meaning those that were copied by del Valle from Rowland's originals.

On 14 April 1854, Robert Thompson

of the commission (which also included Alpheus Felch and Thompson Campbell) issued the board's decision in what was assigned as Case 385. Because there had been the two grants of 1842 and 1845, Thompson took care to review the history of the rancho and, in particular, the differences in the size of the rancho.

Of note, in particular, was an undated petition by Rowland, but which was followed by a 14 January 1842 acknowledgement of receipt by Alvarado, in which the new arrival requested land because he had "come to establish myself in this department and to attain the same," as well as because he had seven children and "desiring the repose of my family and their well being, which is the chief object of my cares," the land was necessary for their sustenance.

Rowland identified the land he wanted as "in the Ex-Mission of San Gabriel [and is] a vacant place at La Puente." Further, the property was said to be, "on the east bounded by El Chino and San Jose, and on the West by the River San Gabriel, on the north by the land of Don Luis Arenas and on the south of the Senores Perez of the Los Nietos and Los Coyotes." Of special interest, though, was Rowland's own specification that, of the La Puente ranch, "I beseech your Excellency that you will be pleased to grant me in property the land which I solicit which may be four leagues a little more or less."

On 22 July 1845, however, Governor Pico issued the new grant to the property, including both Rowland and Workman, and explained the boundaries differently as those in 1842, namely that La Puente was "bounded by the lands of the ranchos of San José, of Los Nogales, of Lugo, of Don Juan Pérez, of Los Coyotes and the River of San Gabriel." No mention was made of the Rancho Azusa, formerly owned by Luis Arenas and then sold to Henry Dalton. The reference to Lugo meant the Rancho Santa Ana del Chino and that for Juan Pérez is for Los Nietos. The grant to Los Nogales made to José de la Luz Linares was at the east and south of La Puente, close to Brea Canyon. No mention was made of the size of the regrant.

That same day, Ignacio del Valle, a

prominent Los Angeles resident, who later owned the famed Rancho Camulos on the border of Los Angeles and Ventura counties, submitted a statement to Pico. In it, he explained that, when Rowland received the first grant to La Puente in 1842, there was an error. Namely, "by mistake or through his involuntary fault not having included in the request his associate Don Julian Workman." Consequently, this strange statement continued, when the final title was issued to Rowland, "the said Workman acquired no right to the land of La Puente, [so] the subscriber appeals to your Excellency that through your well known goodness, you would think proper to order the said title to be revalidated" to add Workman as an owner. Del Valle continued by appealing to "Your Excellency's well known goodness of heart and for which favor the subscriber will live eternally grateful."

Pico, through his secretary José María Covarrubias, replied, also on 22 July, that "it being public and notorious that the Citizen Julian Workman has been and is the associate and partner of the applicant in the occupation of the land of La Puente, and in consideration of the cost and expenses incurred in the settlement and cultivation," a new title should be issued.

Yet, when the petition was passed on, as Mexican law required, to the departmental assembly and its Committee for Vacant Lands to deliberate upon, that Committee, represented by Francisco de la Guerra and Narciso Botello, observed, in a report of 30 September, that the grant to La Puente was "in extent four leagues . . . by title issued the 22nd of July of this year." A few days later, Agustín Olvera, secretary of the assembly, reported that the regrant to La Puente was approved by the legislature in its session held that day. Later on the same day, 3 October, Pico issued a statement noting that the grant was, indeed "in extent four leagues."

Despite these clear indicators, Commissioner Thompson noted in his ruling that, on the map for the 1845 grant, "no quantity is specified, nor is there any reservation of a sobrante (overplus)." Yet, Thompson continued, "It appears very clear

from the grants that it was the intention of the Government to grant all the vacant land lying between the Ranchos named as boundaries, and the River of San Gabriel."

Also of note is Thompson's statement that "the conditions of the grant in this case differ somewhat from the usual form. The grantees are required to have it occupied with an inhabited house, cultivation and cattle. The evidence on this point is very full and complete." He referred mainly to the testimony of Benjamin D. Wilson, who Thompson incorrectly stated "came to this country with Roland [sic] in December 1842," whereas Wilson actually was with Rowland and Workman on their first excursion to the Pacific coast the prior year. Wilson became a highly prominent resident of Los Angeles, serving as a mayor, county supervisor, and state senator, a business man of note, and owner of prime San Gabriel Valley property in what became Alhambra, Pasadena and San Marino. As Wilson testified at this deposition,

It [the rancho] was first occupied in 1842 by Julian Workman, who raised a crop of corn and beans on it. He had a shanty there in the spring and he commenced an Adobe house in which he moved and he resided in it the ensuing winter and has continued living it ever since. He commenced buying stock in 1842 and has increased it since and has now quite a large stock of cattle, horses, and sheep.

There was a second deposition, provided by David W. Alexander, who came to Los Angeles with Rowland on the 1842 trip from New Mexico. Alexander became a merchant with Francis Mellus and Phineas Banning, was on the first American-era common (city) council and served as its president, served two terms as county sheriff, and was a county supervisor. He had interests in several ranchos, including Providencia, Tujunga and Cahuenga, and was part-owner with Workman's son-in-law, F. P. F. Temple, at San Emigdio near Fort Tejon in Kern County.

Alexander stated, in his testimony, that *I am acquainted with the Rancho called*

La Puente, [whi]ch is in the County of Los Angeles, about Eighteen miles from this place [Los Angeles]. It is occupied by Julian Workman & John Roland [sic]—I came to this country with John Roland in December 1842. The land was then occupied by said Workman & Roland, the latter [former, actually] having been here the year previous. There had been a considerable quantity of land cultivated. Mr. Workman had an adobe house on it in which he was then living with his family, & he still continues to live in it. Workman had cattle and Horses on the land in December 1842. Roland built a large house on the land the next season in which he has lived ever since.

Given the archival record, even with his contrary identification of the size of the rancho, and the testimony of Wilson and Alexander, Thompson, on behalf of his colleagues, declared that “the parties have clearly made out a case entitling them to a confirmation of their claim, and a decree will be entered accordingly.”

As was standard operating procedure for the federal government in land claims cases in which the commission had approved the claim of the owner(s), Caleb Cushing, the U.S. Attorney General filed an appeal of that decision on 27 February 1855. In early November, the federal District Attorney in Los Angeles, Pacificus Ord (whose brother Edward completed the first detailed survey of the town in 1849), filed a petition for a review of the claim with an answer then filed, on 2 December, by Rowland and Workman’s attorney, William G. Dryden, who advised Rowland that, “if the juridical possession was ever given to you by the last alcalde, it would be well to get a certified copy of the same & file it in this cause.” The attorney noted, though, that “if no such act was ever performed, why the case will be submitted to the Court, upon the papers as they now stand.”

Dryden, a native of Kentucky, who had recommended his clients as agents of the Republic of Texas in aims to annex most of New Mexico in the early 1840s, came to Los



William Workman, at right, and David W. Alexander, at left, taken in New York by Mathew Brady, early 1851. The two were traveling to the United Kingdom, where Workman visited his native village in northern England and Alexander traveled to his hometown in Ireland. Alexander was, with Benjamin D. Wilson, a witness for the La Puente land claim before the U. S. Land Commission the following year. Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

Angeles in 1850. Although not evidently formally trained in the law, he was admitted to the bar in California and maintained his private practice until he was elected as judge of the Court of Sessions (after 1863 the County Court) in 1856. He remained on the bench through several terms, was defeated in 1868, and died at his ranch south of the Los Angeles the following year. His behavior in the courtroom was legendary for his saltiness, rawness, and humor, although whether the latter was more intentional than not is often unclear. Interestingly, on 25 January 1856, Dryden filed a stipulation to clarify that Workman was not born in New Mexico, but in Great Britain, though what legal bearing that could have on the claim did not, apparently, get explained.

A hint at the cost of legal representation is found in a transcript of a 17 March 1856 bill by Dryden to his clients “for services as an attorney in attending before the U. S. District Court, upon the appeal of the Rancho of La Puente, by the United States, and for obtaining an Order of Appeal from the said District to the Supreme Court of the

United States," which assumed an appeal to the federal high court was coming, for \$100.

The federal district court in Los Angeles, with Isaac S. K. Ogier on the bench, heard the case in the winter 1856 term. Ogier then ruled in favor of Rowland and Workman, but with the significant condition that the grant was for four square leagues. Clearly, the judge felt that the statements made by the Committee on Vacant Lands and Governor Pico in the 1845 grant were unquestionable, despite Thompson's opinion about the intention of the government to grant *all* the land between the surrounding ranchos. On 1 March, the decree was filed and Dryden wasted no time in filing, two days later, his motion for appeal to the United States Supreme Court and then followed this with a new motion for a hearing before Judge Ogier instead, which was ordered and the earlier ruling by the jurist was vacated.

On 29 September 1856, Attorney General Cushing wrote Los Angeles federal district attorney Ord that the federal government would not prosecute an appeal to the United States Supreme Court because the La Puente claim had been approved by the Board of Land Commissioners and the federal District Court. This is despite the discrepancy in the size of the rancho between the two bodies and the fact that the federal government did sometimes take these cases to the federal high court, even if claims were successful at the commission and lower court.

The rehearing, conducted at the December 1856 term of Ogier's court and filed on 13 February 1857, yielded an entirely different result. This time, the judge ruled that the grant to La Puente was to be confirmed within the boundaries of the surrounding ranchos and that it was to be no larger than 11 square leagues. Explanations of why he changed his mind have also not survived.

With the court ruling finalized and, apparently, the federal government uninterested in a further appeal to the Supreme Court, Rowland and Workman went to the next step to receive their land patent. In late 1857, Henry Hancock, who conducted many surveys of ranchos involved in land claims,

engaged in that for La Puente. There were, however, some conflicts about the precise boundary of the rancho with those of some of its neighbors.

One involved a dispute with Rancho La Habra to the south, but a 19 December 1857 agreement in Spanish between Pío Pico, Francisco Ocampo and Abel Stearns and Rowland stipulated that, "the subscribed claimants of the Ranchos La Puente and La Habra . . . have met and agreed on the conformity of the measurement made for the boundary between the said Ranchos . . . Henceforth, the boundary will be between both ranchos according to the survey executed of the Rancho La Puente by Henry Hancock."

The other was a question that also arose about the size of Rancho Los Nogales to the east, this tract having been a square league (about 4,400 acres), but juridical possession was given for double that. In this matter, the federal district court issued an order reducing Los Nogales back to the original square league specified in the grant.

The land claim, however, was not yet finalized and the discrepancy on the size of the rancho arose yet again. The Hancock survey had been forwarded to the California Surveyor General, who, on 3 June 1859, confirmed the boundaries and the quantity of land within them; that is, the eleven square leagues reflected in Ogier's revised decree. On 4 August, the approved plat was sent to Washington to the Commissioner of the General Land Office to fulfill the condition of the 1851 land claims act that a patent would be issued to the claimants once a survey was certified by the state surveyor general and forwarded to Washington along with certification of commission and court rulings.

Yet, the state surveyor general, J. W. Mandeville, wrote on 4 November 1859 to General Land Office Commissioner J. A. Hendricks that

recent investigations in the Archives, has disclosed the fact, that the Departmental Assembly approved the concession made by the Governor as of four square leagues only—the decree of the Court

from which the Survey was based, gave the extent confirmed as to eleven square leagues, within the boundaries.

In addition, Mandeville forward a copy of the 1845 document of approval by the Assembly and concluded with the ambiguous statement that this was done so “for your consideration,” though clearly he was concerned about allowing the patent to be issued with this cloud over the proceedings.

Mandeville’s reservations were complemented by misgivings held by Los Angeles’ federal District Attorney J. R. Gitchell, successor to Pacificus Ord, but this time with respect to the Hancock survey of La Puente from late 1857 and, evidently, whether it reflected the actual size of the rancho as granted by Pico in 1845, if not also by Alvarado three years earlier.

Whether this was independent or anticipatory of new congressional legislation, Gitchell filed a motion on 25 May 1860 in Judge Ogier’s federal district court requesting that the Hancock map be delivered by the state’s surveyor general to the court for a review. On 9 June, Ogier agreed to this, on condition that Gitchell had twenty days to file any exceptions to the survey. For unknown reasons, Gitchell finally did so file, but not until 22 December.

Meantime, on 14 June, Congress did pass its act allowing the federal district courts to order surveys in for examination and adjudication, bypassing the General Land Office, which had, even for land claims standards, been exceedingly slow in processing surveys in preparation for the issuance of patents. This would be the mechanism by which a third district court hearing would be held concerning the La Puente claim.

Meanwhile another notable matter that needed to be cleared up was some confusion over Workman’s given name. From the time of the spring 1842 document that provided him the benefits of using the ranch as if an owner through the summer 1845 regrant by Pico, Workman was always referred to by the first name *Julián*, which was part of the baptismal name *José Julián* used by him since he was converted in 1828 to the Roman Catholic Church while he lived in Taos, New Mexico.

On 13 June 1860, Dryden filed a document to clarify the confusion over Workman’s name. In the document, it was stated that

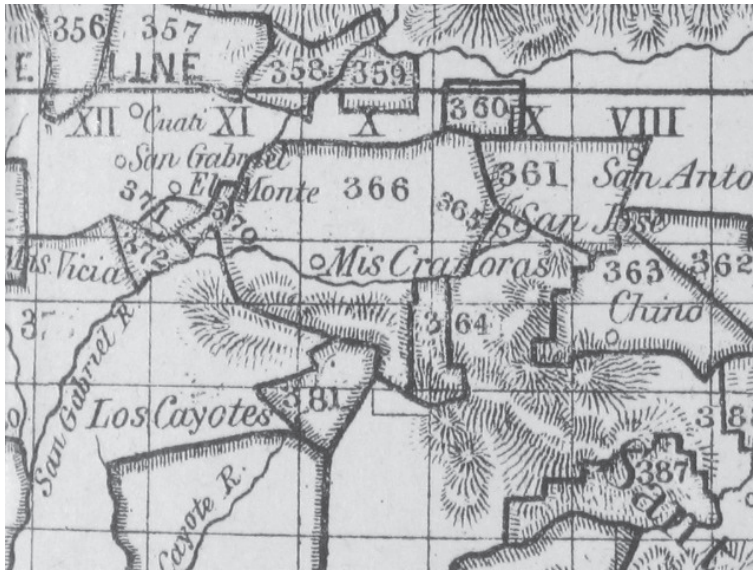
He came to California in the year 1841, at which time there were but few persons speaking English being there, but that nearly all the inhabitants were Mexicans speaking the Spanish language; that it was customary amongst them to call him Julian under which name he was described in the grant of the lands of “La Puente” made to him and John Rowland; and that he was known and described amongst the said Mexicans as Julian Workman, while his real name is William Workman.

Clearly, though, Dryden and Workman thought it better to avoid any mention of the fact that Workman took the name Julian as his baptismal name. It is also interesting that no one thought it necessary to clarify why John Rowland’s surname in the Mexican-era documents was uniformly *Roland*.

For some reason, a new hearing before the federal district court was delayed. Part of it may have been the sudden death of Judge Ogier in May 1861 and it may be, as well, that the onset of the Civil War several weeks earlier also had an influence. In any case, the proceeding took place on 2 October 1862 in the court of Ogier’s successor, Fletcher M. Haight (whose name graces the famed street and neighborhood in San Francisco and whose son later was California’s governor.)

The focus of the hearing was on the Hancock survey and its reflection of the actual area encompassed by the grant. Hancock, then a major with the 4th California Infantry Regiment stationed in the Los Angeles region, testified that the ranch was eleven square leagues and gave the boundaries relative to the surrounding ranchos. He also discussed the boundary disputes with the Coyotes, La Habra and Los Nogales ranchos—all of this under questioning by federal attorney B. C. Whiting.

As to Rowland and Workman’s attorney, Volney E. Howard, who had much experience with land claims cases in northern and southern California and who represented Workman in his claim to the lands of the ex-



This detail of an 1861 map shows surveyed ranchos for the land claims process in the eastern San Gabriel Valley and western Inland Empire, including #366 for La Puente. Note the reference to "Mis Cranoras" within La Puente: this appears to identify the former site of the Mission San Gabriel's adobe granary (the title appears to be a corruption of the Spanish granero, or granary) just north of the Workman residence above Valley Boulevard, the ruins of which were still present in the mid-1870s. Courtesy of the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

Mission San Gabriel (see *The Branding Iron*, Fall 2010, Number 261), he merely repeated the question about the surveyed acreage on the map and was given, naturally, the same eleven square leagues answer.

On 4 October, Haight issued his ruling, decreeing that the Hancock survey acted in conformity with the June 1860 legislation. When Whiting motioned for the filing of exceptions to Haight's decision, he promptly overruled the motion and ordered the survey adjudicated. At that point, Whiting and the federal government had the right to appeal to the Supreme Court, an option that had been foregone in 1856.

Despite the commission rulings, three subsequent federal district court hearings and a lack of a formal appeal to the Supreme Court, the matter was not even then settled. On 22 February 1864, the General Land Office Commissioner, J. M. Edmunds, wrote to U. S. Attorney General Edward Bates about his concerns over the La Puente claim, citing especially his view that the rancho should have only been confirmed for four square leagues, rather than eleven, specifically noting Rowland's January 1842 request

for the amount of land. Edmunds opined that it was worth exploring the possibility of reopening the matter with new proceedings to "right the wrong." On 21 March, Bates replied to Edmunds, but did not appear to give any encouragement to a further pursuit of the variance in square leagues, other than to say that it was up to Edmunds to take the matter to the chancery court, or a court of equity, which could have led to an injunction or decree preventing further action of the matter at hand based on an argument of a committed injustice. This was never done, however.

Four months later, on 16 June, Edmunds sent a letter and a schedule of papers to Secretary of the Interior, John P. Usher. The documents included the original 1842 *diseno* (map) of La Puente, transcripts from the Board of Land Commissioners docket on the claim; the opinion of that board when it confirmed the claim in 1854; the Hancock survey of 1857; California Surveyor General Mandeville's letter of November 1859 calling attention to the size discrepancy; and other material.

At that point, any effort to revive an

appeal of the claim halted and, in fact, a new law was promulgated on 1 July 1864 that superseded the 1860 act and any others deemed inconsistent. The amended act provided a 90-day period for interested parties to file objections to a survey with the surveyor general. This official would then forward the survey, with his opinion, to the General Land Office commissioner, who could order a new report, a hearing, or a new survey.

Usher, however, after looking at what Edmunds transmitted to him, was against the idea of a claim before a court of chancery but stipulated that the papers be filed in the event that they might be required at a future date—and that date never came. In any event, Rowland and Workman were determined to get their patent and took action accordingly.

On 9 March 1865, Rowland sent a letter to Henry W. Halleck, the Chief of Staff for the Union Army. Halleck, part of the invading American forces in California during the Mexican-American War became military secretary of state and a key player in the writing of the 1849 constitution. In his position, Halleck also filed a report with military governor Mason about Spanish and Mexican-era land grants, concluding that they were largely legitimate and grounded solidly on applicable law and practice. Later, he was a member of a prominent San Francisco law firm specializing in land claims cases, in which he made his fortune. In the Civil War, he rose to be General-in-Chief of Union Army forces, based on his superb organizational and administrative skills, but his command in the field was grossly inadequate and Halleck was, in spring 1864, demoted to Chief of Staff as Ulysses S. Grant, his former subordinate, assumed the high command of the Union Army. Not long after receiving Rowland's letter requesting assistance, Halleck transferred to Richmond, Virginia to command the army's Military Division of the James.

His reply of 2 June was brief but pointed. He simply informed Rowland that, "it is not in my power to assist you in getting your patent for the Puente Rancho from the Land Office in Washington. I have been trying for

years to get a patent for land in which I am interested, but without success." Halleck here referred to the Rancho Nicasio in Marin County, a majority share of which he bought in 1850 and the patent for which he and the other three owners finally received in 1870.

Drawing on his personal experience as a successful land claims attorney, Halleck offered some strikingly unalloyed advice to Rowland: "There seems but one way to expedite business in that office—hire an agent & give him plenty of money."

Rowland and Workman did just that. They engaged the services of James C. Zabriskie, a San Francisco attorney, who, in turn, contacted Washington, D. C. lawyer Henry Beard to do the leg work with the General Land Office. On 23 April 1866, Beard wrote Secretary of the Interior James Harlan requesting to examine the records on La Puente held by the General Land Office, as well as to ask for a fifteen day period to prepare an argument to the department in favor of issuing the patent to Rowland and Workman.

Four days later, Beard sent Harlan a longer letter, reiterating his request to examine the GLO docket, expanding on the history of the case and his intent to file an argument. He also showed his knowledge of the contact between Edmunds and Harlan's predecessor, Usher, and pointed out that Rowland and Workman had not been notified of these actions. In reiterating the several steps of confirmation of the claim before the land commission and the courts, Beard observed the further legal action by the government was unnecessary, as earlier decrees were absolute, but requested a hearing before Harlan, if needed.

It is apparent that Beard was granted permission to examine the GLO docket and, on 21 July, he wrote again to Harlan to inform the secretary that he was preparing an argument for Rowland and Workman's patent. This was in the form of a 19-page missive, dated the day prior, titled "In the Matter of the Application of John Roland [sic] and William Workman for a Patent for The Land Claim in Los Angeles County, California, known as 'La Puente'." Published later in

the year by Gibson Brothers of Washington, the document methodically laid out the history of the claim and the pertinent issues involved.

Beard made no mention of Issac S. K. Ogier's first ruling in 1856 on the size of the rancho as being four acres, focusing instead on the early 1857 rehearing in which Ogier ordered that "the confirmation hereby made is made to eleven square leagues and no more, but if the land within said boundaries is less in quantity than eleven square leagues, then the confirmation hereby made is made to such less quantity."

What followed, of course, was Hancock's survey at the end of the year and its submission to the General Land Office on 4 August 1859 satisfied a condition from the original 1851 land claims act that would then lead to the issuance of the patent. Then, however, J. W. Mandeville wrote to the GLO commissioner expressing his view that, because the departmental assembly had voted for approval of the 1845 grant based on four square leagues being the extent of the rancho, the patent was suspended, even though Mandeville acknowledged that the federal district court under Judge Ogier "gave the extent confirmed as eleven square leagues."

Beard then pointed out the finality of Judge Haight's decree, in answer to exceptions filed by the GLO to the Hancock survey, in October 1862 overruling said exceptions and ordering "that the said final survey of the tract of land known as the Rancho de la Puente, and claimed by said Roland and Workman, be and the same is hereby approved and confirmed by the court."

The attorney then noted that:

No appeal having been prosecuted by the United States, from either of these decrees, within the time limited by law, it appears to be an obvious deduction from the facts, that the claimants were, under the act of 3d March, 1851,—and amendatory act of June 14, 1860, entitled to receive a patent for their lands within a reasonable time thereafter. But the patent has not yet been issued, and I have been recently retained by power of attorney from Roland, still an owner of

the land, and by letter from John Reed [Reed was Rowland's son-in-law], who alleges an interest in the title, to demand and receive from the United States the patent for said confirmed private land claim, called La Puente.

Beard did bring attention to the 1864 correspondence between GLO Commissioner Edmunds and federal Attorney General Usher and Edmunds' assertion that the four square leagues delineation appeared in "recent investigations." Yet, there was no questioning of the court record of approving the claim, of any allegations of fraud, of any forged signatures. Rather, Beard continued, "the record evidence in the case showed the claim to be *honest and genuine*."

Dealing with the specific question of addressing any ramifications of the Edmunds/Usher correspondence, apparently considering the possibility, however remote, that a chancery court hearing might be pursued, Beard identified what he offered as unassailable points.

The first was that the 1856 and 1862 court decisions were "final and conclusive." Interestingly, one of the cases cited to buttress this claim was *United States vs. Halleck*, involving the same Henry W. Halleck who gave blunt practical advice to Rowland, which seems to have yielded the retaining of Beard. Beard then noted that, whatever opinions might be uttered by state or federal officials, the decrees by the court supersede any other judgment or determination. As he observed,

Now, if it should be conceded that the allegation is true, it is perfectly plain that the error cannot be remedied. The claimants have fairly obtained their decree and survey as required by law, and there is no tribunal that possesses power to reverse what has been done, or try the case over again, and reverse the existing decision. It is too late to say that the decree is for too much land.

Even then, the fifth section of the 1860 amended act gave a six-month period during which an appeal could be filed, but "no appeal having been taken by either party, the decree has become binding upon both. The

confirmeres cannot be heard on any application to reform the survey, neither can the United States."

The GLO, Beard went on, "cannot now suspend issuing the patent, because the Commissioner thinks the court erred in confirming and surveying too much land. The law gives him no such authority. It gives none such to the Attorney General, or even to the Supreme Court of the United States. . ." In fact, he stated, the 1860 amended law required that the GLO commissioner had the duty "to immediately issue the patent" and, consequently, "the confirmeres now insist that he shall perform that duty without further delay."

With regards to Interior Secretary Usher's order to retain the La Puente claim papers sent to him by Edmunds in the event of any future legal proceeding, Beard offered that "it is not clear that if he had adopted the recommendation of the Land Office, he would have committed a grave error." He also addressed a statement by Attorney General Bates in his March 1864 reply to Edmunds that "the facts of the case disclose a remarkable neglect of the rights of the United States" by the federal district attorneys in Los Angeles who handled the matter or what he termed a "disregard" by the land claims commissioners in their 1854 decision and the judges Ogier in 1856 and Haight in 1862. Namely, if it were so that all these officials were at fault in their decision-making over the claim for La Puente, "let the conduct of those officers be investigated if the Attorney General desires it. That is a matter with which the claimants have no concern."

Indeed, Beard went so far as to express the contention that:

It is strongly intimated that a mistake (!) has been made, by the three several courts, in their three several decisions, at three several times, extending over a period embracing two entire terms of Presidents of the United States, and parts of the terms of two others, and that numberless attorney generals and district attorneys, have neglected the rights of the United States in the premises.

That such a blunder as is ascribed by the General Land Office to these judicial tribunals, and the numerous attorneys who have, in ten years, participated in this case, could have occurred, if not actually impossible, is positively incredible. The blunder alleged is this, that a grant which was for but four leagues in extent, has been confirmed by the court for eleven leagues, by mistake!

Beard's second contention was that there was not only no mistake, but there was no error, in the confirmation and decrees over La Puente regarding its size. Restating the idea that, while the 1842 grant was for four square leagues, the Pico grant of three years later did not specify the size of the property, only its boundaries, the lawyer quoted Thompson's 1854 commission statement that, "no quantity is specified, not is there any reservation of an overplus." Moreover, he recited that body's observation that the 1845 grant intended to cover the "vacant land lying between the Ranchos named as boundaries, and the river San Gabriel."

To Beard, the General Land Office commissioner's inability to distinguish between the two grants belies a supposition. Namely, "to surrender four square leagues and get back but four leagues would involve the unnecessary expense [of securing a new grant] . . . without essential benefit to the parties." Additionally, the attorney branded Mandeville's 1859 letter to the GLO commissioner as "the offspring either of gross carelessness, or of malice to the present claimants, originating probably in some outside party who instigated the Surveyor General to send up that letter, so absurd and untrue," the last part of this statement being again suppositional.

While acknowledging that the Committee on Vacant Lands in its 30 September 1845 report to the departmental assembly specified that the rancho was "in extent four leagues," Beard claimed that this was immaterial, in that "the grant, however, did not contain any limitation of quantity," but he also made no mention of Pico's 3 October statement repeating the four leagues quantity. Rather, the lawyer continued, "the legal

effect. . . was discussed from 1852 to 1856, and always it was in effect held that the grant was the controlling paper, and that the limitation proposed by the Assembly did not curtail the grant." While the Mandeville and the GLO thought that it did, Beard offered the precedent of three federal Supreme Court cases in which the lack of a legislative approval of the entire grant did not change the confirmation to the claimants. In addition, he presented one example in which the GLO, in July 1859, issued a patent for a grant lacking such approval.

With respect to the GLO commissioner's intent to take the matter to a bill in chancery at a district court, Beard cited the case of the Rancho Las Pulgas, in present San Mateo, and the fact that, in 1863, an attempt was made to reverse the approval of the survey and patent for its land claim. The grant specified four square leagues, but the California surveyor general, using the boundaries provided in the description of the tract, instead approved a survey that was twice as large and issued the patent forthwith. Beard ironically noted the fact that, while La Pulgas was approved by the office at double the specified size in the grant, "in this case of La Puente. . . the General Land Office declines to issue the patent because the land included by the survey exceeds four leagues!!" With respect to Las Pulgas, the Secretary of the Interior informed the federal attorney general that there was no reason to pursue any proceedings to set aside the patent, as issued by the GLO, while, with La Puente, the idea was to "*set aside the decree of the court,*" which was a different matter.

Finally, Beard issued a reminder that "the lapse of time, since the recommendation of the Land Office has been before the Department, without renewal, may be regarded as a waiver of the recommendation by that office. It certainly amounts to a negative of it by the Secretary." He observed that a July 1864 law provided that surveys were to be "recognized as final and conclusive where no appeal has been taken." Moreover, a section of that law was quoted by Beard as directing the surveyor general to "follow the decree of confirmation in making surveys of

private land claims finally confirmed." It, then, was obvious that the original 1851 land claims act and the amendatory acts of June 1860 and July 1864 gave the legal grounds for Rowland and Workman "to be clearly established in their right to a patent for the land that has been granted, confirmed, and surveyed to them" and that the two were more than due to receive their patent.

Beard's thorough and detailed argument clearly had the desired effect. On 8 April 1867, he wrote to Rowland through the latter's attorney, Volney E. Howard, that, "I . . . hope to be able to forward your Patent by the next steamer leaving N.Y. Apl. 20th." On 19 April, the patent was drawn up and signed by President Andrew Johnson. After almost fifteen years of commission and court hearings, the expense of surveys, and lengthy delays while bureaucrats and attorneys haggled over the question of the size of the rancho, La Puente was finally and officially recognized as the ranch of Rowland and Workman.

As noted above, the average California land claim was between fifteen and twenty years and the transformations claimants endured personally and professionally, economically and politically, socially and psychologically, were manifold and complex.

While the land claims commission approved two-thirds of the more than 800 claims brought before it with relative efficiency, the processes of appeals before the courts, survey certifications with the state surveyor general (and, after 1860, the courts), and patent issuance by the General Land Office, was excruciatingly slow and costly.

Indeed, if a claimant survived long enough, it still required ample funding and infinite patience to endure the gauntlet of legal and political maneuverings that were embodied in much of the land claims process. While native Californios may have been at a particular disadvantage in terms of understanding a new legal system in a different language, the land claims act was hardly smooth sailing for some Americans and Europeans.

This was the case with John Rowland and William Workman and their claim to

By the time this partition was made, Los Angeles and its environs was entering its first sustained period of growth and development. Migrations from the post-Civil War South and other areas of the country increased significantly. A local railroad was built from the rudimentary harbor at San Pedro and Wilmington (which, however, was improved just afterward) to Los Angeles in 1869, just after the transcontinental railroad was finished. Early oil exploration was underway. New towns emerged in Artesia, Santa Monica, Pomona, San Fernando, Pasadena, among others. Some local residents jumped at the opportunity to pursue new wealth, outside of traditional ranching and farming pursuits.

Among these was Workman, who followed the business advice and direction of his son-in-law, F. P. F. Temple, a prime mover in the emerging business world of the small city. With interests in real estate and construction, oil, mining, railroads, and many other enterprises, the two financed most of their enterprises through banking. A partnership with merchant Isaias W. Hellman in the city's second bank lasted a couple of years before Hellman, concerned about Temple's attitude towards loan policy and other matters, bought out his partners.

Undaunted Temple and Workman struck out on their own with a private bank that, while popular, was so for all the wrong reasons. Unbridled enthusiasm for new potentially profitable projects masked poor administration of bank affairs by its managing cashier and Temple, as bank president, did not exercise proper control of the management of the institution.

When the state's economy floundered in summer 1875, due principally to the collapse of silver mine speculation at Virginia City, Nevada, the bank was the subject of a run. A prolonged suspension, following Temple's election as county treasurer, finally led to a loan from Elias J. "Lucky" Baldwin, who hungrily eyed Temple and Workman's tens of thousands of acres of ranch lands throughout the county. The loan could not stanch the flow of money demanded by depositors and the bank closed permanently

in early 1876. Distraught, Workman took his life that May.

A long period of assignment, revealing shockingly poor management and a long list of "deadbeat" debtors, brought Baldwin's foreclosure in 1879, leaving the Workman and Temple families with little of their former wealth (the two were the wealthiest citizens in the county in the first part of the 1870s). Almost all of Workman's share of La Puente was lost to Baldwin, who kept most of his new holdings intact until his death in 1909.

Rowland, more conservative and focused on his ranching and farming enterprises at La Puente, died in October 1873, leaving virtually all of his nearly 25,000-acre half of the rancho to his widow and children. From the Rowland heirs, came such 1880s boom towns as Puente and Covina, but family members, while selling pieces off periodically, retained large segments of the ranch well into the 20th-century. Today, descendants still own about 100 acres of the ranch, leased to commercial enterprises in the aptly-named City of Industry, and reap the rewards of the patriarch's caution.

A Note on Sources:

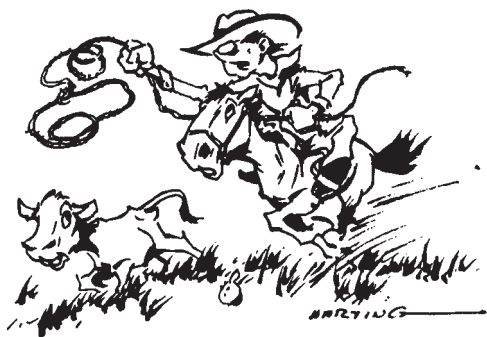
As the official repository for federal documents concerning California land claims, the Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley is the source for most of the material for this article, including: Docket 160, Rancho La Puente, California Private Land Claims Documents, Records of the General Land Office; Abstract of Docket 385, Rancho La Puente, Board of Land Commissioners; Abstract of Docket 127, Rancho La Puente, Southern District Court (federal); Jacob N. Bowman, "Index of the Spanish-Mexican Land Grant Records & Cases of California" (1958); and Henry Beard, *In the Matter of the Application of John Roland [sic] and William Workman for a Patent for the Land Claim in Los Angeles County, California, Known as "La Puente"*, (Washington, D. C.: Gibson Brothers,) 1866

Other material included the 1865 letter from Halleck to Rowland, housed at the Huntington Library, Art Gallery and

Botanical Gardens; a copy of the 1857 boundary agreement for ranchos La Puente and La Habra from the La Puente Valley Historical Society; and notes of John Rowland's papers, including the 1867 letter from Beard to Rowland and notes on the Rancho La Puente land claim, compiled by Thomas Workman

Temple II from Ruth Ann Michaelis and the Workman and Temple Family Homestead Museum.

A copy of the 1867 patent is in Book 1, Miscellaneous Records, Los Angeles County Recorder's Office, Los Angeles County Hall of Records.



THE MONTHLY ROUNDUP

July 2012: Karen R. Jones

Jones, who was this year's Westerners-supported Autry Fellow, gave a presentation titled, "Warhorse and the Winning of the West, 1860-1890." From cavalry chargers and beasts of burden to symbols of masculine heroism and objects of sentimental attachment, the horse played a vital role in the western army. Horses represented organic pieces of military technology that were bred, trained and deployed in the service of westward conquest. Soldiers who relied on their horses became very attached to them and protected them from the elements and the enemy. Logistically, horses created great supply requirements. On a military march, wagons were needed to carry feed, saddles and other equine-related supplies, not to

mention the herding of extra horses should a horse need to be replaced due to injury or death. The western horse also played a critical role in the mythology of West itself, through the figure of mounted, "hunter heroes," such as George Custer, William Cody, and even Theodore Roosevelt. Dr. Jones also told of one of the most famous horses used in the West, Comanche, a member of the 7th Cavalry, taking part in skirmishes, and earning renown as the only "living survivor" of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Comanche died in 1891, having lived for 29 years, and was only the second horse to receive a funeral service with full military honors. Comanche was stuffed, presented at the 1893 Columbian Exposition, and placed on permanent display at the Kansas Natural History Museum.

—Eric Nelson





August 2012: Michael Duchemin



September 2012: Dydia DeLyser

Michael Duchemin is an expert on Gene Autry and has made a study of his life. Michael wrote his doctoral thesis on Gene Autry. Gene Autry is a person and subject that is synonymous with Western Americana, a very fitting topic for Westerners.

Michael delivered a thorough and extremely informative talk entitled “New Deal Cowboy: Gene Autry and Public Diplomacy”. He explained how Gene used his mastery of multi-platform entertainment and extraordinary storytelling in working with the Franklin Roosevelt administration to make policies more attractive to the American public. The career of Gene Autry was explored to exemplify how public diplomacy worked within the American cultural industries and media culture. He showed how Autry’s persona redefined Americanism and the American Way for rural, small town and newly urban fans emerging from the Great Depression.

Gene Autry is the only person to be awarded stars in all five categories on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, for film, television, music, radio, and live performance. He has also received numerous other awards. He was a successful business man as well, who among other operations, owned TV and radio stations, and the Angels baseball team.

Many wonderful things were recounted about Gene Autry. The subject was excellent, the talk, enhanced with visual media was brilliant and everyone came away with a renewed insight into Gene Autry.

—Joe Cavallo

Ghost Towns are a part of the West. We all know about them, we visit them, we read their history. Dydia DeLyser discussing Bodie, California, explained with the animated professionalism of a university professor the historical anatomy of a ghost town, how it became that way and what is the connection to the Western American psyche of today.

The title of her talk was “Bodie, California: Boom Town, Ghost Town, Tourist Town”. Gold had been discovered in Bodie, California in 1859, and by the late 1870s the town boasted a population of as many as 10,000. Bodie is located in the high desert mountains of California’s Eastern Sierra. As with other mining towns, of course, that boom did not last. By the early 1880s a much smaller town remained, one that continued to decline in population and change in character for the next several decades. A little after 1900, Bodie became one of the first places referred to as a “ghost town” and a new group of people began visiting: tourists.

Dydia first sketched a brief history of the town, its boom and bust, and then looked in detail at how tourism transformed and saved Bodie, as well as how tourism in Bodie works today. Dydia began serious research on the ghost town as a graduate student in 1994, engaging in many years of ethnographic and archival research. Her study has revealed how the American understanding of ghost towns was formed in part by town-dwellers themselves, as they romanticized and dramatized their own pasts, and how those understandings were later linked to film and fictional accounts of the American mythic West.

Dydia is an associate professor of Geography at Louisiana State University. At the Bodie, California State Historic Park she served for ten years (1988-1997) as a seasonal maintenance worker and in the early 1990s she undertook doctoral research there, and

wrote her PhD dissertation as well as several articles about Bodie. Her talk was very well done and gave a heretofore unknown view of ghost towns.

—Joe Cavallo

Annual “Hat Night”

Our annual “Hat Night” took place at the September Roundup and featured a wide array of headgear from the silly to the sublime (even with the same chapeau.) Here is a sampling of the sartorial splendor in the realm of the haberdashery. Photos by Steve Crise.



Terry Terrell takes the grand prize in the category of “Sublimely Silly.”



Margie Green shows off a smooth sophistication with her headwear.



Don Green counters his wife’s savoir faire with the eminently practical.



Abe Hoffman offers a salute and a smile with his notable offering of adornment.



Don Franklin expresses his pride in his association with the “Silver Eagles.”



And, finally, Pete Fries models a classic Western cowboy hat as a surprise choice!





November 2012: Phil Brigandi

Phil Brigandi, Westerner member, historian, author, writer, researcher, history tour guide, editor, lecturer extraordinaire, and all round Western expert gave an edge-of-your-seat description of the history of the famous mining town publication, *The Death Valley Chuck-Walla*. The title of his talk was "The Death Valley Chuck-Walla, Startling the Uninitiated". With gripping facts, Phil explained, that during the Death Valley mining boom in the early 20th century, stock promotion was key, as investors from the East poured their money into the ground. To attract these investors, mine promoters worked hard to build up the image of the dark and foreboding Valley of Death through newspapers and magazines. *The Death Valley Chuck-Walla*, published at the ill-fated copper camp of Greenwater in 1907, is one of the best examples of these lurid mining camp magazines. Phil traced the rise and fall of the Chuck-Walla, and shared stories from Greenwater's frantic boom. Phil began his Death Valley research in the 1980s, and became friends with the family of Chuck-Walla co-publisher C.E. Kunze.

As a special momento of the evening, Phil distributed to those attending, a booklet he had prepared and Westerners published. It is a special, limited edition, Westerners Keepsake giving a brief history of the Death Valley Chuck-Walla and a selection of some of its best articles.

—Joe Cavallo



December 2012: Abe Hoffman

Abe Hoffman is an educator, editor, professor, Western film expert, speaker, and showman. He delivered an interesting talk combining Western films and Western history. The title of the talk was: "Actor, Outlaw, Author, Lawmen: Encounters between William S. Hart, Al Jennings, James Franklin, 'Bud' Ledbetter and Bill Tilghman." Using a backdrop of related silent movies playing during the dinner hour, including "Lady of the Dugout" (1918) and "Passing of the Oklahoma Outlaw" (1915), Abe explained that William S. Hart, a stage actor before he made films, was in Muskogee, Indian Territory [Oklahoma] to present a play. While riding out into the countryside, he encountered Al Jennings and his gang, who had recently robbed a train. Hart gave the outlaws passes to see his play, which they did, knowing the Marshal "Bud" Ledbetter was in the audience. While Hart went on to film fame, Jennings was captured, went to prison and, after his release, had his own movie career. For one of these, "Lady of the Dugout," he returned Hart's favor and sent a pass. Moreover, Tilghman and Ledbetter detested a movie Jennings had made about his life and made their own. The interchange between these men made for a fascinating and little-known episode in the early history of Western films. Dr. Hoffman always makes learning about history enjoyable and does so on several levels, using visuals with true historical people and facts interwoven into a meaningful capturing of our Western heritage.

—Joe Cavallo



The spellbinding salesmanship of "Pop Haydn" as he stumped for his remarkably catholic medicinal marvel, "Pop Haydn's Amazing Miracle Oil," may not have registered stellar sales, but it was awfully entertaining.

Rendezvous 2012

Our fall Rendezvous was held on Saturday, 13 October in the surreal surroundings of the Gilmore Adobe, a surprisingly placid island of history in the tumult and frenzy of the Farmers Market and The Grove on Los Angeles' West Side. With beautiful and lush landscaping providing both an attractive ambiance and substantial screening from the ringing registers of the mercantile mania outside, the Adobe grounds were a spectacular setting for our event.

Tours of the house, led by Westerner Brett Arena and a Gilmore colleague, provided an interesting background on the original home of the Rancho La Brea, from its Mexican-era construction by rancho grantee Antonio José Rocha, to the ownership of the ranch by Henry Hancock and his son, Allan, and then the tenure of Arthur Gilmore and his son Earl. Such aspects as the La Brea tar pits, Farmers Market, Gilmore Field and Gilmore Stadium were discussed during the tour, as well as the changes to the house, including a major renovation by Earl Gilmore in the 1920s. Designated a city historic landmark, the building is still owned by the Gilmore family and is used as an office for their properties, including Farmers Market.

Entertainment was mainly provided by "Pop Haydn," a magician and inventor of his

"Pop Haydn's Amazing Miracle Oil," which he fervently, if somewhat ineffectually, pitched to attendees during his main presentation to the group just before a wonderful BBQ catered dinner, served buffet style. As per usual, a fixed-price book sale, organized once again by Sheriff Eric Nelson, yielded impressive results, as did the auction of rare and fine books, as well as some art work and memorabilia with auctioneer Jerry Selmer conducting the proceedings with his usual sense of order and drama. Corral members Richard Doyle and Paul Spitzzeri were also feted as Honored Guests of the day.

The event was planned under the auspices of Deputy Sheriff Joe Cavallo, who had plenty of help from many members, including Terry Terrell and Peggy Hartwell, who served admirable as mixologists at the bar; Paul Rippens, who once again had a fine selection of Western music playing during much of the day; Eric Nelson with the book sale and other logistics; Jerry Selmer and his talents at the auction; auction assistants Tim Heflin and Paul McClure, and many others who pitched in with set-up and clean-up.

The 2012 Rendezvous was truly an event to remember at a memorable and impressive venue.



There couldn't have been a better day and setting for tripping the light fantastic and Terry Terrell and Peggy Hartwell took a turn on the lush lawn of the Gilmore Adobe.



Speaking of enthusiasm, book sale and auction helpers Tim Heflin and Paul McClure and the Corral's treasurer par excellence, Ted Dalton, provided invaluable assistance to Sheriff Nelson.



Paul McClure "models" one of the impressive books offered during the auction.



Auctioneer Jerry Selmer describes some of the finer features of a drawing offered at the auction.



Alice Allen enthusiastically bids in the auction, but DeeDee Ruhlow seems mildly concerned about Alice's bidding being "upside down."



David Kimes enthusiastically raises aloft his bid card in pursuit of his the object of his affections during the auction

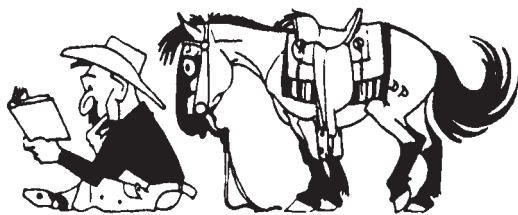


Willa McClure, wife of Corral member Paul McClure, and Corral stalwart David Gillies make their way through the chow line.



Passings: William T. (Bill) Davis

Bill Davis, a long-time member of the corral, passed away at age 81 in northern Arizona in a car accident on 30 July 2012. A native of Hobbs, New Mexico, Bill was a career Marine who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars and was the recipient of a Purple Heart and a Silver Star. After leaving the Marines, he earned B.A. and M. A. degrees in Asian history and Instructional Media, respectively, at Cal State Long Beach and had a long and distinguished career in education, culminating with being librarian at Don Antonio Lugo High School in Chino. Bill loved the study of history, sailing, flying his plane, and traveling with his wife Jeanette, also a member of the Los Angeles Corral. In addition to being a Westerner, he was also a longtime docent with the Historical Society of the Pomona Valley. On 12 October 2012, quite a few corral members attended a celebration of life service for Bill at Todd Memorial Chapel and Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona and paid their respects to and fondly remembered our fellow Westerner.



DOWN THE WESTERN BOOK TRAIL ...

WEST FROM SALT LAKE: *Diaries from the Central Overland Trail*, edited by Jesse G. Petersen. Norman: Arthur H. Clark Company, 2012. 328 pp. Maps, Bibliography, Index. Hardbound, \$34.95.

In late September 2001 I took a trip through the Great Basin in central Nevada to Salt Lake City. I followed U.S. 50, "the loneliest road in America." This route followed the Pony Express Trail. One of the towns I was interested in visiting was Austin. At one time it had been the largest community in Nevada. The town today is almost a ghost town with most structures still in existence. Every business on Main Street has a for-sale sign. One could imagine those signs stating, "last one out of town shut off the lights." My interest in this town centered on the sister of my great-grandfather Hodge who lived and died there. I located her grave as well as her twelve-year-old daughter—the first child born in Austin.

One of the two primary routes for travelers destined for California was called the Southern route that followed the Mormon corridor of small communities from Salt Lake City to Cedar City, then on to Las Vegas and San Bernardino. This route was preferred by companies that had started out late and wanting to avoid the fate of the Donner party in the Sierra. It was on this trail on September 11, 1857, the West's most tragic episode occurred. A group of Mormons slaughtered 120 men, women, and children of the Fancher train in what is referred to as the Mountain Meadows Massacre. The most used route to California was the Salt Lake cutoff or California Trail that headed

north into southern Idaho before turning south into the Great Basin, following the Humboldt River and the Hastings Cutoff to Genoa—the first community in Nevada settled by the Mormons.

In 1857 General Albert Sidney Johnston led a U.S. Army contingent to the Utah territory to subdue a perceived Mormon rebellion. Travelers heading to California desired to shorten the distance. A contingent of his soldiers explored an alternative route from Camp Floyd to the town of Fairfield, Utah, where two of my great-great-grandfathers had resided. It would cut off 400 miles from the existing route. This new trail would be known as the Central Overland Trail. Jesse Petersen's book details journals of pioneers who elected this option and their deviations from it in an attempt to shorten distance, time, and potential hazards. Travel was predicated on the availability of water more than perceived hostilities from Indians.

I commend the editor on his inclusion of nine maps as a group preceding the first chapter in lieu of distributing them throughout the text. It permits the reader to relate to maps of adjacent sections and the alternatives the travelers might have selected. Having already transverse these locations, I could appreciate the hardships they were exposed to. This is not a book about disaffected Mormons trying to extricate themselves from the Kingdom. It consists of twenty-eight diaries, nine of them kept by women. I recommend this book on traveling conditions of some 150 years ago. Then follow it up by taking the trip yourself through this inhospitable arid desert to have a better appreciation of what they endured.

—Lynn G. Hodge

HELEN J. STEWART: *First Lady of Las Vegas*, by Sally Zanjani and Carrie Townley Porter. Las Vegas, Stephens Press, 2011. 211 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Bibliography, Index. Hardbound \$22.95

This well-researched biography chronicles the life of Helen J. Stewart (nee Wiser) (April 16, 1854-March 6, 1926) from early childhood near Springfield, Illinois through her life on the Las Vegas Ranch in southern

Nevada. In 1903, she became the first postmaster of Las Vegas (then called, Los Vegas) and in 1916 was the first woman elected to the Clark County School District's Board of Trustees. At one time she was the largest land owner in Lincoln County, Nevada.

Helen's marriage at age 19 in 1873, to Archibald Stewart, born in Dublin, Ireland, of Scottish decent, marked the beginning of her journey to becoming the "First Lady of Las Vegas." Archibald and Helen took over the Las Vegas Ranch as a temporary move, when the owner, Octavius Gass, defaulted on his payments to Archibald from whom he had borrowed \$5,000 in gold. The course of her life was further changed when her husband was murdered on July 13, 1884, leaving Helen a widow with four small children and pregnant with her fifth child.

This biography details her life as a business woman, landowner and parent set against the backdrop of history: the Mormon Trail, the coming of the railroad to the area, and the growth of what became the town of Las Vegas. Thanks in part to the publication of this book, it is easy for the prospective reader to do a Google search and find more detailed and informative reviews of this book. To stop at that point would deprive potential readers of an engaging narrative of the merging of faith, character and circumstance in the American West. The authors' extensive research into public records, the personal papers of Stewart, newspaper accounts, and interviews combined with their writing skills bring to life a woman whose death certificate recorded her occupation as "historian." Since *Westerner Corrals* are unable to present her as a guest speaker, we are privileged to have this excellent biography available to tell the story of why Helen J. Stewart is remembered as the "First Lady of Las Vegas."

—Alice Allen

CHILD OF THE FIGHTING TENTH: *On The Frontier With The Buffalo Soldiers*, by Forrestine Cooper Hooker. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011. 272 pp. Illustrations, Further Reading, Index. Paper, \$19.95.

As the title announces, this is a memoir of Forrestine Cooper Hooker, from birth through the first 19 years of her life, as the family follows her father's career with the 10th U.S. Cavalry throughout the Southwest. Forrestine had her first story published in 1904, only because her daughter submitted it to a publisher without her knowledge.

Thereafter she continued to write but never finished her own story. Her memoir was only partially completed at the time of her death in 1932. The book's editor, Steve Wilson, tells us that had her memoir been published at that time, it would have been one of the very first accounts written of the Buffalo Soldiers, a black cavalry in regiments formed after the Civil War and commanded by white officers. And today, her story remains one of only a few accounts of a girl who grew up in the frontier army and the only one of growing up in her father's regiment, the 10th U.S. Cavalry.

Forrestine, known as "Birdie", grew up surrounded by soldiers, some of whom formed an informal "Honor Guard": protected her, carried her, guided her first steps, heard her first words, were her "playmates" and became lifelong friends. Being the daughter of an officer, Birdie led, if not a luxurious life, a privileged one for the time and place. There was an excursion back to Philadelphia for education. She had her own horse and pet dogs. She acquired a piano that traveled throughout the Southwest with her. Officers and their families had accommodations according to rank, all the same size regardless of family size; and were expected to house and entertain other officers and families passing through or transitioning between posts. Housing at their level usually consisted of two, rarely three, rooms, some with a lean-to kitchen and others with an outside tent for a kitchen. Each family had a cook and a manservant known as a "striker" who was an enlisted soldier hired to work during his off-duty hours.

The book spans the years spent at Fort Sill, Forts Concho and Davis and Grant, Camp Bonita and lastly, Fort Apache; all during the Indian campaigns; and ultimately, the capture of the remaining Apaches.

Although she had a brother and sister, three and four years younger than she, most of the revelations concern only Forrestine, her parents, and the doting soldiers. Her memories of adventures and experiences are both humorous and touching; while her details of "her" regiment's exploits pay tribute to the valor of the Buffalo Soldiers. Her father, Captain Charles Cooper, has his own page in history.

Although being alone and unarmed, Captain Cooper captured Chief Mangus, the last Apache chief.

The book is a very interesting overview of day-to-day life and experiences on the frontier, seen through the eyes of a young girl; some very humorous "adventures" and some bone-chilling events. It brings into sharp focus the stalwart but refined women and their children who follow their men in army life, never quite settled before moving on to the next post; never quite safe from frontier dangers, but always ready for each new day.

So the next time you watch an old movie and the cavalry arrives with banners, flags, buglers, sharp uniforms and spirited horses, stop to think about the long caravan of buggies and wagons carrying their families and all their possessions and supplies.

There is a chronology at the end of the book; a list of places to visit, and an index.

—Dee Dee Ruhlow

CAPTAIN JOHN R. HUGHES: *Lone Star Ranger*, by Chuck Parsons. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2011. 399 pp. Illustrations, Notes, Selected Bibliography, Index. Hardbound, \$29.95.

At the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas, hangs a bronze plaque commemorating the service and sacrifices of thirty Texas Rangers who gave their lives in the line of duty. One of these rangers was John Reynolds Hughes.

John Hughes was born February 11, 1855 in Illinois. His family moved to Kansas. At the age of fourteen he left home and made his way into Oklahoma Indian territory. He lived among the Choctaw and Osage Indians and later with the Comanche in the Fort Sill

area (near Lawton, Oklahoma). There he worked as a trader and later as a trail driver. In 1870 Hughes's right arm was partially disabled from a fight but he compensated by using his left hand and quickly learned to shoot as a southpaw.

Hughes and his brother Emery moved to central Texas and bought a farm near Liberty Hill (thirty-three miles northwest of Austin) where he raised horses. In 1886 several horses were stolen from his and neighboring ranches and Hughes trailed the men and herd for several months, killing some of the thieves and capturing the rest. He returned the stolen horses to their owners, thus gaining the attention of outlaws and horse owners alike, but also the Texas Rangers.

In July 1887, Hughes helped Texas Ranger Ira Aten track down and kill escaped murderer Judd Roberts. The very next month John Hughes was persuaded to join the Texas Rangers. He rose to the rank of sergeant in Company D by 1893, and when their captain, Frank Jones, was killed in June of that year, Hughes was promoted to fill that position. Most of Hughes's career was served along the southwest Texas border. During the 28 years he was a ranger, Hughes dealt with a wide variety of cases, including thefts at a silver mine, cattle rustlers, horse thieves, and murders. He was known as "the border boss" and during his entire Ranger

service he never lost a prisoner, never lost a fight, never was wounded in action, and in so doing, he earned the respect of his fellow Rangers, as well as all of the honest citizens of Texas. He loved the service and one of the axioms he used while enlisting his men was, "Nerve without judgment is dangerous, and has no place in the Ranger Service."

In 1901 the seven Frontier Battalions, A through G, were abolished, and the Texas State Rangers were created; Hughes was selected as a captain of one of the four new companies. He served until his retirement in 1915. John remained a bachelor all his life and spent his retirement years prospecting and traveling by automobile. He was also involved in the banking industry in Austin, but he continued to live in El Paso. He moved to Austin to live with a niece. It is sad that after surviving western frontier times and two world wars, he committed suicide on June 3, 1947, at the age of 92. He was buried in the State Cemetery in Austin, Texas.

Author Chuck Parsons presents lively stories of the early Texas police force. Parsons has written extensively on the Texas Rangers and is editor of the Wild West History Association. As a former Texan, this reviewer highly recommends this well researched and written biography.

—Ken Pauley

