

The monthly newsletter is a service to the community and our members. We welcome requests to research specific topics from the public and accept articles on local history. Please note that the Society reserves the right to accept or decline any article or material at its discretion. The Society is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any submitted material so please keep a copy for your records. Please include a note authorizing Anderson Historical Society to publish the material. We need two things from all members or those interested in local history: please be sure the Society has an updated email address and please spread the word to friends and neighbors about the Newsletter. Please contact us at:_____.

Notes from the past:

Ono Farmer is Fined, Redding Searchlight July 14, 1920: "Rollie Raines, farmer of Ono, was arrested in this city late Monday evening for parking his automobile in front of a fire hydrant at the corner of Tehama and Market Streets. Tuesday Raines pleaded guilty and was fined \$5 by Judge Walter E. Herzinger. The arrest was made by City Marshall John W. Reives." (Note: Rollie is Rollin Raines born about 1862 who was half Wintu and died in 1935. Judge Herzinger was the Justice of the Peace for Redding. John Reives was elected City Marshall in 1920 and was killed while in office in 1921. Thank goodness for modern parking tickets.)

A Narrow Escape – Shasta Courier April 9, 1864: On Wednesday last, while Henry Bordman of Texas Springs was accompanying a party of friends to the Sacramento River, who were on their way to the northern mines, he became spirited jolly and fell from a loaded wagon weighing some 9,000. He fell upon his face and two wheels of the wagon passed over his shoulders close to the neck, and also over his right wrist. His comrades procured medical aid and took the unfortunate man to Mullen's ranch, where, we learn, he is fast recovering – a badly contused face, a broken nose and a slight fracture in one of the bones of the wrist being the principal injuries. Hank, who is a very solid, well-built, muscular man, seems quite surprised to know that he has been injured by a wagon running over him. He says he stood the first wheel well enough: then his luck turned, for just as the last wheel poised squarely on his back, and his face was well inserted in the hard gravelly road, the wagon stopped about half a minute, and he could not halloa to the boys and tell them to start the wagon. (Note: since Texas Springs and the Mullen ranch are only about a mile apart it seems Hank was "spirited jolly" before he got into the wagon.)

The June 2017 edition contains three articles: Humboldt & Eastern Railroad, Confusion Over the J. F. Bedford Store, and a research question on Major Seymour Beach Conger.

Humboldt & Eastern Railroad
Ron Jolliff

The discovery of coal from Cox Bar through Hyampon and South Fork Mountain in Trinity County and on into Beegum Creek in Shasta County in the 1880s

along with the presence of millions of feet of mature timber on federal land sparked an interest in completing a railroad from Eureka to the Central Valley. At the time Red Bluff was still the head of river transportation to Sacramento and San Francisco so in 1890 there were multiple routes for the railroad to consider. One was to through Hayfork to Beegum Creek to and on to Red Bluff or Cottonwood. In 1893 W. P. McKean of Redding proposed an electric railroad between Redding and Weaverville via the Tower House Route but no work was accomplished. The project did lure a British Capitalist, Lord Thurlow (1), to form the Shasta, Trinity & Humboldt Company and spur interest from other capitalists.

Lord Thurlow, like other developers, did not disclose the selected route as various syndicates, banks, and individuals were poised to buy land and mineral patents thus increasing the cost to the railroad. Lord Thurlow began raising capital and started multiple surveys but the whole project came to an end when one of Thurlow's promoters, George Proctor, stole the company funds.

Lord Thurlow sought additional capital from financiers in the East and England. The result was a railroad promoted by A. Cleaver, an electrical engineer, who promoted using the wagon road from Redding to French Gulch to Lewiston and ending in Weaverville. F. L. Evans promoted a railroad from Eureka to Redding then on to Idaho and Casper, Wyoming. Evans was contacted by W. R. Beale of the Cleveland Mine in the Bully Choop Mining District who proposed shipping quartz ore to smelters north of Redding to use as flux in the reduction of copper. The new proposed route was from the Tower House to Indian Creek. The Evans franchise was taken over by the Northern California Development Company with Warren Jones (2) as President, while F. L. Evans continued as promoter. All in all little was done other than plan due to a lack of capital. That changed in 1909 when fifteen wealthy capitalists from Humboldt formed a committee headed by William S. Clark, President of the Humboldt Gas and Electric Company. The new Humboldt & Eastern Railroad proposed two routes: one to Hayfork then to Harrison Gulch, Beegum and Red Bluff and the other through the Hay Fork Valley to Buckhorn Pass to Whiskeytown then Redding.

The Southern Pacific Railroad sent a survey crew to Harrison Gulch in 1910 to forestall the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad. At the same time all the plans now faced the Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Forest Service. Seventy-five miles of either railroad would have to pass through the Trinity National Forest and freight charges from lumber sales would be the key to making either railroad profitable. Many local residents were supporting the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad to foster competition with the Southern Pacific and thereby reduce shipping charges. In July 1910 the Forest Service in Washington, D.C. agreed to sell one billion feet of ripe timber in the Trinity National Forest under the condition that the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad or the successful bidder completed the rail line from Eureka as far as Wildwood within five years. The lumber price was to be fixed at \$1.50 per 1000 feet for the first five years and \$2.00 per 1000 feet for the next five years. In July 1910 the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad sent a survey crew to Hayfork to begin the permanent survey. The reason for the start at Hayfork rather than Redding or Eureka was to gain possession of the route over Goods Mountain Pass, on the Trinity-Shasta Divide.

The Secretary of Agriculture threw a monkey wrench into the project by announcing that his own study showed that the Trinity and Klamath Rivers could with reasonable improvements be used to transport timber to the coast. The report stated that the construction of the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad was not necessary. Although the report was damaging to the recruitment of capital, it was the follow-up reply to the initial offer that soured the project. The government changed the offer to one half a billion feet of timber to be cut in ten years with an initial cost of \$2.00 per 1000 feet until January 1914, then to increase by not more than fifty cents per 1000 feet each year thereafter. The Humboldt and Eastern Railroad felt the profit from the new offer was not sufficient to offset the proposed construction costs of seven million dollars.

In response to the rejection of the offer the Department of Agriculture sent an officer to Trinity County to do a further investigation. The report was generally negative for the 568,000 acres the railroad wished to harvest but it did show certain portions of commercial timber were inaccessible without the railroad. It also found that the railroad would be a commercial benefit to the communities along the route.

In response to the report the Department of Agriculture offered a concession of 219,000 acres under a ten-year contract at \$1.50 per 1000 feet for five years and \$2.00 per 1000 feet for the second five years. The Humboldt & Eastern Railroad if it was the successful bidder would have to actually build the standard gauge railroad and reach Wildwood within the first five years. The Department of Agriculture indicated that they would be willing to open up other sections at a later date. The Humboldt and Eastern Railroad committee then asked the Department of Agriculture to sell at public auction to the highest bidder 3 billion feet of mature lumber from its eleven billion feet of local forest reserves with the bidding to start at \$1.50 per 1000 feet and with the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad to put up a bond that the railroad from Eureka to the Sacramento Valley would be completed. The Department of Agriculture again countered to put up 1.4 billion feet of timber in the Trinity Forest reserve but eliminated almost all the forest within Humboldt County.

In February 1911 the government announced the auction for the lumber in Trinity National Forest with the conditions that the railroad reach Wildwood on or before April 1, 1916 and only oil burning or electric locomotives could be utilized within the Trinity National Forest. There was to be a penalty on failing to reach Wildwood that all timber cut prior to April 1, 1916 would rise to \$2.00 per 1000 feet.

It was thought that the Southern Pacific would drop out and that the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad would be the only railroad bidder. When the bids were to be opened on April 1, 1910 in San Francisco none were submitted. The Humboldt & Eastern Railroad did not bid stating the amount of timber was insufficient to justify the construction costs. The railroad stated that three million feet of lumber was required to assure economic stability. In May 1911 the Department of Agriculture notified the Humboldt & Eastern Railroad that their request was denied thereby causing the abandonment of the project. Local papers tended to blame the Department of Agriculture for the failure but there were those who were happy not to create another monopoly. No matter which side was right,

May 1911 marked the end of the possibility of a railroad serving southwest Shasta County.

It is interesting to consider how our area would have looked with a railroad down Beegum Creek to Red Bluff or a railroad across the Bully Choop Mining District to Redding. Both would have provided ready access to Eureka and the coast and been a boon for tourism. It still is a dream of some as in 2011 there was again a movement in Eureka to build an eastern railroad. The feasibility study stated the "east-west route was not a new idea, but one that actually had its origins in the late 1880s. The Humboldt & Eastern Railroad was in the process of acquiring financing and obtained easements to build a railroad from Humboldt Bay to the Sacramento Valley when the 1906 earthquake and fire made the competing north-south rail line necessary to supply materials to rebuild the City. Within a few years the eastern route was shelved, but not before the route was scouted and mapped." In 2012 the Redding Searchlight was excited about the idea of an east-west rail line to open the extreme Northern California to Chinese markets. It is now 2017 and the railroad turmoil is quieted again so May 1911 seems to be the high water point for our east-west railroad dreams.

(1) Lord Thurlow was John Thomas Hovel-Thurlow-Cumming-Bruce, 5th Baron Thurlow. The 1st Baron Thurlow was the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain for fourteen years during the reign of George III and strongly opposed American Independence. The 5th Baron Thurlow was born in 1838 and died in 1916. He entered the diplomatic service in 1858. In 1859 he was Attache at Paris then a member of the mission to China in 1860-1861. He was next attached to the Viceroy of India from 1862-1864 and in 1864 was Attache in Vienna. From 1865 to 1866 he was Attache to Washington, D.C. From 1866 to 1870 he was 2nd Secretary at the Hague and afterward involved on and off in government (Privy Chancellor and Paymaster General in 1886). He was in California in the 1890s trying to form stock companies but the theft of funds by George Proctor eventually landed him in bankruptcy court with stock liabilities of \$2,100,000.

(2) Warren Jones was born in Ohio and moved to San Francisco in 1861 where he initially worked as a clerk. At age twenty-eight he moved to Eureka and opened a series of stores. Until his retirement in 1910 he promoted the construction of railroads and roads to connect Eureka to the south and east.

Confusion Over the J. F. Bedford Store

The Bedford & Wright store has long been held to be the first store in the new town of Anderson but how long has it been there? In a 1944 article titled "Dunlap buys Bedford Store" it cites that the J. F. Bedford store in Anderson dates from 1875 and before that date was located in Texas Springs. The 1946 obituary of Homer Bedford states that the J. F. Bedford store was in Centerville before moving to Anderson. The articles raised three questions: 1) was there a store at Centerville, 2) when was the store relocated to Anderson, and 3) what was the relationship of Bedford and Wright?

The location of the store was fairly straight-forward, at first. The History of Shasta County by Philip Sutter, the 1871 Pacific Coast Directory, various voter registrations and other sources had the Bedford & Wright Store location as Texas Springs initially. The confusion may stem from the time of the second article. In 1946 when Homer Bedford passed away the town of Texas Springs was long abandoned and the closest geographical reference was Centerville (Middletown had also been abandoned). The author wrote, "Bedford was born in Texas Springs, former mining camp near Centerville," and later describes the store at Centerville. Tax records, the U.S. Census, and histories have the Bedford and Wright Store in Texas Springs before moving to Anderson.

In the 1855 tax roll, J.L. Wright has two entries: 1) notes and cash valued at \$1,500 in personal property and \$1,500 in real estate, and 2) the J. L. Wright & Company which list the French Gulch Hotel and money and stock valued at \$2,540 and real property valued at \$4,520. J. M Bedford in the 1855 tax roll is listed in Middletown with personal property of \$200 and real property of \$200. In the 1860-1861 tax roll, J.I. (L.) Wright is listed in Texas Springs with "money" and W. L. Wright is listed as owning 160 acres in Texas Springs valued at \$300. John J. Bedford is listed in Texas Springs with 2 oxen and a wagon. In the 1861-1862 tax roll Bedford & Company is listed in Oregon Gulch with money, horse, stock cattle and hogs. W. L. Wright is listed as Texas Springs with a house and garden valued at \$400 and William Wright is listed as French Gulch with oxen and cattle. It seems the early years were not as settled as previously believed. J. L. Wright may have been the driving force in the early Bedford -Wright partnership. The 1871 Pacific Coast Directory lists the Texas Springs general merchandise store as Wright & Bedford rather than the way it is usually listed (Bedford & Wright). The new data raises questions about what type of operation was conducted in French Gulch, Middletown and Oregon Gulch by the two families but it seems clear that the first mercantile store was at Texas Springs.

As to the second question of when the store moved to Anderson there seems to be two answers. Most histories list the store opening in 1872. Philip Sutter in the History of Shasta County states John F. Bedford and Jerry (Jeremiah) Wright bought land from E. Nicolas in 1872 and moved the store that had been at Texas Springs. He also states the Bedford & Wright store was built on one acre along with a blacksmith shop for a Mr. Brown who later sold it to D.N. Parkson. He adds that Jerry Wright built the first house in Anderson.

Edward Peterson in his book Anderson 1872-1972 A Centennial History wrote: two enterprising businessmen from the Shasta County gold mining town of Texas Springs were the first to set up a mercantile business in Anderson. Because Haggin and Frisbie were not ready to sell lots as soon as they desired, these two bought three-fourths of an acre from Elmas Nicholas and started the Bedford & Wright store (present Shop-Rite Market on North Street). Haggin started selling lots in October 1874 so Peterson seems to be indicating the store was opened in 1872.

The 1870 U.S. Census only adds confusion as J.M. Bedford, J.F. Bedford, John McCarley and J. P. Wright are all listed at American Ranch Post Office. In 1870 there was still a Horsetown Post Office and Bell's Bridge Post Office that would have been more suited to include a resident of Texas Springs. The reality may be that the land

was purchased in 1870 and the store was being built and stocked until it opened in 1872 when the only buildings in the future town of Anderson was a C&O Railroad depot, the Bedford & Wright store and a blacksmith shop. A courier article dated June 13, 1874, supports the theory that Jeremiah Wright built the first house in 1873. The Pacific Coast Business Directory supports the theory that the Wright & Bedford store was still in Texas Springs in 1871.

Based on what has been found my theory is that the Bedford and Wright as businessmen were aware of the approximate route the railroad would take from Red Bluff and purchased the land in 1870. No accounts refer to a structure on the new land so it probably took some time to build and stock a store. The store probably opened in 1872 when the railroad would have made it a viable concern. The store in Texas Springs could have stayed open during this transition period. The 1875 date is definitely out as a June 13, 1874 advertisement for Bedford & Wright in Anderson states, "dealing in groceries, dry goods, boots and shoes, sole agent for: Buckeye Mower and Reaper, Haines Header, Burdick's Hay Cutters, Taylor Wheel Horse, Chuttler Wagons." To fully answer the question will require a trip to the Recorder's Office to check the transaction with Elmas Nicholas and the sale of the Bedford and Wright properties in Texas Springs.

The third question is answered through an 1857 marriage when Uel Lambkin Wright's daughter Ella Virginia married James Madison Bedford's son John Franklin Bedford. By marriage the two families were also related to another merchant family, the McCarley's of McCarley and Smith.

In the end the moral of this story is don't trust everything that is in print. Just because it is in print doesn't make it accurate history. Check and cross-check.

Major S. B. Conger

Question: Major S. B. Conger was listed in The Shasta Courier on October 29, 1864 as being in the 3rd Virginia Cavalry and dying near Moorefield, Virginia. Is he related to W.K. Conger of Piety Hill who was an ardent Union supporter? Was he in the Confederate Army?

Answer: The quick response is yes to the first question and no to the second. S. B. Conger is Seymour Beach Conger who was the younger brother of Williston Kingsbury Conger of Piety Hill. He was not in the Confederate Army as his unit was actually the 3rd West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry Regiment (it was for a short time called the 3rd Virginia Cavalry). The other 3rd Virginia Cavalry was a noted Confederate regiment that served in fourteen major campaigns including Gettysburg. The article points out the problems of taking old newspaper articles as accurate: Major S. B. Conger was not known to be associated with Shasta County, the military unit is incorrect as is the state where Moorefield is located. Many of the old articles need to be verified for accuracy. The errors in this article are understandable: W. K. Conger probably provided the newspaper notification of his brother's death. Also in early 1861 there was no West Virginia. After Virginia

separated from the Union the northwestern part of the state voted to separate from the Confederacy in late 1861. West Virginia did not become a separate state until June 1863.

We did find some history on Seymour Beach Conger. He was born on September 25, 1825 in Plymouth, Ohio and was the son of Enoch Conger (1792-1872) and Ester West (1796-1882). In 1846 he married Mary Abigail Baker in Richland, Ohio. He seems to have resided in Ohio until the Civil War. In December 1861 he helped recruit Company C of the 3rd West Virginia Cavalry in response to President Lincoln's call for volunteers. Recruiting was accomplished in both West Virginia and Ohio. S. B. Conger appears to have been elected 1st Lieutenant of Company C where his brother Everton was the company commander. Seymour was later captain of Company A and finally commanded both Company A & C. In February 1862 Companies A & C were attached to General John C. Fremont's command in the Shenandoah. In March the two companies were attached to the Railroad District of West Virginia to protect vital transport lines from skirmishes with General "Stonewall" Jackson's retreating Confederates. In June 1862 the two companies were assigned to the Army of Virginia providing scouts in northern Virginia.

When the Army of the Potomac was reorganized in January 1863, Companies A & C were detached to General Sigel's Reserve Division. In June 1863 Companies A & C, still under the command Captain Conger, were assigned to General Buford's First Cavalry Division where they saw heavy action at Brandy Station, Beverly Ford, Stevensburg and Upperville. The unit was then ordered north through Maryland and arrived at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on June 30, 1863 with only 59 men remaining. The unit held off infantry advances until relieved by units of the 1st Corps. When the newly arrived Union 11th Corps was pushed back north of Gettysburg, the little 3rd West Virginia and Davin's Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division slowed the Confederate advance and allowed the Union infantry time to rally on Cemetery Hill and Cemetery Ridge.

After the Battle of Gettysburg the survivors of Company A & C under Captain Conger were ordered to the Department of West Virginia to recruit and reorganize. Reorganization lasted until early 1864 after which the unit was assigned to the Army of West Virginia under the command of Major Conger. On August 7, 1864 Major Conger was killed leading a charge near Moorefield, West Virginia. After an initial interment his grave was moved to Arlington National Cemetery.

The 3rd West Virginia Cavalry continued on with General "Phil" Sheridan's Cavalry Corps. It fought at the Battle of Waynesboro and during the Appomattox Campaign. After the confederate surrender the unit took part in the Grand Review in Washington D. C. before being mustered out of service on June 23, 1865. Seymour's brother, Captain Everton Conger was severely wounded in 1862 while scouting near Bristoe Station. After recovering from his wounds he was appointed Lt. Colonel of the 1st District of Columbia Cavalry and worked closely with Lincoln's secret service. After Lincoln's assassination it was the Everton's regiment that finally cornered John Wilkes Booth. Everton survived the war and lived until 1918.

