

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: www.andersonhistorical.com.

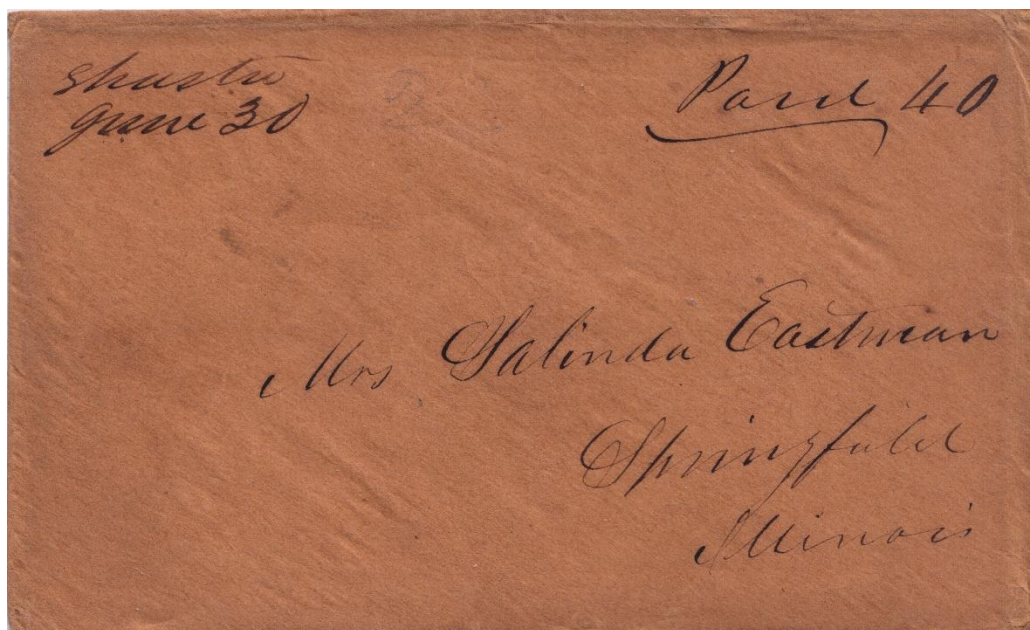
This is a California historical geography test:

1. Where is Branciforte County?
2. Where is Coso County?
3. Where is Fremont County?
4. Where is Klamath County?
5. Where is Mount Diablo County?
6. Where is Oro County?
7. Where is Pautah County?
8. Where is Reading County?

The answers are on the last page. If you didn't do well, don't be hard on yourself: the editor only got three out of eight.

The articles for the month of July 2023 are: 1) August Eastman Letter 1851, 2) John Balthasar Weber Letter 1851, 3) Solomon D. Baker Letters (2) 1851, 4) Galen Gates Letter 1851, 5) Ernest Sylvanus "Van" Bartell & Nettie Mae Taylor Bartell, 6) Robert Holtby Bartell, and 7) Anna Maria Battams.

August Eastman, Shasta, January 25, 1851



Letter mailed at the Shasta Post Office in June 1851 using manuscript postmark SHA-4080. The cost of the letter was forty cents the rate for a letter from the Pacific coast to the Atlantic coast.

Shasta, Cal. Jan. 25th 1851

Dear Mother

I have just returned from a trip up Feather River where I went to see Mr. Lawson. I was gone some 14 days. (unreadable) lay in a region near the emigrant road which we came in so I concluded to go out on that road. Altho it had been near two years since I traveled it yet all the prominent features so far as I went (about 100 miles) were easily recognized and I could not help finding the contrast between this trip and the journey in. This road is the worst one I have seen in California or anywhere else. We had good fast mules to ride and passed 3 or 4 camps each day. When we arrived our mules were worn down and it seemed to me almost a wonder that we got in State over such a road. I did not find Mr. Lawson. He was out in the mountains prospecting. I learned considerable about his business and think I shall get what he owes me. His agent on the rancho paid me the small note I held against Mr. Lawson individually. This was given for money loaned to him in amt. \$577 on which 350 had been paid. The bal. \$157 I just recd. I have put the other note and a/c in the hands of a lawyer for collection and I think it will be paid without being tried. The amt. due me now including interest is about \$1500 which if I had now I think I would go home but as I shall have to wait some time for it I may get into a business. This will keep me here 'till next spring when I think I shall come home. I have not fully determined what to go at next but think I shall locate in the Sacramento Valley buy and sell stock horses, mules and cattle. I think that I can double my money in about 1 year. I have always considered the valley sickly but as we become acclimated it seems more healthy. The place I have selected is not on the river and I think that my chance of health as good there as in Illinois. I sometimes think of leaving a place in the country so as that when I go home if I find the winter too cold or from any other cause wish to come back I can have a home to come to. Will that not be a good idea! I think that if I should wish to come here to live that you and George would come with me after I had seen you and told you all about things here. I should never think of you

crossing the plains but think a journey to this part across the Isthmus may be made a very pleasant one. The longer I remain in Cal. the more fully I feel persuaded that I shall not be satisfied to live in Illinois and if I am not I shall not wish to stay there. On of the most common things met with men in Cal. are men that had gone home as they thought for good were dissatisfied and have returned most that had families with them.

It is my opinion that in 5 years Cal. will be as densely settled as Illinois. I mean the tillable lands. I do not know that I shall wish to return but if I should I want to know what you think about it. There has been new discoveries in the gold mines near this place. Recently some 3 or 4 different gulches on Clear Creek have been and are still paying very well. Two young men of my acquaintance brought in some \$4,000 a few days since the product of about 6 weeks labor. The gold is very course. Pieces have been found from 1 to 9 ounces. You must not infer from this that all are doing well tis not 1 in a 100 that make these big licks.

Mr. Weber is talking of selling out and going home. Mr. Watson says he thinks he shall go this fall. Mr. Johnson next spring. I saw a young man on his way home a few days since with whom I am well acquainted. He promised me that if he passed through Springfield he would call on you and answer all the questions you might ask relative to me and Cal. I told him that he would need no other introduction than to tell you he knew Gust in California. I hope that you will see him. His name is Chas. Shackelford.

Just before I left for the mountains I read a letter from Geo. dated Mar. 23 also one from Hannah Mar. 16th. This is the first opportunity I have had to answer them. I have not been able to write as often as I would wish for some time past but if you should not get letters from me as regularly as you would wish you may attribute it to the fact that I am so situated that I cannot write regular for I know how anxious I am to hear from and judge that you are quite as anxious to hear from me. Therefore I will never fail to write often when I can. I see a part of your letter was written just 2 years from the day I left you. Does it seem so long to you! With me it has seemed the shortest 2 years of my life, yet is a long time to be separated from those near and dear to each other. You seem to think that Hope will go to Baltimore this fall. I feel loath to have her go yet I think on account of the children it may be for the best. Tell her that she need not think to hide from me for when I get home if she is in Baltimore I shall go to see her and that my curiosity may not be satisfied but I have reached the old state just beyond where I may see someone else. Tell her it has been a long time since I have read a letter from her. George I am sorry you were disappointed in my letter of Jan. 19th but you must excuse me. I mention everything I can think of at the time of writing that I think will interest you but there are no doubt many questions that you would ask me could we see each other that I do not think of. We will talk about such things when we meet with me soon! The Gold Bluffs you have doubtless heard that this was a "hum bug" and among the greatest in Cal. I have said all I know to my future business in Cal. at present. As to what I have made I have given you my opinion which you doubtless will succor before you get this. You must excuse me for not complying in this simple instance. Augustus Eastman

Augustus Eastman was born in 1818 in Maine and by his letter came to California about 1849 after crossing the Great Plains. In the 1850 U.S. Census he is listed as a merchant in Shasta with a value of \$1500. He was listed with other merchants: B. R. Biddle, John B. Watson, John B. Weber and Louis Johnson with whom he may have worked. In 1851 he was thinking of

relocating to the Sacramento Valley and in the 1860 U. S. Census he was listed at Moons (Moon's Ranch) in Tehama County with a value of \$10,000 in real estate and \$7,000 in personal property. In the 1860 entry just above August there was a George Eastman 48, L.E. Eastman 28 and G.L. Eastman 21.

Augustus was the son of David Eastman 1794-to 1845 and Salinda Wood 1797-1871. The couple had four children August born 1818, Louisa Hope 1822, Charles H. 1830, and George Llewelyn 1833. By the time Augustus left for California his father had died (1845), his brother Charles died in 1849, and his sister had married. His mother Salinda and younger brother George were left in Illinois where the family had settled around 1836. In 1852 George Llewelyn came to California. In 1868 Augustus died intestate in Tehama County but naming his mother Salinda, brother George and sister Louisa as his living relatives. In 1870 George returned to Illinois to take care of his mother who died in 1871. George never returned to California.

Louisa Hope married Owen Maynard in 1840 and had two children: Richard David 1841 and James Herbert 1846. Owen died in 1849 and Louisa and the children about the time of the letter considered moving to Baltimore where Owen was from. In 1870 Louisa was listed in Illinois with her mother and George but later returned to Baltimore and lived with her son Richard a successful coffee merchant. Louisa died in 1908.

The George Eastman listed in the 1860 U.S. Census for Moons was George W. Eastman born in 1810 in Maine who was an uncle to Augustus and George. George appears to have come to California early with his brother Edward. George joined the 1st Mountaineer Battalion (California) in 1863 and served as a sergeant until discharged in 1865. George died in 1871 and named his brother Edward and his sons George and Thomas, and nephews George Llewelyn previously of Tehama County now Illinois, and nephew John Ayers of Maine as his heirs.

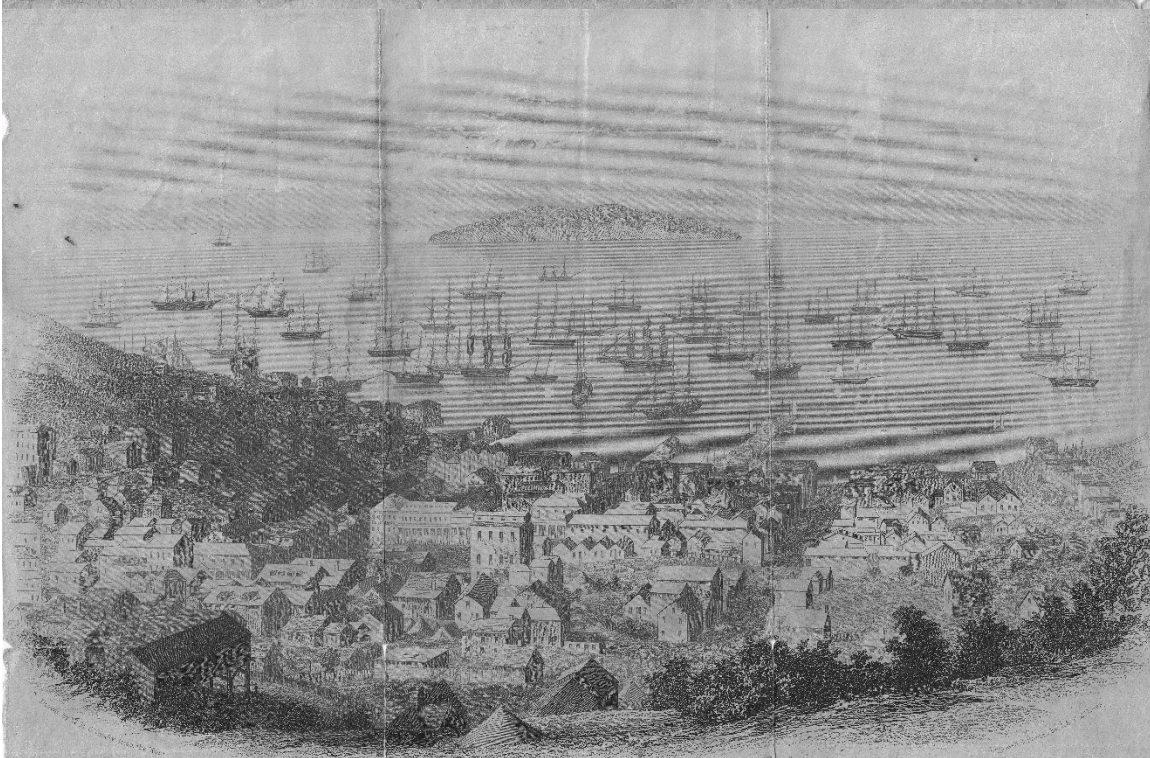
Augustus appears never to have married and seems forgotten as he is absent from most of the Find A Grave data.

John Balthasar Weber, Reading Springs, February 29, 1851



John Balthasar Weber 1810-1889

John. Mary Ellen & Elizabeth Weber
Springfield
Illinois
7



San Francisco.

18

Reading Springs California
Feb 28th 1851

Dear John, Mary Ellen, and Elizabeth

I received a few lines from each of you yesterday, and was pleased to hear that you had received your little lumps of gold. Since then I have sent each of you another little lump. I hope your anticipations with reference to the return of your Father was realized soon after you wrote to me. Though I have not yet heard of his return to Springfield.

At the top of this letter you will find a beautiful view of San Francisco taken from a different point, and at an earlier date than the one I now send with this to your Cousins. San Francisco is situated about five miles from the Pacific Ocean on the south side of the Bay of San Francisco. A few years ago this place had but five hundred inhabitants and now it is a large city, where in all probability, more wickedness is exhibited than in any other civilized place of the same population, in the world. You ought to feel very thankful that you are permitted to live among good people, where you receive moral and religious instructions from the example and teachings of those around you. When I return to Springfield I will give you an account of the abominable doings of the people of California and of the lamentable condition of the unclothed children of the California mountains. You ought to be obedient children, Love God, obey your Parents and be kind to each other, for upon these things your happiness in this life and in eternity, in a great measure depends.

Your affectionate uncle
 Jno. B. Weber

The letterhead paper reads San Francisco and in small print Drawn by W. H. O'Grady from the West. Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1850 by P. O'Grady in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Vermont. Engraved and printed by A. J. McLees.

The letter is addressed to John, Mary Ellen, & Elizabeth Weber, Springfield, Illinois. The letter reads:

Reading Springs, California
 Feb. 23d, 1851

Dear John, Mary Ellen, and Elizabeth

I received a few lines from each of you yesterday and was pleased to hear that you had received your little lumps of gold. Since then I have sent each of you another little lump. I hope your anticipations with reference to the return of your father was realized soon after you wrote to me. Though, I have not yet heard of his return to Springfield.

At the top of this letter you will find a beautiful view of San Francisco taken from a different point and at an earlier date than the one I now send with this letter to your cousins. San Francisco is situated about five miles from the Pacific Ocean on the south side of the Bay of San Francisco. A few years ago this place had but five hundred inhabitants and now it is a large city, where in all probability, more wickedness is exhibited than in any other civilized place of the same population in the world. You ought to feel very thankful that you are permitted to live among good people where you receive moral and religious instructions from the example and teachings of those around you. When I return to Springfield I will give you an account of the abominable doings of the people of California and of the lamentable conditions of the unclothed children of the California mountains. You ought to be obedient children, Love God, obey your Parents and be kind to each other, for upon these things your happiness in this life and in eternity in a great measure depends.

*Your affectionate uncle
Jno. B. Weber*

The author of the letter was John Balthasar Weber who was born in Virginia in 1810 (now West Virginia). In 1832 John married Sarah Woltz 1812-1866 and had two children before moving to Illinois in 1836 with his extended family that included his brother Philip W. Weber and his family. Both brothers were farmers but in 1849 got gold fever and came to California. In the 1850 U. S. Census the two families were living next to each other in Springfield, Illinois. John's family consisted of Sarah and the "cousins" in the letter: Andrew 1840, George 1842, James 1844, Amanda 1847 and Cornelia about 1849. Philip's family consisted of his wife Amanda Shepard 1811-1899 and son John 1840, Mary Ellen 1843, William 1846, Elizabeth 1846, and Sarah 1848. In 1850 the brother's mother Elizabeth born about 1789 in Virginia was living with Philip's family.

Philip 1812-1902 did return to Springfield in 1851 and returned to farming for the rest of his life. John followed Philip back to Springfield also arriving in 1851. He returned to farming except for the period 1854 to 1856 when he was County Sheriff and Tax Collector. In 1866 John's first wife died and in 1870 John married Nancy Jane Dodds 1819-1896. John Balthasar Weber died in 1889.

Solomon D. Baker, Nevada City, March 7, 1851

Nevada Cit. May 7th 1851
Dear Brother Sister & Niece

I this moment
recd your kind letter of the 16th of Dec, And
hasten to answer it, as it was the first I
had recd from you. I know you must
have written and your letters have been
mislaid, I trust as we are in such haste to
answer you will not call me a dilatory corres-
pondent. Your kind letter found Miam ~~and~~
~~Byrd~~. Well, I have been confined to the House
for a fortnight with Boils, but I shall soon be
rid of them I think, as soon as I get well I
shall start north on a prospecting tour, Mr
Park a partner in business has been gone
some two months I am fearful he is
detained by snow in the Mountains if he
should not succeed in finding any thing the
expense will be considerable. We have however
become accustomed to losses so that we
bear it very well. We expect to pursue
quite a different course from that which we
have been pursuing since we have been in
the Country. We have made money since
we come to the country but have got rid of the
greater part of it in various ways, by speculation,
bad management, being too indulgent ~~to our~~
Sister Mary we would gladly accept of your kind
solicitation to return if we could get our letter

feelings to justify us in so doing, but we can not
We have been un lucky or managed badly. have
saved but little. And we have come to the conclusion
to remain in California or Oregon until we can
make a pile, provided our health is spared us.
do not think this a foolish resolve, or that
we have lost all the filial and parental affection
that ever softened our hearts, for such feel is not
the case, for I trust we each of us love and reverence
our relatives as much so as any persons on
the western Coast.

Apr 13th Is it possible I have delayed
~~finishing~~ this scroll this long. it is seven
so, and yet I have no news. Bro Green
man has not yet gone home as we had
expected, he is at Rough & Ready with G B Lanson
and Sam Boston. They are mining and I think
doing very well at this time, though they have
been able to do but little for the want of water
heretofore. Since writing the above we purchased
two Teams and I have been on the roads ever
since but have made nothing. I had a truck
worth one hundred & fifty dollars and a yoke of
Cattle stole while I was on the road last week.
Union is staying here selling such things as we
have on hands and such as I shall. There is
considerable sickness in this place at this time.
it is a species of Dysentery. proves fatal in
almost every instance.

May I shall be in my 31st year in a few days then I presume I am at liberty to take a better half. for you recollect you told me I must not take that decisive step before that time, It has now rolled round and I have not yet made a choice. I presume by the time I return you can show me a paragon of perfection but she will have to be of a new crop as all the old crop are marring off - Well Marguill dear niece. What shall I say to you, nothing that I can think off save I would give piles to see you, you tell me that you are yet enjoying single blessedness, and you intend to do so until we get back. I can assure you there is ample time to make a choice yet and when you do remember that it is for life. your happiness or misery depends upon that important change. But why am I advising a young Lady of your discretion and forethought I presume you will answer that I had better take a little of the advice to myself, granted, you will be surprised when I tell you that even in California, there are bright Eyes, rosy Cheeks and ruby Lips that are accessible, though I must acknowledge that I have not yet tasted them. I will promise you that I will endeavor to ward off Cupid's darts until my return, then my heart will be susceptible of the tender emotion, Love. My compliments to the Dove and the Angel. Well Brother Rowan

What shall I say to you that will be of interest
I know of nothing save that you were one of
the lucky ones in not being led astray by the
high wrought California Stomps. Tell Albert
and Sis that Uncle He and Sol will be sure
and bring those Poms this time if they did
come up. Minus ~~therefore~~ as did the Outabmens
Chicken. I trust they are good and dutiful
Children and fond of their Books. You are
aware that if they are so fortunate as to receive
a good education it will enrich them more
than all the gold that glitters in C.A. Remember
me to all the B. boys and by no means pass by
the G. girls without giving me a lift for
I am aware you are quite a Ladies Man
Well Father. I & Maria have looked
long and Anxiously for a Letter from you
it has been some time since we received
one. We however often peruse those you
have sent us. they contain kind and Parental
instruction which we should profit by. though
I can assure you this in a hard Country to
improve any one's Morals. Write often. You know
how tedious. You know not the satisfaction it
affords us to peruse them. I wrote to
Charles & Sidney not long since. Very love to Julia
Lana. Emily & the rest of the family — I must
close. All accept our love — in haste —
The B. Boys & Sol — Solomon & Maria

Nevada City Mar. 7th 1851

Dear Brother, Sister and Niece

I this moment received your kind letter of the 16th of December and hasten to answer it
as it was the first I had received from you. I know you must have written and your letters have

been mislaid. I trust as I am in such haste to answer you will not call me a dilatory correspondent. Your kind letter found Hiram well. I have been confined to the house for a fortnight with boils but I shall soon be rid of them I think. As soon as I get well I shall start north on a prospect. Mr. Park a partner in business has been gone some months. I am fearful he is detained by snow in the mountains. If he should not succeed in finding anything the expense will be considerable. We have however become accustomed to lapses so that we bear it very well. We expect to pursue quite a different course from that which we have been pursuing since we have been in the country. We have made money since we came to the country but have got rid of the greater part of it in various ways, by speculation, bad management, being indulgent, etc. etc. Sister Mary we would gladly accept of your kind solicitation to return if we could get our better feelings to justify us in doing so, but we can not. We have been unlucky or managed badly, have saved but little and we have come to the conclusion to remain in California or Oregon until we make a pile, provided our health is spared us. Do not think this a foolish resolve, or that we have lost all the filial and parental affection that ever softened our hearts for such is not the case for I trust we each of us love and revere our relatives as much as any person on the western coast.

April 13th. It is possible I have delayed finishing this scroll this long. It is even so and yet I have no news. Jno. Greenman has not yet gone home as we had expected. He is at Rough and Ready with G. B. Lavison and Samuel Aston. They are mining and I think doing very well at this time, though they have been able to do but little for the want of water heretofore. Since writing the above we purchased two teams and I have been on the road ever since but have made nothing. I had a mule worth one hundred and fifty dollars and a yoke of cattle stole while I was on the road last week. Hiram is staying here selling such things as we have on hand and such as I haul. There is considerable sickness in this place at this time. It is a species of Ireszpalm proves fatal in most every instance.

Mary I shall be in my 27th year in a few days then I promise I am at liberty to take a better half for you recollect you told me I must not take that decisive step before that time. It has now rolled around and I have not yet made a choice. I presume by the time I return you can show me a paragon of perfection but she will have to be of a new crop as all the old crop are marrying off. Well Margaret dear niece what shall I say to you. Nothing that I can think of save I would give piles to see you. You tell me that you are yet enjoying single blessedness and you intend to do so until we get back. I can assure you there is ample time to make a choice yet and when you do remember it is for life. Your happiness or misery depends upon that important change. But why am I advising a young lady of your discretion and forethought.

I presume that you will answer that I had better take a little of the advise to myself, granted, you will be surprised when I tell you that even in California there are bright eyes, rosy cheeks and ruby lips that are acceptable though I must acknowledge that I have not yet tasted them. I will promise you that I will endeavor to ward off cupid's darts until my return, then my heart will be susceptible of the tender emotion, love. My compliments to the Dove and the Angel. Well brother Rowan what shall I say to you that will be of interest. I know nothing save that you were one of the lucky ones in not being led astray by the high California stories. Tell Albert and Sis that Uncle H. and Sol will be sure and bring those ponies this time if they did come up minus before as did the Dutchman's chicken. I trust they are good and dutiful children and fond of their books. You are aware that if they are fortunate as to receive a good education it

will enrich them more than all the gold that glitters in California. Remember me to all the B!hoys and by no means pass by the G!hirls without giving me a lift for I am aware you are quite a ladies man.

Well father I and Hiram have looked long and anxious for a letter from you. It has been some time since we received one. We however often peruse those you have sent us. They contain kind and parental instructions which we should profit by though I can assure you this is a hard country to improve anyone's morals. Write often you now have leisure. You know not the satisfaction it affords us to peruse them. I wrote to Charles and Sidney not long since. My love to Julia, Laura, Emily and the rest of the family. I must close. All accept our love – in haste.
M.B. Rowan etc. Solomon and Hiram

Ireszpalm may be Irish Fever or typhus. The disease is a group of bacterial infections spread by parasites such as body lice and fleas and outbreaks did occur in numerous mining camps. The symptoms were usually a fever, rash and headaches and were at the time often fatal.

B!hoys and G!hirls seem to be a family joke possibly based on an early speech impediment and meaning boys and girls.

The author of the letter, Solomon Dodge Baker was born in Ohio in 1825. His parents were Doctor Isaac Baker 1783-1872 and Susannah Morgan Dodge 1788-1833. Solomon's father Dr. Isaac Baker was born in Connecticut and trained as a physician prior to moving to Ohio about 1810 or 1811. During the War of 1812 Dr. Baker served in the Ohio Militia. In 1820 Dr. Baker moved to New York to assist his brother in law in building a steam works for a factory, then moved to Maine where he built the state's first steam powered mill before returning to Ohio. In 1827 Dr. Baker moved the family to McClean County Illinois. During the spring of 1831 Dr. Isaac and two other businessmen laid out the town of Bloomington, Illinois. Dr. Baker served as the Clerk of the County Commissioners Court for fifteen years then served a city postmaster. After the death of his first wife in 1833 Dr. Baker married Ruth White 1793-1848 and upon her death married Nancy Miller (birth unknown; died 1852). In the letter Solomon seems to hint at his father's Puritan roots in the Plymouth Colony.

By his first wife Susannah Morgan Dodge, Isaac Baker had eleven children: Seth 1805-1846, Elliot H. 1808-1845, William Morgan 1811-1900, John Dodge 1813-1900, Susanna M. 1815, Charles 1817-1862, Sidney Dodge 1820-1906, Mary Ann 1823-1855, Hiram about 1825-1873, Solomon Dodge 1825-1902, and Albert 1829. Margaret S. Baker born in 1830 is often listed as Solomon's sister but as later letters clearly point out Margaret is his niece. Margaret's father was Seth Baker who died in 1846 after which she lived with Isaac and his family. By his second wife Isaac had two additional children: Julia Ann 1834-1919 and Laura White 1839-1910.

At the time of the letter Solomon was living at Nevada City, the county seat of Nevada County. At the time Nevada City was the most important mining community in the State as Nevada County was the leading gold producer in 1850-1851. At the time Solomon was working

as a freighter and he and his brother operated a store in Nevada City. The rest of Solomon's story will be reviled in five additional letters from him in 1851, 1853, 1855 and 1859.

Solomon addressed the letter to brother, sister, niece and closed it with M. B. Rowan. Martin B. Rowan was Solomon's brother in law who was married to his older sister Mary Ann Baker. Mary was born in 1823 and married Martin B. Rowan in 1843. The couple had two children: Albert Hiram 1843-1863 and Mary Ellen 1846-1917. Both Mary and Martin were victims of a cholera epidemic that swept through Bloomington, Illinois in 1855. Solomon's niece and nephew survived the tragic death of their parents.

In the letter Solomon addresses Jno. Greenman being at Rough and Ready in Nevada County and expecting to go home to Bloomington. John Greenman was Solomon's step brother and the son of his step mother Ruth White. Ruth had married John Greenman 1790-1831 in 1810 and had nine children including John born in 1820. John did return to Bloomington where he died in 1872. Nothing was found on G. B. Lavison or Samuel Aston.

The other addressed in the letter were all immediate family: Charles, his brother born in 1817, Albert his brother born in 1829 and Sidney his brother born in 1820, Margaret his niece born in 1830, Julia his half sister born in 1834 and Laura his half sister born in 1839. Emily who was listed with Julia and Laura was not found.

Solomon D. Baker, Nevada City, May 12, 1851

Nevada City May 12th 1851

Dear Brother Charles

I know not whether to address you in the Character of a single or a married man, not having heard of your marriage I shall address you in the former Character, should I be mistaken you will please apologise to your Lady for me, and accept my prayers for a long, a happy and a fruitful union, but Charles a truce to jesting. I heard you were about to be married to a fine young Widow who came to Bloomington shortly after I left, if such is the case you have been very shy, for you have never hinted at such a union in your Letters, let me know the truth in your next, if it should ever come which I have but little reason to expect as it has been so long since your last was received, William & I enjoy good health in this Country, William is now at Sac City disposing of our Mule Team

P.S. please direct your letters to Sacramento. Robt Baker
is still here. he has made nothing as yet - H P Dodge
sends his love to all engineering friends.

He intends running an ox Team through the
summer and fall. He prefers that to mining
and perhaps will make quite as much at
it, the last time he was at the City
for goods he had his purse stolen from under
his head while asleep. Fortunately he had
paid out all his money but about seventy
Dollars.

I am closing off such articles
as we have on hands. I shall then
start into the Mountains in quest of
Ore, and endeavor to follow that business
while I remain in the County. It could
possibly still show the profits if
there should be any, we have been able
to save but little of our earnings since
we came to the County. We are not yet
entirely discouraged, and hope we will do
better in future, we have been unfortunate
in all our speculations, and now intend
applying, muscle and sinew to the task.

We have not yet been able to find any
of our stock that has been stolen, nor
to collect but few of our outstanding
debts. Stephen Park a Gentleman
who has been engaged with us in

Lewis rep has just returned from a three months prospecting tour in the Northern Mines. What time he was able to work for the falling weather he made Ten Dollars per day. He was on the north fork of the Trinity, a distance of Three hundred & fifty miles, there is where we now talk of going. Should we find the mines lasting and be able to hire a No of hands I think we will do well. The Bloomington boys are well so far as heard from, none doing better than they should. Saml Astor G B Larison. Williams Elkin, John M^cHisson. Lewis Quibby. Harvey Merriam. and others too numerous to mention have gone North for the purpose of mining. Will. Wickizer is in San City. talks of starting home soon. Thomas Howard. William Hill of Clinton. James Mitchell. Edward Park. Davidson & others are now in the City. May W W Packard & L Dietrich at San Jose. John talks of going home soon. I recd a line from him a few days he is very anxious to sell out his Tin Shop and furniture

to be remembered to him; I regard him as a worthy and a
 true friend. Remember me to Mrs. Durell, and my compliments
 to the young ladies of my acquaintance. My love to all
 I received a line from Levi Hite a few days
 since stating he had sold his interest
 in Ranch, and was then clerking in
 Marysville at J. D. Greenman. William
 Damsan and others have gone home.
 I left Ranch from him, and had a
 prospect of doing well he intends making
 his home in our cities have been awfully scourged
 within a few weeks past with fire -
 San Francisco, Stockton & Nevada have been
 reduced to ashes. supposed to be the work
 of an incendiary. It is a generally held opinion
 that there is an organized band of lawless desper-
 adoes, whose business it is to fire and pilage
 cities. It would seem as if we were thus
 visited for our iniquities - for crime and sin
 in all its hideous forms can be seen in all our
 cities at noon-day as well as under the curtain
 of night - The cunning and the stratagem
 used by some of the sharpers in decaying the
 innocent and unsuspecting miner into their
 hands is unparalleled in any portion of the world
 Gaming Saloons are the principal places of
 resort on the Sabbath, We have some magnificent
 saloons of that class - indeed the best buildings in
 California are used for these vile purposes
 Charles should you see Saml. Hay I wish

Nevada City May 12th 1851

Dear Brother Charles

I know not whether to address you in the character of a single or a married man. Not having heard of your marriage I shall address you in the former character. Should I be mistaken

please apologize to your Lady for me and accept my prayers for a long, a happy and a fruitful union. But Charley a truce to jesting, I heard you were to be married to a fine young widow who came to Bloomington shortly after I left. If such is the case you have been very shy, for you have never hinted at such a union in your letters. Let me know the truth in your next, if it should ever come which I have but little reason to expect as it has been so long since your last was received. Hiram and I enjoy good health in this country. Hiram is now at Sac. City disposing of our mule team. He intends running an ox team through summer and fall. He prefers that to mining and perhaps will make quite as much at it. The last time he was at the city for goods he had his purse stolen from under his head while asleep, fortunately he had paid out all his money but about seventy dollars. I am closing off such articles as we have on hand. I shall then start into the mountains in quest of ore and endeavor to follow that business while I remain in the country. H. and myself will still share the profits if there should be any. We have been able to save but little of our earnings since we came to this country. We are not yet entirely discouraged and hope we will do better in future. We have been unfortunate in all our speculations and now intend applying muscle and sinew to the task.

We have not yet been able to find any of our stock that had been stolen nor collect but few of our outstanding debts. Stephen Park a gentleman who has been engaged with us in business has just returned from a three-month prospecting tour in the northern mines. What time he was able to work for the falling weather he made ten dollars per day. He was on the North Fork of the Trinity, a distance of three hundred and fifty miles. There is where we now talk of going. Should we find the mines lasting and be able to hire a number of hands I think we will do well. The Bloomington boys are well so far as heard from. None doing better than they should. Samuel Anton, G. B. Lanson, William Elkin, John McKisson, Lewin Durley, Harvey Merriman and others too numerous to mention have gone north for the purpose of mining. H. I. Wickizer is in Sac. City talks of starting home soon. Thomas Howard, William Hill of Clinton, James Mitchell, Edward Park, Davidson and others are now in the city. Maj. M. W. Packard and I. Dietrich at San Jose. John talks of going home soon. I read a line from him a few day. He is very anxious to sell out his tin shop and furniture. I read a line from Levi Hite a few days since stating he sold his interest in Rancho and was clerking at Marysville. I Greenman, William Dimson and others have gone home. Philip Loving was in Ranch when last heard from him and had a prospect of doing well. He intends making hay. Our cities have been awful scourged a few weeks past with fire. San Francisco, Stockton and Nevada have been rendered to ashes. Supposed to be the work of an incendiary. It is a generally received suspicion that there is an organized band of lawless desperadoes whose business it is to fire and pillage. It would seem as if we were thus visited for our inequities for crime and sin in all its hideous forms can be seen in all our cities at noon day as well as under the curtain of night. The cunning and stratagem by some of the sharpers in decoying the innocent and unsuspecting miners into their snares is unparalleled in any portion of the world. The gambling saloons are the principal place of resort on the sabbath. We have some magnificent saloons of that class – indeed the best buildings in California are used for these vile purposes. Charles should you see Samuel Hay I wish to be remembered to him. I regard him as a worthy and true friend. Remember me to Mrs. Durett and my compliments to the young ladies of my acquaintance. My love to all the relations. I should like to see Esta and the balance of your children but I must wait patiently as I wrote all the news a few days since in a family letter. I must draw to a close. Your affectionate brother.

Solomon

(In the margin of the second page) *P. S. please direct your letters to Sacramento. Robert Baker is still here. He has made nothing as yet. F. P. Dodge sends his love to all enquiring friends.*

The letter was written just over two months from the previous letter and Hiram and Solomon were anticipating a move to the northern mines in partnership with Stephen Parks.

Solomon begins by teasing his brother about his marital status: Charles had married in 1843 to Susan C. Hitchcock who bore him three children, Elizabeth, Melvin and Estella before she died. In 1851 Charles remarried Hester Beatty who died in 1857. That same year Charles married for the third time to Sarah Russell Shaw and the couple had two additional children, Anna Davis and Susan Lillian.

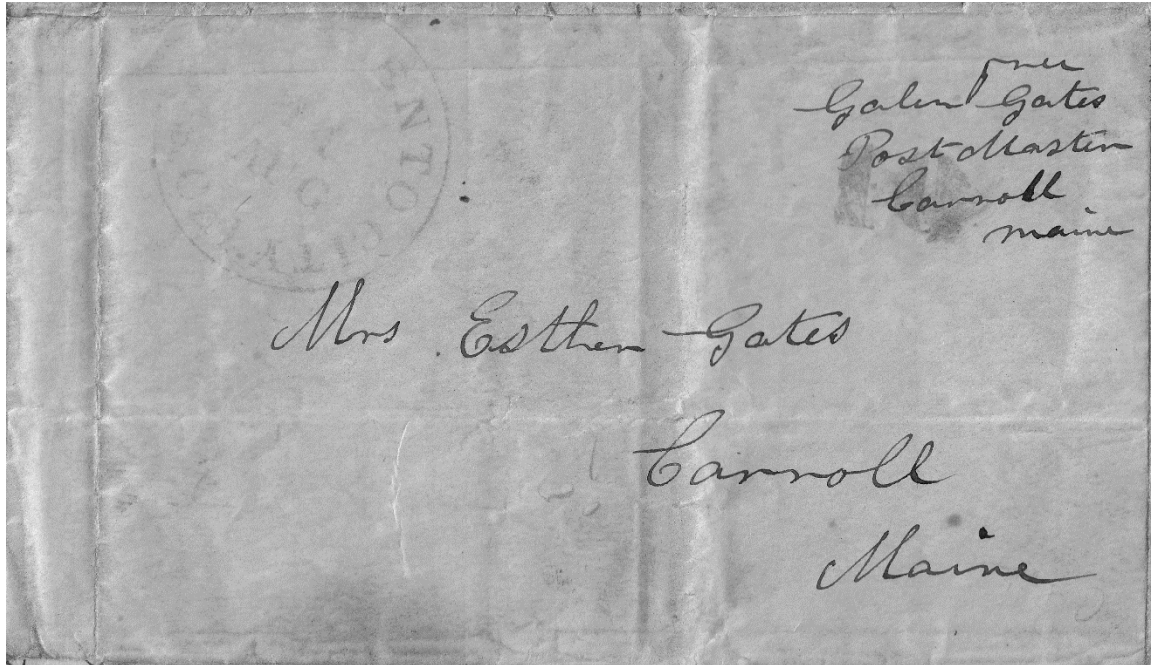
Esta was Charles Baker's daughter Estella Baker born in 1847 and the balance of the children at the time were Elizabeth born in 1836 and Melvin born in 1844.

Stephen Park was actually Solomon's relative by marriage. Stephen was born in 1823 in Ohio and was the son of Aaron Park 1787-1832 and Miriam Carpenter 1790. Stephen's sister Cinderella Park 1825-1915 married Solomon's older brother John Dodge Baker 1813-1906. Stephan would remain partners with Solomon in the move to the northern mines.

According to one source a group of men did set off across the Great Plains from Bloomington in 1849 via Saint Joseph, Missouri and most of the family names mentioned in the letter such as Greenman, Dietrich, Davidson, Parks, McKisson, and Wickizer were listed in the 1850 U. S. Census for Bloomington. A few like Major M. W. Packard did return to Bloomington where he became a prominent lawyer. Levi Hite was still listed as a merchant in Marysville, Yuba County in 1860. Samuel Findley Hay 1822-1901 to whom Solomon wished to be remembered was a farmer at Bloomington.

F. P. Dodge who sent his love was also a distant relative. Frank P. Dodge 1829-1894 was the son of Solomon Dodge 1798-1889 and Elizabeth Betsy Springer 1802-1878. Solomon Dodge was the brother of Susanne Morgan Dodge who married Solomon Baker's father Isaac. Frank did return to Illinois before 1861 when he married Hannah Catherine Cooley 1842-1910.

Galen Gates, Chastae Mines, July 25, 1851



The envelope was taken by an express company to Sacramento (Sacramento City) and placed in the U. S. Mail. The envelope is addressed to Mrs. Esther Gates in Carroll, Penobscot County, Maine from her husband Galen Gates. The address for her husband is Galen Gates, Postmaster, Carroll, Maine and up until coming to California via Oregon he was the postmaster at Carroll, Maine. The letter cites it came from the Chastae Mines which is a corruption of names used on older maps. To the Russians Mount Shasta was Tchastal meaning white, while the Wilke's Expedition of 1841 used Shaste and Fremont in 1848 used Tsashtl. These and other variations such as Chasta were common in the first few years after the Gold Rush.

Chastac Mines July 25th 1881

Dear Wife

Having an opportunity of sending a letter to San Francisco City I will write a few lines to let you know that I am well & hope this will find you enjoying the same blessing

I have not had the first letter from Maine since I left San Francisco last Oct, & am under the greatest anxiety to have a letter from you or some of the rest of the good folks

I have been mining here most of the time but I have been hunting for other & richer mines in this vicinity without finding them which has not been very profitable business, but have at last come to the conclusion to hunt no more, but stop here through the winter & do the best I can so that I can have some news from home ~~once~~

There is an Express running regularly once a month from here to San Francisco & you will please have the goodness to write me once in while & I will try & do the same

I have not experience enough in mining to judge of what is to be made by it but as far as I know of the business it is hard old doings to a great majority of my acquaintances

The man I send from Puget's Sound in to north has left for home discouraged with the business; he was sadly disappointed because he could not make as much as he could two years ago when he was in the mines

Eight of us left the Sound - only two of us left here & one leaving to day for the southern mines the rest having ^{left} gone home "hence you perceive" I am the only one left here to tell the news

of the party I am going to work digging dirt to wash in the rainy season for the water is most all dried away in these mines ^{one year}

I shall not be likely to return home before next fall. perhaps not then it will depend on my success in the business although I want to see you all very much; perhaps I shall then want you to move to Oregon

I hope you & the children get along well for I don't know as I shall be able to help you this fall to any thing in the way of sending home to you but wish I could

I think I have a chance to do good business here this fall & winter; shall try at any rate by best

I left Orongeton at the Sound farming he was going to send to San Francisco for all the letters that might be there for me & write me what news they contained I then expected to go there this fall but have otherwise concluded

I want you to write & let me know how you get along; how all the rest of the good people do &c. &c. Post Office business also

The train by which I send this are about leaving & I must close wishing you health & happiness

May kind Providence constantly protect you Farewell

Galen Gates

I would write a few lines to the children but have not time
God bless them

Chastae Mines July 25th 1851

Dear Wife

Having an opportunity of sending a letter to Sacramento City I will write a few lines to let you know that I am well and hope this will find you enjoying the same blessing. I have not had the first letter from Maine since I left San Francisco last October and am under the greatest anxiety to have a letter from you and some of the rest of the good folks. I have been mining here most of the time but have been hunting for other and richer mines in the vicinity without finding them which has not been very profitable business, but have at last come to the conclusion to hunt no more but stop here through the winter and do the best I can so that I can have some news from home.

There is an express running regular once a month from here to San Francisco and you will please have the goodness to write me once in a while and I will try to do the same.

I have not experience enough in mining to judge what is to be made by it but as far as I know of the business it is hand old doings to a great majority of my acquaintance. The man I came from Puget's Sound into (California) with has left for home discouraged with the business; he was sadly disappointed because he could not make as much as he could two years ago when he was in the mines.

Eight of us left the Sound – only two of us left here and one leaving today for the southern mines, the next having left for home “hence you perceive” I am the only one left to tell the story of the party. I am going to work digging dirt to wash in the rainy season for the water is most all dried away in these mines.

I shall not be likely to return home before next fall one year. Perhaps not then it will depend on my success in the business although I want to see you all very much; perhaps I shall then want to move to Oregon.

I hope you and the children get along well for I don't know as I shall be able to help you this fall to anything in the way of sending home to you but I wish I could.

I think I have a chance to do good business here this fall and winter; shall try at any rate by best.

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I want you to write and let me know how you get along; how all the rest of the good people do etc. etc. Post Office business also. The train by which I send this are about to leave and I must close wishing you health and happiness.

May kind Providence constantly protect you. Farewell

Galen Gates

I would write a few lines to the children but have not time. God bless them.

Galen does not indicate which mining camp he is at but it was probably not Shasta as they had regular express services by 1851. It was probably not Yreka or the Rogue River Valley either as there is no mention of any conflict with Native Americans. Companies of the 1st Dragoon Regiment were requested for troubles north of Yreka at the time of the letter. Whereever it was the camp was connected by pack train to larger towns. Like many of the small camps in Shasta County, Galen is sitting on dry diggings waiting on the fall and winter rain to wash the gravel on his claim. Later miners often obtained water from ditches and flumes and many battled the ditch owners over the high costs of water.

Galen seems to have come to California in a party of eight men presumably from Maine. Since Galen was listed in the 1850 U. S. Census in Carroll, Maine he must have come by ship to reach San Francisco by October of 1850. The letter indicates the party sailed to Puget Sound in Oregon (Washington Territory after 1853) before coming south to the northern mines probably in the spring of 1851.

Galen Gates was born in 1808 in Maine. He was the son of Alfred Gates 1765-1846 a farmer in Maine and Marcia House 1781-1859. In 1836 Galen married Esther Merrill Chase born 1806 in England. Esther's parents were Merrill Chase and his first wife Sally Tucker. In 1845 Galen was appointed postmaster at Carroll Penobscot County, Maine. In the 1850 U. S. Census

Galen was a farmer with four children Albert and Albion twins born in 1839, Mary Harriet born in 1842, and Byron born in 1844. Galen was known to have had another set of twins: Solon 1848 who died in 1849 and an unidentified child. In 1850 Galen was a farmer in Maine who left his family in Maine to try his luck at mining in California.

Nothing was found about Galen in California but a biography of a relative states that Galen did well at placer mining and returned home with several thousands of dollars he used to purchase a farm. It states he was a selectman (like city council) and treasurer of Carroll as well as serving as postmaster for twenty years. He was noted to be serving as postmaster in 1865.

Esther died in 1867 leaving Galen with four children. In 1869 Galen Married Ruth Wright born in 1828. Galen continued to farm in Maine until his death in 1882.

Ernest Sylvanus “Van” Bartell and Nettie Mae Taylor (nee Bartell)



Ernest Sylvanus Bartell with his wife Nettie Mae Taylor and four of their six children. The children are from left to right: Lance Taylor, Earl Robert standing in the rear, Jesse Vernon standing in front, and "Pink" (probably Mervin Sylvanus). The photograph was taken by William Samuel Valentine who operated in Shasta County from 1896 to 1929 and probably dates from about 1912. Courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

Ernest Sylvanus "Van" Bartell was born in 1869 in Kansas. Ernest was the son of Engelhard Ingram Bartell who was born in the Free City of Bremen in 1825 and immigrated to the United States about 1832. In 1849 Engelhard was living in Iowa where he was naturalized.

Engelhard had moved the family to Texas by 1857, then Kansas by 1865 and by 1874 was again in Texas. In 1850 Engelhard had married Cynthia Ann Roques Rodgers with whom he had eight children. In 1865 Cynthia died and in 1866 Engelhard married Mary Alice Southwell born about 1836 in Illinois. Engelhard and Mary had six more children including Ernest Sylvanus in 1869 and Robert Holtby in 1874. In 1890 Engelhard purchased 156 acres along Cottonwood Creek in Shasta County. Engelhard died in Shasta County in 1910 and Mary survived until 1925.

In 1890 Ernest was listed as a farmer at Gas Point. In 1901 Ernest registered a brand at Gas Point (a bar with a joined T and L for Bartell). In 1903 Ernest married Nettie Mae Taylor born about 1876. Nettie was the daughter of Alanson Taylor 1829-1895 and Sarah Ellen McFarlin 1845-1931. At the time of his marriage Ernest was operating a blacksmith shop with his brother Robert in Ono where the Grange is now located. The brothers at some point operated a blacksmith shop at Cloverdale near Igo. In 1910 Ernest was listed as a farmer at Igo and in 1920 as a farmer at Anderson. Ernest later operated the Story & Bartel Hardware store in Anderson. Ernest and Nettie had six children: Earl Robert 1904, Lance Taylor 1906-1989, Oscar A. 1906, Jesse Vernon 1909-1992, Mervin Sylvanus 1911-1955, and Glen Arthur 1913-1999. From 1923 to 1931 Ernest was elected the Supervisor for District 5 and in 1925 served as chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Nettie died in 1959 and Ernest followed in 1962.



Nettie Taylor Bartell. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.



Ernest Bartell and Nettie Mae Bartell. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.



Ernest and Robert Bartell. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

Robert Holtby Bartell



Portrait of Robert Holtby Bartell taken by Peter Datesman who operated in Shasta County in 1893-1894 and 1897-1899. Courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

Robert Holtby Bartell was born in 1874 in Kansas. Robert was the son of Engelhard Ingram Bartell who was born in the Free City of Bremen in 1825 and immigrated to the United States about 1832. In 1849 Engelhard was living in Iowa where he was naturalized. Engelhard moved the family to Texas by 1857, then Kansas by 1865 and by 1874 was again in Texas. In 1850 Engelhard had married Cynthia Ann Roques Rodgers with whom he had eight children. In 1865 Cynthia died and in 1866 Engelhard married Mary Alice Southwell born about 1836 in Illinois. Engelhard and Mary had six more children including Ernest Sylvanus in 1869 and Robert Holtby in 1874. In 1890 Engelhard purchased 156 acres along Cottonwood Creek in Shasta County. Engelhard died in Shasta County in 1910 and Mary survived until 1925.

Robert registered as a farmer in Redding in 1896 but by the turn of the century was working with his brother Ernest at a blacksmith shop in Ono. In 1902 Robert married Edith Edna Taylor 1880-1970. Edith was the daughter of Alanson Taylor 1829-1895 and Sarah Ellen McFarlin 1845-1931. The following year Robert's brother Earnest would marry Edith's sister Nettie Mae Taylor. Robert and Earnest also operated a blacksmith shop at Cloverdale near Igo. In the 1910 U. S. Census Robert was still listed as a blacksmith at Igo but by 1920 was listed as a farmer at Millville. In 1928 and 1930 Robert was listed as a blacksmith in Millville and in 1940 a farmer at Millville. Robert and Edith were known to have had six children: Marion Sylvanus

1903-1971, Alice Edna 1904-1988, Robert 1909, Donald Taylor 1909-1984, Neva 1912, and Mary Lois 1919-2014. Robert died in 1965 and Edith survived until 1970.

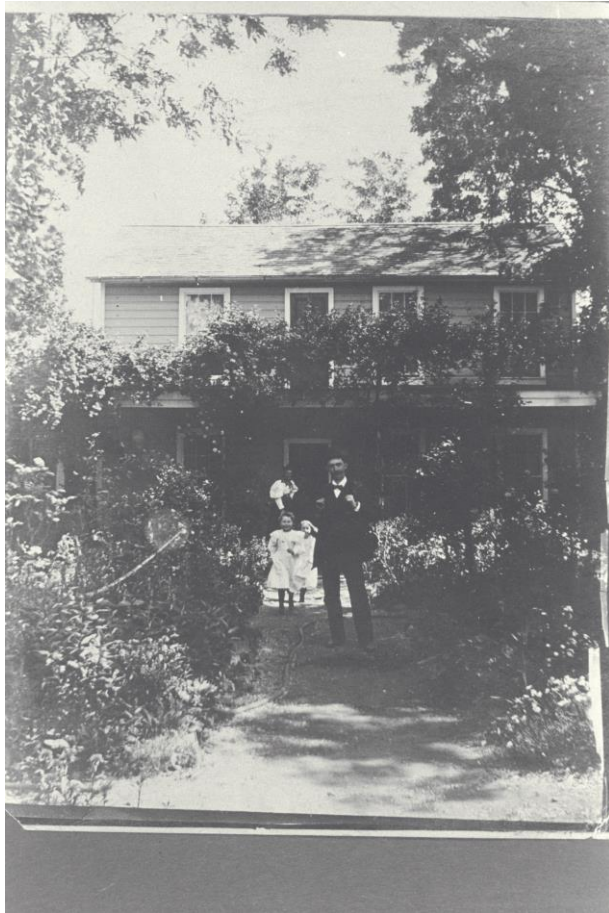
Anna Maria Battams (Mrs. Mathew Hume)



Portrait of Anna Marie Battams. Courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

Anna Maria Battams was born in Shasta County in 1869. She was the daughter of Thomas Battams who was born in England about 1827. Thomas was listed as a miner at Shasta in 1860. In 1868 Thomas married Lavernia A. Whiting who was born about 1844 in New York. In the 1880 U. S. Census Thomas was listed as a blacksmith in Shasta. Thomas died in 1883 and Lavernia married Silas S. Stickley who was born in Virginia in 1854. Silas registered as a farmer in Reading late in 1880 but was earlier in 1880 listed as a farm laborer in Township 7. In the 1900 U. S. Census Anna was living with her stepfather and mother in Buckeye where Silas was a grocer. By 1910 Anna had married Mathew Hume who was born about 1873 in Pennsylvania.

Mathew was the son of Edward and Carrie Hume who were living in Shasta County by 1880. In 1900 Anna and Mathew were living with Silas and both Silas and Mathew were listed as quartz miners. In 1918 Mathew was working at the Reid Mine and Silas was serving on the draft board. On the 1920 U. S. Census Silas was listed as widowed and working as a Sealer of Weights & Measures while Mathew was listed as a copper miner. Mathew died in 1924 and Anna appears to have moved to Red Bluff in Tehama County where in 1930 she was listed as a domestic cook and in 1940 a housekeeper. Anna Maria Battams died in Shasta County in 1948.



Silas Stickley's house in Buckeye. It is believed that Anna's brother Thomas Sylvanus is standing in the path with two nieces behind him. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

Answer key:

1. Branciforte County was one of the original 27 counties adopted by the statutes of 1850, but soon after that the legislature changed the name to Santa Cruz County.
2. Coso County was approved by the legislature which designated territory in Mono and Tulare Counties to be a new county with the county seat at Bend City. Coso County was never organized and in 1866 substantially the same territory was created as Inyo County.
3. Fremont County was a county proposed by a committee of the 1st California Constitutional Convention. Before the statute was adopted the legislature changed the name to Yola County

and later changed the name to Yolo County. Colusa County has a similar beginning as it started out as Colusi County.

4. Klamath County was created in 1851 from the northern half of Trinity County. In 1857 Del Norte County was formed out of part of Klamath County. In 1875 Klamath County was abolished and the remaining territory was divided between Humboldt and Siskiyou Counties.

5) Mount Diablo County was a county proposed by a committee of the 1st California Constitutional Convention. Before the statute was adopted, the legislature changed the name to Contra Costa County.

6) Oro County was a county proposed by a committee of the 1st California Constitutional Convention. Before the statute was adopted, the legislature changed the name to Tuolumne County.

7) Pautah County was created on paper in 1852 with the county seat at Carsonville, in the Utah Territory. California had the expectation that the territory would be ceded by the U.S. Congress, but no action was taken. In 1859 the act creating the county was repealed by the California legislature. The territory is now part of Nevada.

8) Reading County was a county proposed by a committee of the 1st California Constitutional Convention. Before the statute was adopted, the legislature changed the name to Shasta County.