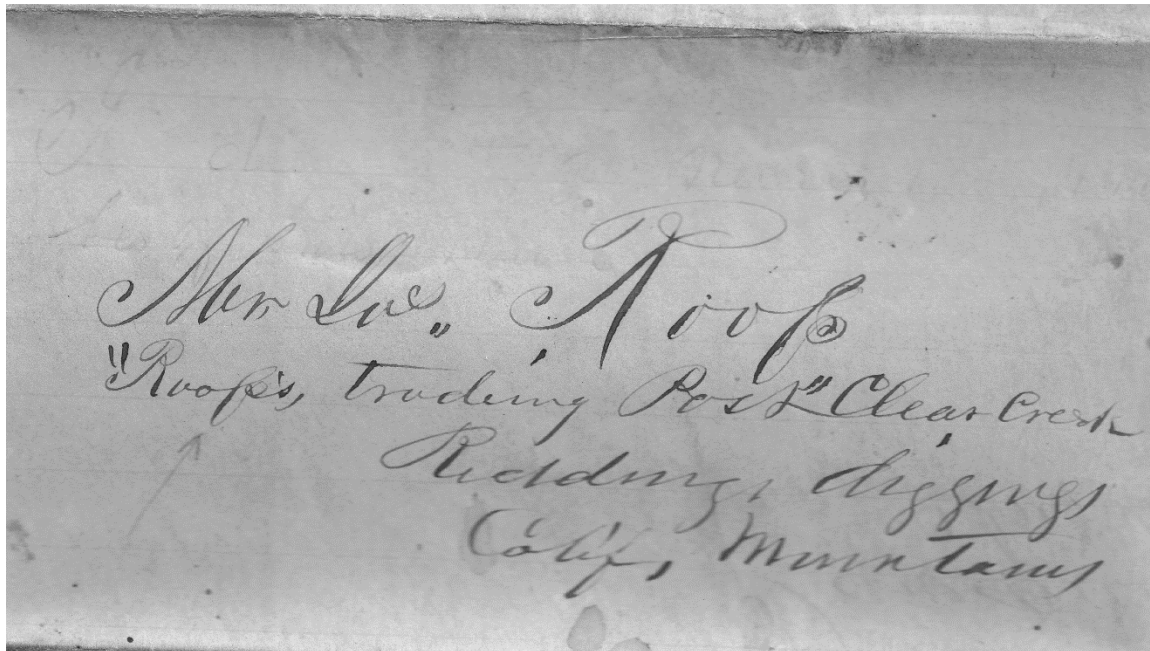


The monthly newsletter is a service to the community and our members. We welcome requests to research specific topics from the public and accept articles on local history. Please note that the Society reserves the right to accept or decline any article or material at its discretion. The Society is not 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](http://www.andersonhistorical.com).

The articles for the month of June 2023 are: 1) Letter: Ira Pratt, Sacramento, August 27, 1850, 2) Letter: Milton Delaphane, Chasta City, September 23, 1850. 3) Letter: James L. Freaner, Reading's Rancho October 11, 1850 4), Mary Ann Andrews and Alexander Robertson Andrews, 5) Mary Shumate Andrews and Ella Andrews, 6) Solomon Dodge Baker, 7) The Kohn Family by Patrick Carr.

### Ira Pratt, Sacramento, August 27, 1850



Letter and envelope courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

Sacramento August 27<sup>th</sup> 1850  
Mr Josiah Roop

My Dear Sir, Brother Amos  
the bearer Mr Wait is a young man lately  
from Ohio — is trying to make a few dimes  
in this land of Gold.

Any thing you can do  
for him I will be obliged to you.  
he is a young man of strict integrity,  
and industrious habits, &c.

I wrote you a few days ago  
through the Post Office, and now have only  
time to say, that I am well, and in good  
spirits, — Mr. Wait can tell you  
all about my matters here,

Please write me by return of  
Mr. W. Tell me when you expect to be  
in Sacramento, — When you intend starting  
home &c. &c. All quiet — and  
this place tolerably healthy

Yours ever &c  
Isa Pratt

Sacramento August 27<sup>th</sup> 1850

Mr. Josiah Roop

My dear sir, brother and companion the bearer Mr. Wait is a young man lately from Ohio  
— is trying to make a few dimes in this land of gold.

Anything you can do for him I will be obliged to you. He is a young man of strict integrity  
and industrious habits.

I wrote you a few days ago through the post office and now have only time to say that I  
am well and in good spirits. Mr. Wait can tell you all about my matters here.

*Please write me by return of Mr. W. Tell me when you expect to be in Sacramento. When you intend starting home etc. All quiet and this place tolerably healthy.*

*Your as ever etc.*

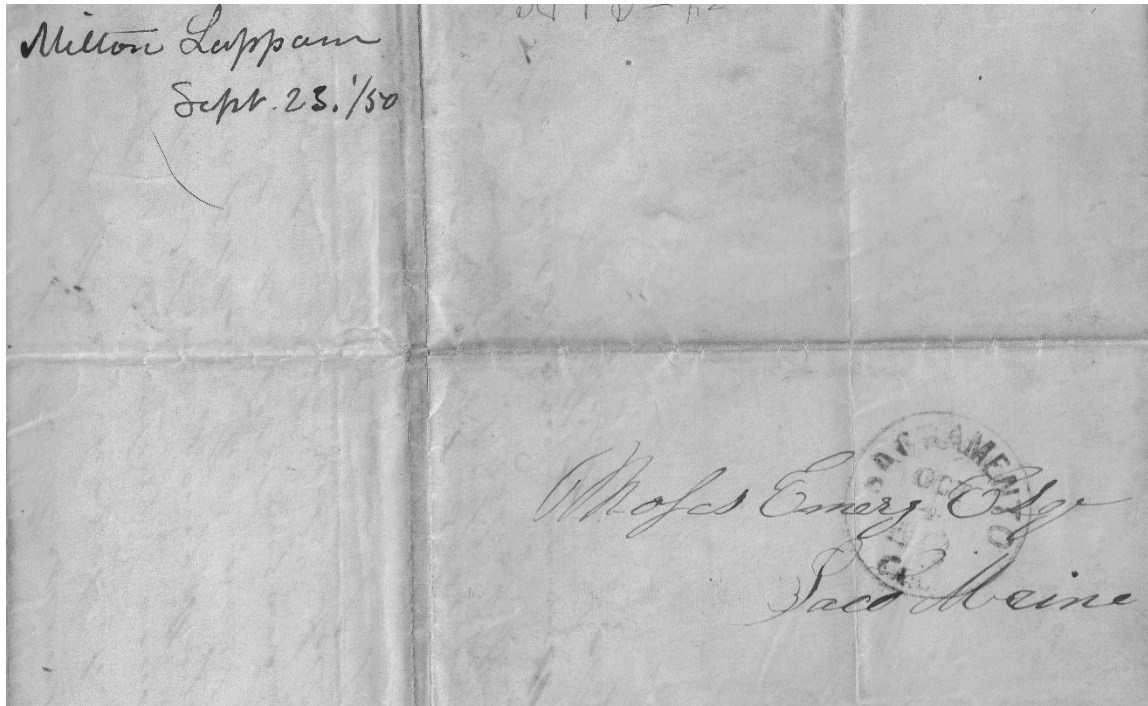
*Ira Pratt*

The letter was addressed to Josiah Roop at Roop's Trading Post, Clear Creek, Reading's Diggings. Josiah was born about 1815 in Maryland. He was the son of Joseph Norman Roop 1792-1865 and Susannah Engle 1794-1864. Josiah married Elizabeth Shafer (born about 1820) in Maryland in 1837. Within a few years Josiah and his parents had moved to Ohio. In May 1849 Josiah joined a party from Ashland, Ohio and crossed overland to California. Without success as a miner Josiah quickly changed to trading. Josiah opened up a store in what would become Shasta and quickly prospered and owned the Old Dominion Hotel. In September 1850 his brother Isaac Newton Roop 1822-1869 set off to California via Nicaragua to join Josiah. In September 1851 Josiah purchased the Oak Bottom House at Oak Bottom and put Isaac in charge. Josiah was appointed postmaster at Shasta but in May 1852 made Isaac his agent and left California to bring his wife west. Josiah took the Nicaragua route thought to have less disease than the Panama route but soon after leaving San Juan Del Norte, Nicaragua contracted dysentery and died in June 1852 about eighty miles south of Cuba. The SS Prometheus buried Josiah at sea. Josiah's wife was left with two daughters Sallie born 1846 and Mary born 1848 and appear to have returned to her family's home in Maryland. After 1870 no records were found for Elizabeth.

The letter appears to be written as an introduction from a member of the Free and Accepted Masons to another Mason. The Grand Lodge of California was established in Sacramento in 1850 and Western Star Lodge No. 2 was at Shasta in May 1851. It was not found that Josiah was a Mason but his brother Isaac was active in the Shasta lodge. Little was found on the others mentioned in the letter: there was an Ira Pratt listed in the 1850 U. S. Census for Rough and Ready in Yuba County. He was the son of Oliver Cromwell Pratt 1763-1844 and Jedidah Luce 1761-1842. Ira was born in 1808 in Maine and died at Marysville, Yuba County in 1853. He was noted as previously living at French Corral in Nevada County.

In the letter Wait and Waite are both and there was a group of brothers named Waite listed for Shasta in the 1850 U. S. Census. The brothers, who were all born in Ohio, were Nelson Waite 1819-1904, Obediah B. Waite 1822-1898, Benjamin Kent Waite 1818- 1913 and Francis M. Waite 1830-1899. It is conjecture but there seems to be a connection between the individuals: Ohio. Ira Pratt came to California from Ohio as did the Waite brothers. The Waite brothers appear to have returned to Ohio by 1854.

**Milton Delaphane, Chasta City, September 23, 1850**



The cover of the letter was addresses to Moses Emery a long-time lawyer in Saco, York County, Maine. The postmark is from Sacramento in October 1850 and in the top corner someone applied the note Milton Luppam Sept. 23/50 which is when the letter was written. Envelope and letter courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.



Charter City Sep 29 1850

Moses Emery Esq Dear Sir,

I have just returned from Trinity where  
I have spent three months engaged in  
a damming operation which has completely  
died me with a thousand other poor  
unfortunate devils who have spent this  
summer on Trinity. This is the first opportunity  
of writing you since I left in the spring.  
I have two hundred and fifty dollars which  
is all I could muster after the failure of  
the dam. Will I would send you cash  
I don't with safety. I regret that I could not  
have sent you some clothes. But I will  
forward some within two months if I have  
to make a trip to the City for that  
only. My health is very good and I intend  
to stay in the mines this winter where  
I think I can make a little, not a fortune  
for the days for making fortunes have  
past for not one hundredth part of the  
miners have earned their salt this  
season and unless the emigration is  
stopped a greater amount of humane  
misery never was piled into one place  
than will be witnessed in California  
within two years. Robbery and murder  
will be common events companies are already  
forming to scour the Southern mines

and rob the Mexicans who are at  
work there I was elected Capt of one  
company providing I would join but  
I declined having any thing to do with  
the expedition this must be kept  
a secret don't let anyone see this letter  
write to my parents tell them I  
have not much now but intend to  
have in two or three years or two shall send  
them some next spring if not this  
fall ~~burn it~~ Destroy this after you  
have read it and you will oblige  
Milton Delaphane

Chasta City Sep. 23, 1850

Moses Emory Esq. Dear Sir

I have just returned from Trinity, where I have spent three months engaged in a damning operation which completely dried me with a thousand other poor unfortunate devils who have spent this summer on Trinity. This is the first opportunity of writing you since I left in the spring.

I have two hundred and fifty dollars which is all I could muster after the failure of the dam. This I would send to you, could I do it in safety. I regret that I could not have sent you some of this but I will forward some within two months if I have to make a trip to the City for that only.

My health is very good and I intend to stay in the mines this winter, where I think I can make a little, not a fortune, for the days of making fortunes have past, for not one hundredth part of the miners have earned their salt this season and unless the emigration is stopped, a greater amount of human misery never was packed into one place than will be witnessed by California within two years.

Robbery and murder will be common events. Companies are already forming to scare the southern miners and rob the Mexicans who are at work. Here I was elected captain of one company providing I would join, but declined having anything to do with the expedition. This must be kept a secret. Don't let anyone see this letter.

Write to my parents, tell them I have not much now but intend to have in a year or two. Shall send them some next spring if not this fall. Destroy this after you have read it and you will oblige.

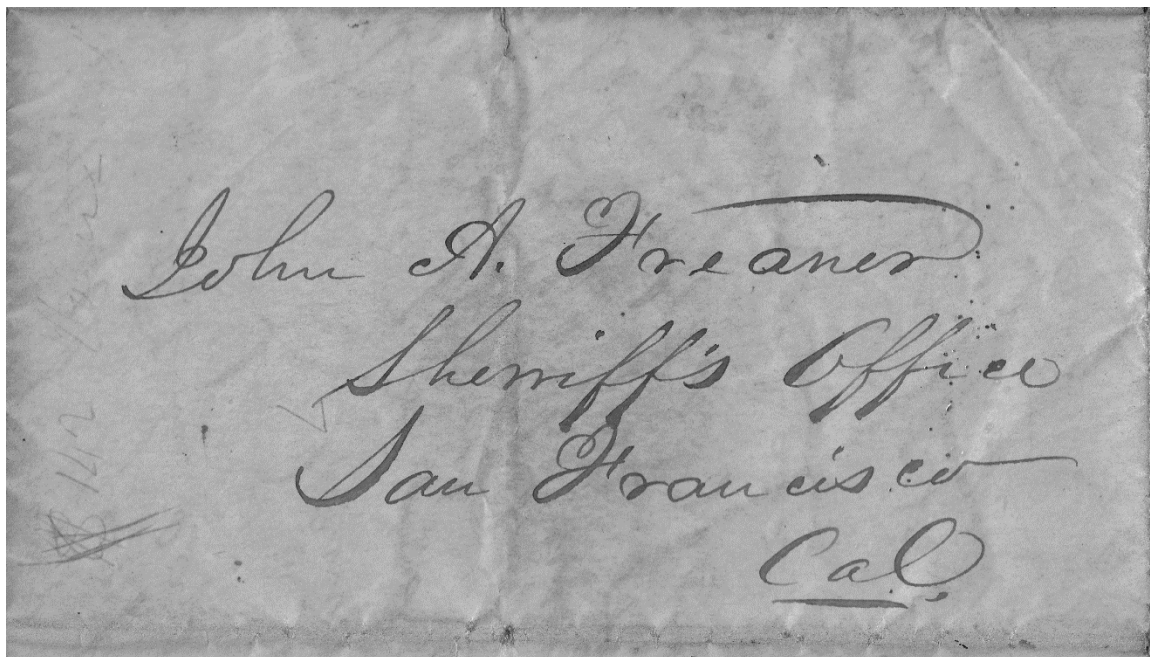
Milton Delaphane

Nothing was found on Milton Delaphane using various spellings in California or Maine. The notation on the cover cites Milton Luppam and various spellings again turned up nothing. There was a Moses Emory, Esquire in Saco, York County, Maine in 1850 who was a lawyer born about 1790 (died 1881).

In many of the early mining camps miners attempted to build wing dams across parts of California's rivers. If successful, the process exposed the riverbed on one side of a river and allowed miners to work the sediment down to the bedrock. For those that succeeded it could be very profitable, but many companies formed to create wing dams failed costing miners both time and money.

By April 1850 the American miners had forced the California Legislature to enact a foreign miner's tax of twenty dollars per month on all miners who were not U. S. citizens. The English, Irish, Canadian, and German miners protested, and the act was modified to exempt all free white persons. By the end of 1850 only about one thousand Chinese had arrived in California, so the act was aimed mainly at miners from Mexico, Peru, and Chile. As claims became more difficult to find and completion increased, tensions mounted to the point of violence in many mining camps. Nativism became a political theme in California for decades and led to the formation of the Know Nothing Party (American Party after 1855). The 1850 act was repealed in 1851 after serious protests only to be reintroduced in modified form in 1852.

James L. Freaner, Reading's Rancho, October 11, 1850



Envelope and letter courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

Readings Ranch  
Oct 11, 1850

My Brother -

I arrived here about two weeks since sick enough to go to bed but the healthiness of the country and good living has brought me out without the aid of medicine - I am now engaged in getting ready for the winter and making my arrangements to commence farming in the spring. I think I shall be able to make a good deal of cash during the winter.

I wrote to you from Sacramento City and sent you a power of Attorney by Mr. Hensley - He will hereafter attend to the water property and I will get my interest in it - If you should hear of his making a sale of it or he should mention any such thing to you receive my interest as you see proper and make what use you please of it. He, however, will do what is right between him and me - Send my papers and letters to Hensley and Merrill of Sacramento - or if you see Mr. Hensley give them to him -

Give Col. Wells my regards and tell him to write to me - I should to know what time the election for U. S. Senator will come off.



Destroy all my letters after you receive them.

See Wardsworth and ask him what has been done with Congress Hall And also see my friend Judge Levensworth and ask him if he knows what has been done with the Thompson lot and write it to me what he says.

Yours

James L. Freeman

Mag Reading and Tom Will was out on a hunt the day I arrived and they only killed eight muskies, Bear and six deer that they got. They also shot two more Bear that got into the brush and night came on and they could not get them out.

Give my regards to Caperton and Jack Hays. Tell Jack the little gun shoots to a nicety.  
Wm. H. Hays

Reading's Ranche

October 11, 1850

D. Brother

I arrived here about two weeks since sick enough to go to bed but the healthiness of the country and good living have brought me out without the aid of medicine. I am now engaged in getting ready for the winter and making my arrangements to commence farming in the spring. I think I shall be able to make a good deal of cash during the winter.



*I wrote to you from Sacramento City and sent you a power of attorney by Mr. Hensley. I will hereafter attend to the water property and I will get my interest in it. If you should hear of his making a sale of it or he should mention any such thing to you receive my interest as you see proper and make what use you please of it. I, however, will do what is right between him and me. Send my papers and letters to Hensley and Merrill of Sacramento – or if you see Mr. Hensley give them to him.*

*Give Col. Weller my regards and tell him to write to me – I should like to know what time the election for U. S. Senator will come off.*

*Destroy all my letters after you receive them.*

*See Wadsworth and ask him what has been done with Congress and all. And also see my friend Judge Levensworth and ask him if he knows what has been done with the Thompson lot and write it to me what he says.*

*Yours*

*James L. Frenner*

*Maj. Reading and Tom Hill was out on a hunt the day I arrived and they only killed eight grizzly bear and six deer that they got – they also shot two more bear that got into the brush and might come on and they could not get them out.*

*Give my regards to Caperton and Jack Hays. Tell Jack the little gun shoots to a nicety.*

*R*

*James Frenner.*

James Logan Frenner was the son of Heinrich Wilhelm “William” Frenner 1792-1870 and Margatha Hagerty 1798-1878. James was born in 1817 in Maryland and may have been a newspaper writer in New Orleans prior to the Declaration of War with Mexico. James enlisted at Port Isabel, Texas in the 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Mounted Infantry commanded by Col John “Jack” Coffee Hays. The regiment was commonly called the “Texas Rangers” and joined General Zachary Taylor at the Battle of Monterrey and played a distinguished part in the fighting. James was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant, but the regiment had only been raised for six months service and was mustered out of service following the battle. James appears to have joined a second regiment raised by Col Hays in 1847 for twelve months service. The second regiment was assigned to General Winfield Scott’s campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. During his service John wrote under a pseudonym for the New Orleans *Delta* newspaper. He wrote under a number of names but the most remembered was “Mustang.” The pseudonym comes from when John during an attack killed a Lancero (lancer) officer and took his horse. After the capture of Mexico City James was close with Nicholas P. Trist who negotiated the peace treaty for President James K. Polk. Trist entrusted James to carry the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo to Washington, D. C.

James was believed to have returned to Mexico before coming to California to report on the Gold Rush. James may have been accompanied by his younger brother John and both reached San Francisco about the time his old commanding officer Col John Hays and Major John Caperton arrived after traveling overland from Texas than by ship from San Diego. Hays became the first elected Sheriff of San Francisco in April 1850 and John Caperton became the first deputy sheriff. From the envelope Col. Hays found a place for in the department for John Anderson Frenner.

From the letter James appears to have had business plans not only in San Francisco but across the State. He addresses lots in San Francisco and on his trip to Reading's Ranch he stopped at Sacramento where Samuel L. Hensley, the friend and former partner of Pierson B. Reading, had formed Hensley, Merrill & King a brokerage and business bank in April 1850. He also appears to have a land deal with William B. Ide in Colusi County, probably at Monroeville, before reaching Reading's Ranch. Although James claims to be starting a farm in the spring of 1851 he also plans to make money during the winter. James was known to have proposed to the State Legislature a plan to develop a wagon road connecting communications with Oregon.

After leaving Reading's ranch James appears to have moved to Yreka in Siskiyou County. The Legislature passed the act for a wagon road connecting the Sacramento Valley to the border of Oregon on its third reading in 1852. James was granted the right to regulate the tolls on the road. In June 1852 while scouting the road at the Pitt River, James, John Brando, "Cayuse" Jackson, and "Adobe" John were ambushed by Pitt River Indians and killed.

The letter was written by James, to his younger brother John Anderson Frenner. John was born in 1817 in Maryland and very little was found about his early life. It is not known if he served during the Mexican War nor for sure if he accompanied his brother to Mexico after the war although he did obtain a passport in 1849. What is known is that John was serving in the Sheriff's Department in San Francisco in October 1850 and had James' power of attorney to conduct business for him. When Col. Hays left office in 1852, John remained under Sheriff Thomas R. Johnson. A news article states Undersheriff John Frenner was shot and wounded on July 20, 1853, while trying to evict a squatter from a house on Mission Street.

By 1861 John was listed as an aide with the rank of captain in the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Division of the California State Militia. The unit included Alameda County but not San Francisco. When John registered to vote in 1876 in San Francisco it stated he transferred from Alameda County. It appears John was working as a stockbroker in Alameda County at least from 1861 to 1876. When John returned to San Francisco he appears to be semi-retired as sometimes he listed no occupation and at others stockbroker. John appears never to have married and died in 1885. John was buried in the plot with Col. John "Jack" Coffee Hays.

James Frenner mentions sending a power of attorney through Mr. Hensley in Sacramento City and later describes the company as Hensley and Merrill. Hensley is Samuel J. Hensley who was born in Kentucky in 1817 and as a young man trapped and hunted the wilds of Missouri becoming acquainted with many famous Mountain Men. In 1843 Samuel joined the Childes-Walker Party destined for California along with Pierson B. Reading. In California the party divided with Hensley and Reading finding employment at Sutter's Fort and much of the rest of the party going on to Monterey. Sutter assigned Hensley to float logs down the Sacramento River to Sutter's settlements at Marysville and Sacramento. When Reading decided to apply for a Mexican land grant it was Hensley who recommended the location and mapped the site. Part of the proposed grant included Bloody Island named after a fight with Hensley's logging crew and local Yana.

In 1846 Hensley resigned from Sutter's employment to join the California Battalion during the Mexican War. Hensley was commissioned as a major. At the conclusion of the war Hensley accompanied Commodore Stockton and John C. Fremont to Washington D. C. for Fremont's trial for insubordination in a struggle over the military governorship of California. On the return trip Hensley and a party of ten men discovered the Salt Lake cut-off that avoided the

dangerous Hastings cut-off and saved about one hundred and fifty miles on the journey to California.

Upon his return in 1848, Hensley, Reading, John A. Sutter, Junior, and Jacob Rink Snyder started a mercantile company in Sacramento. The store closed by mutual consent early in 1850 and Hensley went on to form a new firm. James Freaner called the firm Hensley and Merrill but it was actually Hensley, Merrill & King with Robert D. Merrill and James King, of William. The firm purchased gold dust becoming an exchange, brokerage, and banking company. In 1854 Hensley became a partner in Reading's Latona Company but his main focus was on consolidation of inland steamship transportation as President of the California Steam Navigation Company. Hensley died in 1866.

The second person mentioned in the letter was Ide concerning water property. This was undoubtedly William B. Ide who in 1850 was living at Monroeville on the Sacramento River and attempting to develop Colusi County. Ide was born in 1796 in Massachusetts and was a carpenter by trade. Ide and his wife Susan moved to Kentucky, then Ohio and finally Illinois where Ide supplemented his farming income by teaching school. In 1845, Ide, a Mormon, sold his farm and joined a wagon train bound for the Oregon Territory. On the advice of Caleb Greenwood, a Mountain Man and guide, Ide and a small group split off for California. After arriving at Sutter's Fort in October 1845, Ide traveled north to work for Peter Lassen. In 1846 Ide joined with a small group of settlers and seized the town of Sonoma and the Mexican military commander. The group declared California a republic and for twenty-five days Ide was President. After U.S. forces took over control at Sonoma Ide joined the California Battalion along with Hensley and Reading.

After the war Ide returned to Red Bluff and resumed a partnership with Josiah Belden in Rancho Barranca Colorado. Ide bought out Belden in 1849 and had moderate success in gold mining. Ide was elected to office in Colusi County (Tehama and Glenn Counties were not yet formed and Red Bluffs was in Shasta County) with the County Seat at Monroeville (now a ghost town in Glenn County). Ide served as Probate and County Judge, Presiding Judge of the Court of Sessions, County Recorder, County Auditor, County Clerk, County Treasurer, Deputy County Surveyor, and Deputy Sheriff. The "water property" could have been at either Red Bluff of Monroeville as both are on the Sacramento River. Ide died of smallpox in December of 1852.

James Freaner next asked about Col. Weller and the election for the U. S. Senate. Colonel Weller is John B. Weller born in 1812 in Ohio, who was a senator from Ohio, Senator from California, fifth Governor of California and a minister to Mexico.

Weller began his career as a prosecuting attorney for Butler County in Ohio from 1833 to 1836. In 1838 he was elected to Congress from Ohio and served until 1845. Weller served as a Lieutenant Colonel in the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Ohio Volunteers from 1846 to 1847. The regiment served at the Battle of Monterrey making Weller, Hays, Caperton and James Freaner all possible acquaintances. After the war Weller ran an unsuccessful campaign for governor of Ohio. In 1849 and 1850 Weller was a member of the U. S. Commission to establish the border between Mexico and California. Weller was removed by President Taylor and decided to settle in California and practice law. In January 1852 the California Legislature elected Weller to the U. S. Senate seat and he served until 1857. Weller was unsuccessful in a bid for another term as senator but was elected Governor of California from 1858 to 1860. President Buchanan

appointed Weller as ambassador to Mexico, but President Lincoln recalled him shortly after he presented his credentials.

Weller moved to Louisiana in 1867 to practice law. Weller died in New Orleans in 1875.

James Freaner commented on his “friend Judge Levensworth” and a lot in San Francisco. James was most likely referring to Thaddeus Leavenworth who was Alcalde of San Francisco from October 1847 to June 1849. Alcalde was the Spanish title retained during the period of military control of California and having both judicial and administrative functions. After the first state constitution abolished the position those who had served retained the honorary title of judge. Judge Leavenworth was put out of office for financial perfidy.

Thaddeus was born in Connecticut in 1803 and at the time of the Mexican War was an Episcopalian minister (as well as physician and druggist) on Staten Island in New York. Thaddeus joined Colonel Stevenson’s 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment of New York Volunteers (later changed to the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment) being raised specifically for service in California. Thaddeus was regimental chaplain and arrived with the unit in March 1847. At the end of hostilities, the regiment was disbanded in California. Thaddeus quickly entered local politics and was appointed Alcalde but was repeatedly accused of exploiting his office by selling waterfront lots. By the time of the letter Thaddeus had moved to a disputed eight-hundred-acre ranch in Sonoma County but still controlled numerous lots in San Francisco, Thaddeus survived until 1893, dying in Sonoma County.

James Freaner commented that Major Reading and Tom Hill were out hunting upon his arrival in Shasta County. Thomas Hill was believed to have been born about 1811 and raised with the Delaware (Lenape). There is no agreement if Hill was half Native American or of full blood. Tom was noted to have joined Kit Carson in 1833 and wintered over in California. Hill remained with Kit Carson operating out of Taos (New Mexico) until 1839. Tom settled among the Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) and married a member of the band. In 1846 Tom joined a group of Walla Walla going to meet with John Sutter over a prior confrontation. Upon learning that the Mexican War had begun, and that John C. Fremont was calling for volunteers, several of the Walla Walla volunteered as scouts and Tom joined a white rifle company. The volunteers marched to Monterey and near present day Salinas, a scout party including Tom Hill was confronted by several hundred Mexicans. The party was cut off from Fremont’s main command and after four hours Tom volunteered to slip through and get help. Tom was followed by a small group of Mexicans who gave up the chase after Tom killed four with his tomahawk. For the Battle of Natividad Reading awarded Tom a silver tomahawk and three extra months pay. For the rest of the war Tom commanded the Native scouts.

After the war Tom was believed to have been employed by Reading at his ranch in Shasta County. Tom was known to have been part of the prospecting party that found gold on Clear Creek in 1849 and from the letter he was still present in late 1850. By 1854 Tom returned east to the Delaware Reservation in Kansas where he received a land allotment of one hundred and sixty acres. Tom was believed to have died in 1860.

Pierson B. Reading was born in New Jersey in 1816. In his early life he was a cotton broker at Vicksburg by 1837. He was married but his wife died before leaving for California in 1843. The couple had a daughter Jeanette who was left in the care of Reading’s relatives in Philadelphia when he moved west (some sources cite she was left in a Catholic Convent in New Orleans). Reading was one of the twenty-five members of the Chiles-Walker

Party that entered California following the Pit River then Sacramento River to Sutter's Fort. Reading agreed to work for Sutter and was often out with hunting and trapping parties in the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys and Sierras. His friend Samuel Hensley from the Chiles-Walker Party had logged for Sutter around Bloody Island and recommended the area to Reading for a land grant. In 1844 Governor Manuel Micheltorena granted Reading six leagues between Lodo Creek and Bloody Island named Rancho Buena Ventura. The land was occupied by a ranch manager named Julian while Reading continued to work for Sutter. With the Bear Flag Revolt Reading enlisted under Colonel John C. Fremont but with the appearance of regular American forces joined the California Battalion raised by Commodore Stockton. Fremont became the battalion commander while Reading was appointed paymaster with the rank of major. With the conclusion of fighting in California, Reading moved to Shasta County to improve the ranch. Reading quickly visited his friend Sutter when the news of the gold strike became public and Reading recognized the geological similarities to the country west of his ranch. Reading took a large party of Indians out to prospect. He found gold at Reading's Bar near what became Horsetown and started the rush to the northern mines. In Reading's second gold expedition to what became Trinity County he discovered gold at Reading's Bar near current Douglas City but also had disputes with miners from Oregon who resented Reading's use of Indians. Reading gave up active mining but leased land for others to prospect. Reading focused on commercial operations such as opening a store in Sacramento with his friends Samuel Hensley and Jacob R. Snyder (Hensley, Reading & Company). The store operated only until early 1850. In 1849 Reading did outfit an unsuccessful ocean expedition to find the mouth of the Trinity and Klamath Rivers. The expedition was blown off course and it was left for others to explore Humboldt Bay and new routes to the interior gold fields. In 1850 Reading visited Washington D.C. to settle accounts of the California Battalion. Reading's ledgers were precise, and he was soon on his way back to California. He did stop at Vicksburg and New Orleans where he demonstrated his commercial integrity by paying \$60,000 in debts from his cotton-broker days. Again in California Reading ran unsuccessfully as the Whig candidate for Governor. Reading's good offices with the Native Americans was used in 1851 when Oliver Wozencroft was assigned to obtain treaties with Native Americans. Negotiations were held at Reading's Rancho and a treaty was signed but never ratified by the U.S. Congress. In 1852 President Fillmore appointed Reading Special Indian Agent for California but Reading quickly returned to commercial pursuits to improve transportation and agriculture. Reading experimented with new crops such as tobacco and cotton. In 1852 Reading filed a petition with the U.S. Land Commissioner for a patent for his grant. The petition was initially approved in December 1852 but later rescinded. Reading appealed the decision to the U. S. District Court and the patent was again granted and rescinded. Finally Reading returned to Washington D.C. in 1854 to appear before the Supreme Court. Reading received introduction to the Washington family from Lt. Richard Bland Lee. Lee, who had served in California had probably met Reading in 1850 when his ledgers for the California Battalion were inspected. The introduction led to his marriage to Fannie Wallace Washington. In 1856 the Supreme Court awarded Reading title to the grant as petitioned in 1852 and Reading and new bride returned to California. Reading returned to developing northern California quickly starting a grist mill, ferry, and developing river navigation into Shasta County. In 1854 Reading, Samuel Hensley and Thomas Lysle formed the Latona Company for clearing the Sacramento River above Red Bluff in exchange for exclusive steamship



rights for twenty years. Reading had the town of Latona at the mouth of Clear Creek plotted. In 1861 William Magee started clearing the channel north of Latona and in 1862 Reading authorized him to sell lots. The navigation scheme was never successful, and the development of Latona was curtailed by fire in 1863. In 1860 the family was pressed for funds and in March 1866, Fannie and Pierson signed a mortgage in favor of Mary H. Hensley and Charles J. Brenham, executor of the late Samuel J. Hensley's estate to secure a note for \$34, 125. In 1868 Pierson B. Reading died suddenly leaving his wife Fannie Wallace Reading and five children: Anna Washington 1858, Alice Matilda 1859, twins Robert Lee and Richard Washington 1863, and Fannie Collins 1865. The couple's son Pierson Barton born in 1861 died in 1863. After Readings death the widow of Samuel Hensley brought an action in court to recover the loan, she claimed was unpaid. Rancho Buena Ventura was collateral for the loan. In the absence of proof of payment, the Court ordered the ranch up for sale exempting all previous sales and the 1,507 acres around the mansion. In 1871 James Ben Ali Haggin purchased approximately 20,000 acres for \$34,438.32 that was sufficient to pay the Hensley debt. Fannie and the five remaining children moved back to Washington D.C. where they resided with Fannie's widowed mother Ann Matilda Washington. Richard, Robert, and Alice would return to Shasta County later in their lives. Later Robert Reading discovered among his father's papers receipts for sufficient land sales and mining stocks to bring the matter of the land sale before a new court. The family chose not to reopen the claim due to the harm to later purchasers who bought in good faith.

The last two individuals mentioned in the letter were Caperton and Jack Hays. Jack is actually John "Jack" Coffee Hays who was born in Tennessee in 1817. At the age of fifteen Hays' parents died and he took a job as a surveyor's assistant. In 1836, after news of the fall of the Alamo, Hays set off to fight in Texas. After serving in the Army of Texas, Hays joined the newly formed Texas Rangers who were directed to maintain law and order in the Texas Republic.

While serving as a ranger, Hays also continued to work as a surveyor often in some of the most isolated areas under the control of various Native American bands. In 1840 Hays was promoted to captain in the Texas Rangers. In 1841 he was also elected Bexar County Surveyor. In 1842 Governor Sam Houston promoted Hay to the rank of major in the Texas Rangers. Hays outfitted the Rangers with Colt's revolutionary five shot Paterson revolver and revolving rifles. In 1844 the increased fire power turned the tide at the Battle of Walker's Creek where Hay and fourteen Rangers beat back an estimated one to two hundred Comanche.

In 1845 Texas was annexed to the United States and gained statehood in December 1845. The change had little effect on the Texas Rangers and Hays continued operating until the beginning of the Mexican War. Texas was requested to supply troops for the war and the governor directed Hays to raise a regiment of militia around a small corps of Rangers. Hays was successful in raising the 1<sup>st</sup> Texas Mounted Rifle Volunteers and was commissioned its colonel. With Hays as the commanding officer the regiment participated in the Battle of Monterey. After the battle the regiment was disbanded as the term of enlistment was only for six months. The governor of Texas sent Hays to Washington D. C. in February 1847 to plead for more federal assistance in raising troops and defending Texas. As a direct result Hays was authorized to raise a regiment for twelve months service and to proceed to Vera Cruz. Hays and the regiment marched from Vera Cruz to Mexico fighting multiple battles then marched back to Vera Cruz fighting small bands of guerrillas. It was not until May 1848 that Hays returned to Texas and was discharged from military service.

Hays took an assignment from the State of Texas surveying roads west from San Antonio. At the conclusion of the almost four-month survey there was a movement for Hays to run for governor of Texas, but he declined. Instead, Hays took an offer from the new U. S. Department of Interior and set off in the summer of 1849 for an expedition to explore routes from El Paso to California. Hays party reached San Diego by the end of December 1849 and Hays issued his report about the viability of the route and the need for protection from Apache and resigned.

Hays, Caperton and John Nugent took a coastal steamer to San Francisco arriving on January 25, 1850. Hays reputation preceded him, and he was quickly approached to run for sheriff. Hays was offered the Whig ticket but decided to run as an independent. Hays won handily becoming sheriff of a much larger San Francisco County as San Mateo County was not formed until 1856. Hays was joined by his wife Susan and purchased the two-thousand-acre Mountain House Ranch on the peninsula. Hays was immediately faced with having to build a real county jail as the old hulk Euphemia in the harbor was inadequate. Hays also faced the civilian uprising against crime known as the Committee of Vigilance formed in 1851. Hays was not a member of the Committee, but he at least had their approval on most issues. The conflict with the Committee of Vigilance came to a head when they started handing out death sentences and he was directed by the governor and Court to intervene. Hays won a bid for a second term but was already looking ahead to a different career. In March 1852 Hays, Caperton and a few other investors purchased thousands of acres on the East Bay known as Encinal. The purchase included Lake Merritt and the group quickly developed the town of Oakland.

At the end of 1852 Hays took a four month leave of absence as Sheriff and traveled to Washington D. C. Hays intended on attending the inauguration of Franklin Pierce and to seek an appointment as California's Surveyor General. Four days after Hays' return to San Francisco in early 1853 he resigned as Sheriff and took up his new post of Surveyor General, serving until 1856. Through this whole process Hays maintained his partnership with Caperton and bought and sold extensive tracts of land.

Hays traveled to Nevada in 1859 due to problems with the Paiute disrupting silver mining. Hays raised a militia unit known as the Washoe Regiment of several hundred men and went on campaign in the Carson River Valley. Hays participated in the Battle of Williams Station and the Second Battle of Pyramid Lake Hays was still in Nevada at the beginning of the Civil War but soon returned to California.

Hays returned to Oakland where he was a major stockholder in the Oakland Gas Light Company as well as founder and director of Oakland's Union National Bank. Hays was active in Democratic politics and a regent of the University of California Board of Directors. John "Jack" Coffee Hays died in Oakland in 1883.

John Caperton was the son of Hugh Elwood Caperton 1781-1847 and Mary Jane Erskine 1786-1831. He was born in Virginia (now West Virginia) in 1817 and nothing was found about his life prior to appearing in Texas about the time it joined the United States. John appears to have joined the Texas Rangers about 1845 and was believed to have been in the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Texas Mounted Rifle Volunteers. John was definitely a member of the second Texas regiment organized by John Hays and was believed to have risen to the rank of major. When Col. Hays took the job of surveying the roads west of San Antonio, John was part of the hundred- and six-day expedition and when Col. Hays took the U. S. Department of Interior expedition from El Paso to California John was part of the fifty-nine whites, five Mexicans and eight Indians in the

party. John traveled with Hays to San Francisco arriving there in January 1850. Upon Col. Hays election to sheriff in 1850, John was appointed the first Deputy Sheriff. John was a partner with Col. Hays in the land deals in the East Bay and San Francisco and appears to have dropped out of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department when Col. Hays resigned.

In 1856 John married Mary Elizabeth Guthrie 1823-1901. In 1859 John traveled to Nevada but he does not appear on the list of officers in the Washoe Regiment. John did show up in a military dispatch from Nevada considering him a secessionist sympathizer. The report proved unfounded, and John returned to Oakland in 1861 to continue in real estate. In the 1880 U. S. Census John was listed as a capitalist living in San Francisco. After the death of Col. Hays in 1883, John appears to have moved to Louisville, Kentucky where he had four children (only one survived John). John died in Chicago in 1900 and his will demonstrated that he still had a connection to California: three lots in Alameda, nine hundred acres on Roberts Island in San Joaquin County, one thousand acres on Twitchell Island in Sacramento County and one thousand eight hundred acres in Contra Costa County. John's surviving son and heir was named John Hays Caperton.

## Mary Ann Andrews (nee Dudley) and Alexander Robertson Andrews

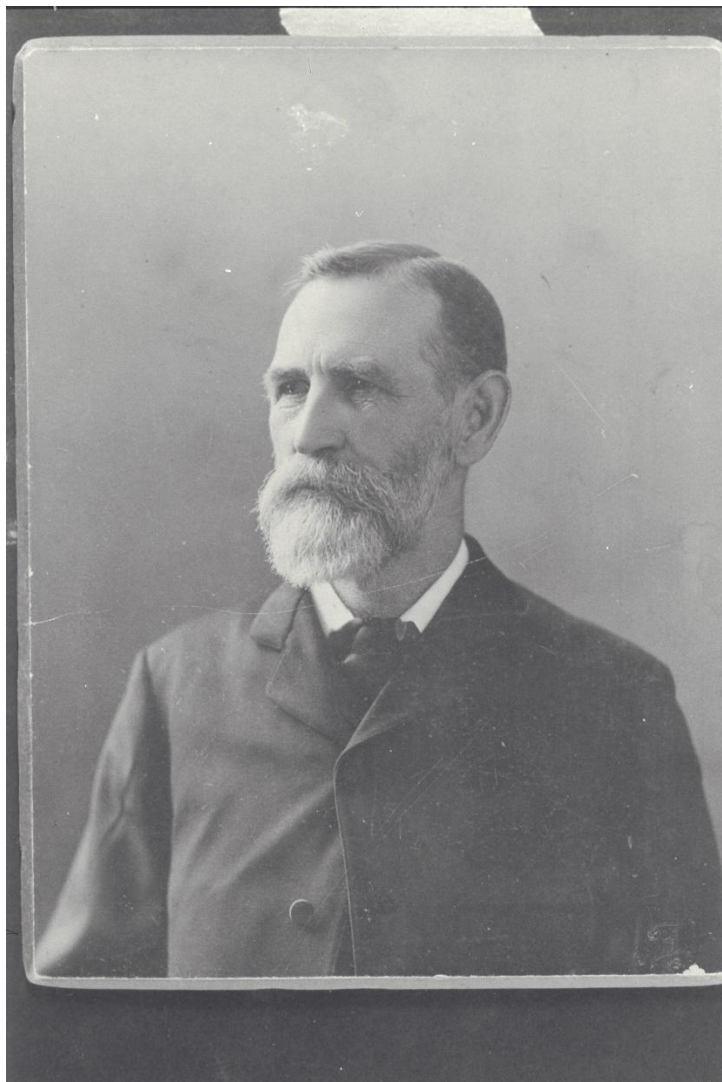


The portrait identified as Mary Andrews. Courtesy of Ralph Holibaugh.

The portrait is identified as Mary Jane Andrews, but the name was only found on the 1880 U. S. Census. On the Census of 1850 and 1900 the name is given as Mary A. and no middle initial was given in 1860, 1870 and 1910. According to the North American Family Histories the given name was Mary Ann Stout Dudley. Mary Ann was born in 1829 in Kentucky and was the daughter of James Hite Dudley and Elizabeth Davis Shumate. In 1856 Mary married Alexander R. Andrews who was on a trip from California.

Alexander Robertson Andrews was the American Party Assemblyman at the 7<sup>th</sup> Session (1856) and Democratic Assemblyman at the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Sessions (1869-1872) of the California legislature. He was born in Kentucky in 1829 and served in the Mexican American War as a sergeant in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Kentucky Volunteers. After serving in the campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City he returned to Kentucky in 1848. In 1849 he immigrated to California with the Abraham Cunningham wagon train via the Peter Lassen route. He was a member of the mining party led by Abraham Cunningham that opened up the Arbuckle area of Shasta County in 1850. Due to conflicts with the Wintu he returned to Clear Creek Diggings and developed mining claims on Andrew's Creek (named for Alexander). He invested in various properties including Andrew's Ditch, Roaring River and Middlefork of Cottonwood Ditch, a road from Piety Hill to his sawmill on Eagle Creek (it became a public road in 1862), and a toll bridge across Clear Creek. He returned to Kentucky in 1856 and married Mary Ann Dudley before returning to California in 1857. His partner in many operations was Henry Clay Stockton who was sheriff from 1858 to 1860 and who was married to his sister, Ella. He purchased the Kentucky Ranch on lower Clear Creek which became a noted racetrack. He studied law and opened a practice in Shasta specializing in land law. Andrew and Mary had five children: Ella (1857-1936; married and divorced Scott Sutton), Eliza "Lydia" Dudley (1858-1894; married Rudolph M. Saeltzer), James Dudley (1861-1889), Mary Shumate (1865-1941; married Judge Edward Sweeney), and Zelinda (1867-1930; married William J. Gillespie then Charles Barner). Stockton's wife Ella died in childbirth in December 1857, but their daughter Ella survived. In 1860 Stockton sold his interests in Shasta County to Andrew, left Ella in the care of the Andrews family, and moved to Tehama County (he later moved to Lassen County). Stockton would reunite with Ella in the 1870s.

In 1880 and 1900 Alexander was listed as a lawyer first in Shasta then in Redding. Alexander died in 1901. In 1910 Mary was residing in the boarding house operated by her daughter Zalinda "Lynn" Gillespie in Redding. Mary died in 1914.



Alexander Andrews. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.





Andrews, Mary Dudley. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.



Andrews, Mary Dudley. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

Mary Shumate Andrews (Mrs. Edward Daniel Sweeney) and Ella A. Andrews (Mrs. Scott Sutton)



Portrait of Ella A. and her sister Mary Shumate Andrews.

Mary Shumate Andrews, born in 1865 in Shasta and Ella A. Andrews born in 1857 were the daughters of Alexander Robertson Andrews 1829-1901 and Mary Ann Stout Dudley 1829-1914. Their father was the American Party Assemblyman at the 7<sup>th</sup> Session (1856) and Democratic Assemblyman at the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Sessions (1869-1872) of the California legislature. He was born in Kentucky in 1829 and served in the Mexican American War as a sergeant in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment of Kentucky Volunteers. After serving in the campaign from Vera Cruz to Mexico City he returned to Kentucky in 1848. In 1849 he immigrated to California with the Abraham Cunningham wagon train via the Peter Lassen route. He was a member of the mining party led by Abraham Cunningham that opened up the Arbuckle area of Shasta County in 1850. Due to conflicts with the Wintu he returned to Clear Creek Diggings and developed mining claims on Andrew's Creek (named for Alexander). He invested in various properties including Andrew's Ditch, Roaring River and Middlefork of Cottonwood Ditch, a road from Piety Hill to his sawmill on Eagle Creek (it became a public road in 1862), and a toll bridge across Clear Creek. He returned to Kentucky in 1856 and married Mary Ann Dudley before returning to California in 1857. His partner in many operations was Henry Clay Stockton who was sheriff from 1858 to 1860 and who was married to his sister, Ella. He purchased the Kentucky Ranch on lower Clear Creek which became a noted racetrack. He studied law and opened a practice in Shasta specializing in land law. Andrew would continue his law practice in Redding up until his

death in 1901. Mary would survive until 1914. Andrew and Mary had five children: Ella (1857-1936; married Scott Sutton), Eliza "Lydia" Dudley (1858-1894; married Rudolph M. Saeltzer), James Dudley (1861-1889), Mary Shumate (1865-1941; married Judge Edward Sweeney), and Zelinda (1867-1930; married William J. Gillespie, then Charles Barner). Stockton's wife Ella died in childbirth in December 1857, but their daughter Ella survived. In 1860 Stockton sold his interests to Andrew, left Ella in care of the Andrews family, and moved to Tehama County (he later moved to Lassen County). Stockton would reunite with Ella in the 1870s.

Ella Andrews was born in 1857 in Shasta County, most likely at Piety Hill. Ella made the move with her family to Shasta and by 1880 was teaching school there. At some point after 1880 Ella married Scott Sutton and the marriage ended in divorce prior to 1900. In 1900 Ella was living with her parents in Redding and in 1910 Ella was living in her sister's Zelinda Gillespie's boarding house with her mother. Ella died in Redding in 1936.

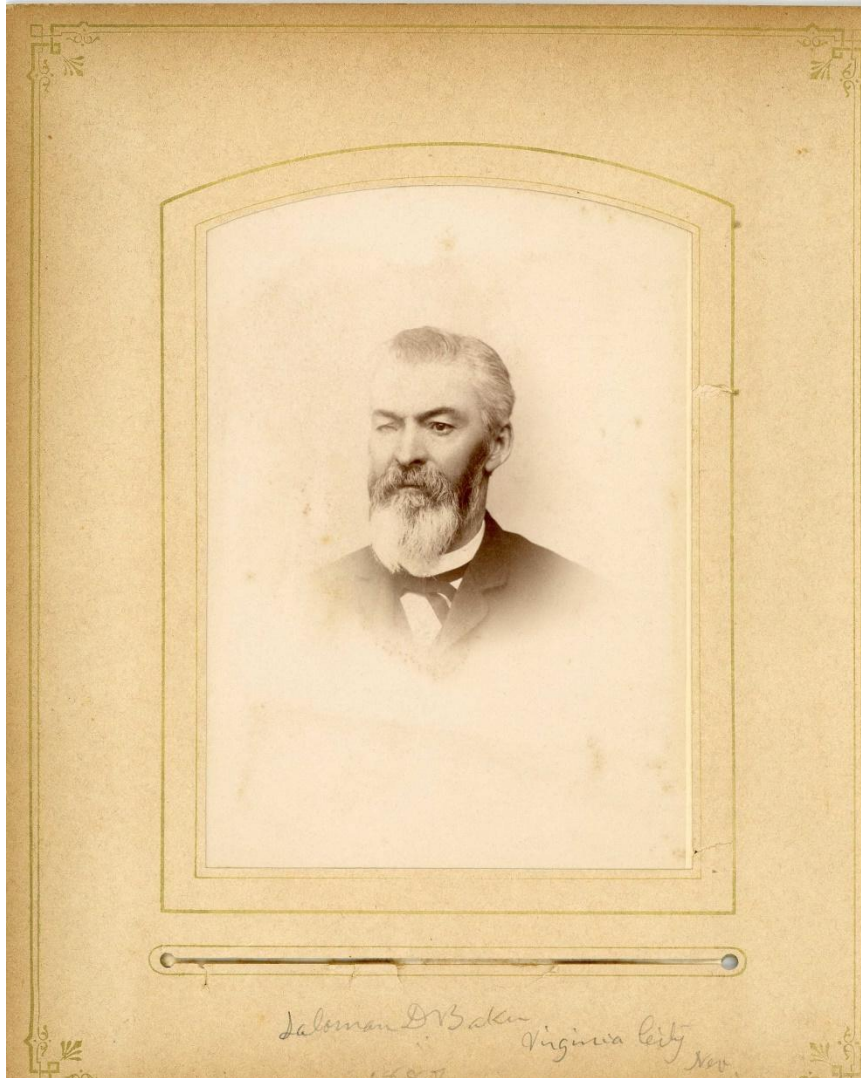
Mary Shumate Andrews was born in Shasta in 1865. In 1892 Mary married Edward Daniel Sweeny who was born in 1854 in Massachusetts. Edward's parents were Daniel Sweeny born about 1818 in Ireland and Anna Sweeny born about 1826 in Ireland. By 1870 Daniel had moved the family to Horsetown where he was a miner. By 1875 Edward was teaching school at Shasta and appears to have begun the study of law. In 1881 Edward was listed as a lawyer in Shasta and from 1882 to 1886 served as the Shasta County District Attorney. After having served as District Attorney Edward returned to the practice of law until succeeding Judge Aaron Bell on the Superior Court in 1890. In 1896 Edward was a lawyer in Redding and in 1905 was a partner in the law firm of Sweeny & Tillotson. In 1907 Edward was appointed Superintendent of the U. S. Mint in San Francisco. Edward died in San Francisco in 1912. From 1914 to 1917 Mary was known to have traveled extensively in Europe and the Orient before returning to San Francisco and Redding. Mary died in San Francisco in 1941.

Solomon Dodge Baker



Portrait of Solomon Dodge Baker taken at Virginia City, Nevada. Courtesy of Ancestry.com.





Solomon Dodge Baker at Virginia City. Courtesy of Ancestry.com.

Solomon Dodge Baker was born in Ohio in 1825. Solomon's parents were Dr. Isaac Baker 1788-1872 and Susannah Morgan Dodge 1788-1833. Solomon's father served in the Ohio Militia during the war of 1812 and moved the family to McClean County in Illinois in 1827. In 1831 Dr. Baker and two other businessmen established the town of Bloomington where he served as clerk of the Court of County Commissioners and later postmaster.

Solomon was believed to have crossed the plains in 1849 with a company from Bloomington but was first verified in California in March 1851 in company with his brother Hiram C. Baker 1825-1873 and a cousin, Stephen Parks. Solomon was working as a freighter at Nevada City while Hiram operated a store. By May 1853 Solomon, Hiram and Stephen Parks were in Shasta County and had established a farm on Bear Creek in an area now known as Parkville. Hiram, although still a partner moved to Humbug Gulch in Siskiyou County to mine and Stephen Parks dropped out of the partnership. In 1855 Solomon ran for County Judge but lost by a small margin and was appointed Justice of the Peace. In December 1857 Solomon married Mrs. Sarah M. Beverly (nee Davison) 1838-1878 who had a daughter Nancy born in

Indiana in 1854. Solomon and Sarah would go on to have four other children: Christopher 1860, Ada Belle 1860, Isaac Frank 1862, and Sarah M. 1865. In 1858 Solomon's brother Hiram returned to Shasta County and was raising pigs on Bloody Island. In 1859 Solomon and Hiram set up a store in Shasta to freight supplies to the mines to the west and north. By 1870 Solomon moved to Virginia City, Storey County, Nevada where he opened a grocery store. In 1878 Sarah died and in 1879 Solomon married Margaret A. Passage born about 1838 in New York. Solomon would remain in Virginia City until his death in 1902 but it appears his second marriage did not last. In 1900 Margaret was living in San Francisco with a son from a previous marriage and died there some time prior to 1930.

### **The Kohn Family of Shasta County & The Ranch at Balls Ferry** **by Patrick W. Carr (Grandson of Walter & Lillian Kohn), July 2019**

The story of Walter and Lillian Kohn is a chronicle of two fascinating and very independent spirits, whose lives intersected and eventually contributed to the rich fabric of Shasta County culture. The following brief summaries of their lives, and of their ranch holdings in south Shasta County are drawn from family records and shared lore passed down through three generations of Kohn and Carr family members in the county.

#### **Walter George Kohn (1894-1958)**

Walter G. Kohn was born in the town of Urspring, near Stuttgart, Germany on March 14, 1894, the son of George Kohn and Marie (Maurer) Kohn (daughter of Christoff Maurer). His mother died when he was born and he never knew his father. Walter was raised by his grandparents into his adolescent years and, rejecting his grandparents wishes for him to take over their dairy farm, he left home and made his way to the port city of Hamburg. Once there, he hired on as a cabin boy on a three-masted schooner.

His life as a seaman entailed harsh working conditions, scurvy, and a few violent episodes in the bars of port cities where they docked. In 1912, having suffered serious burns aboard ship, Walter was brought ashore in Brooklyn, NY and placed in a hospital. Upon release, he discovered that his ship had left without him, thus launching his unwitting journey to citizenship in America.

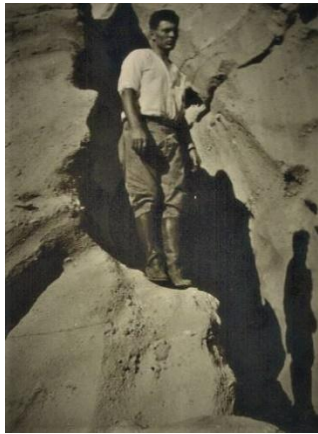
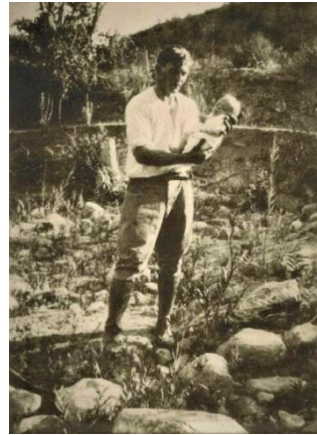
He decided to stay in the United States and began a new journey across the country, first working in mines and at odd jobs, and eventually arriving in Minneapolis, where he worked at odd jobs until he stumbled onto a maintenance position at a mental hospital in St. Paul. It was there that he met and fell in love with Lillian McDonald (or "Lou" as he would affectionately refer to her throughout their lives), a tall, red-haired nurse who "walked like a queen." They were married in Minneapolis on May 12, 1917. Their marriage eventually produced three children:

MARIE ELIZABETH KOHN CARR	B. 1918	M. LAURENCE WILLIAM CARR (1912-1991)	M. 1941	D. 2017
GEORGE ANGUS KOHN	B. 1922	M. MARY BARBARA MACHADO (1923-2013)	M. 1942	D. 1984
JOESPH WALTER KOHN	B. 1926	M. JOYCE RAE FURLONG (1930-2008)	M. 1949	D. 1988

The first child born to them was a daughter, Marie Elizabeth, unceremoniously entering the world on March 12, 1918 in a snow bank, on the way to the hospital.

#### **Re-settling in Southern California, Starting in San Fernando Valley**

Later in 1918, Walter and Lillian decided to move to sunny Southern California, to a chicken farm they'd purchased sight unseen, in the San Fernando Valley. Upon arrival at their new home, they discovered that the chicken ranch did not meet expectations. The young couple set about making improvements, cultivating a garden and doing what they could to make the place livable. Once things had stabilized on "the chicken ranch," Walter advised Lillian he was leaving for the Los Angeles area to find work. Enterprising as he was, Walter (who had once worked in a tire business in Minnesota) established a tire business in Long Beach (***Kohn's Expert Tire Service***) and relocated his young family there. Before leaving San Fernando Valley, however, their second child, George Angus Kohn (1922-1984) was born on February 17, 1922—a premature infant so small that he had to be fed with an eye-dropper. Innovatively, Walter fashioned an incubator for the child out of tinted brown whiskey bottles as he and Lillian nursed little George to survival.



Walter and daughter Marie in San Fernando Valley

Walter and baby George

Walter at ~28 years

### **The Kohns in Long Beach**

***Kohn's Expert Tire Service***, at the corner of Daisy and Seventeenth Streets in downtown Long Beach proved to be a thriving business, which survived one complete reconstruction following the massive Long Beach Earthquake on March 10, 1933.



### **Kohn's Expert Tire Service – Long Beach CA – before the big earthquake**

Walter's savvy business intellect, his disciplined work ethic, and stamina allowed him to build this successful business. He was also recognized for his physical strength, as he would often lift up the back ends of cars to kick blocks under the axles for tire removals.



In January 1926, a third child addition to the Walter Kohn family arrived – Joseph Walter Kohn (1926-1988). The fortunes of the family had improved substantially, and they settled in a comfortable home on Signal Hill in Long Beach.

Religiously, Walter was Lutheran (in later years elevating to the level of a 33<sup>rd</sup> degree Mason), but having married Lillian, a Roman Catholic, he committed to, and sent his children to St. Anthony's Catholic School in Long Beach.

Toward the end of the 1930's Walter had advanced his business to become the sole tire representative in the Long Beach area for Seiberling Rubber Company. Unfortunately, Seiberling later decided to change its tire design and left Walter with an inventory which he could not exchange, and which proved hard to sell. The business suffered substantially and Walter determined to look elsewhere for viable business alternatives.

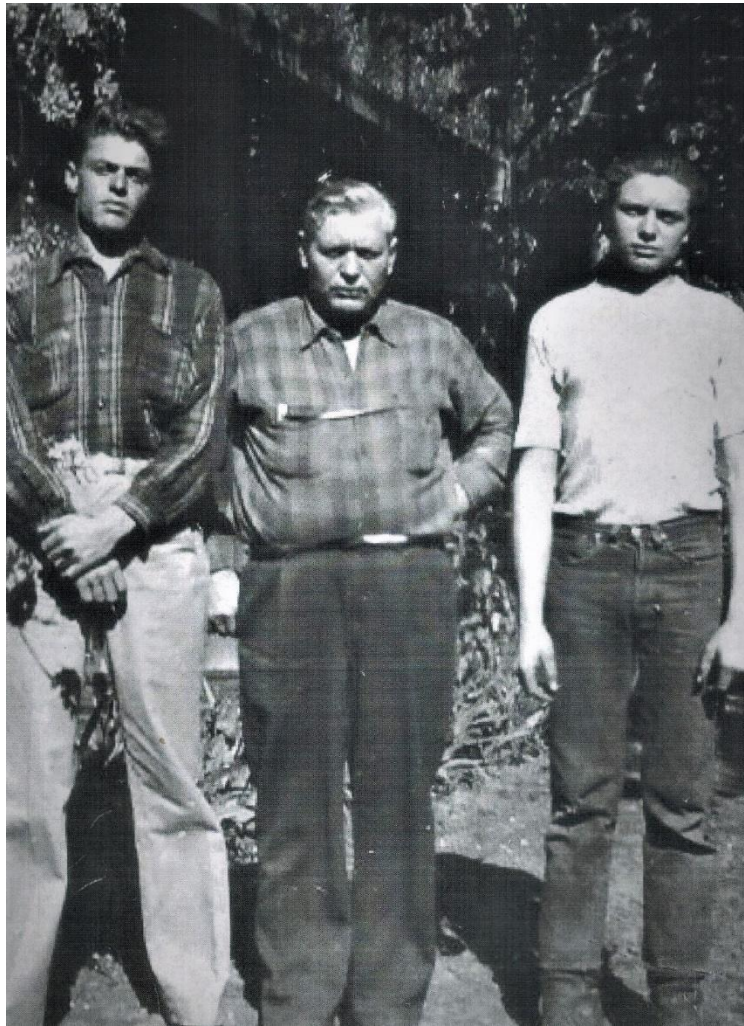


### **Walter Kohn – From Minneapolis to Southern California to Shasta County**

#### **Coming to Shasta County**

He ventured north to Shasta County where he established a tire business making tires for the trucks and huge carry-all's being employed on the Shasta Dam project. He bought property at the corner of Veda and south Market Streets in Redding and set up shop ("***The Tire Exchange***"), where he designed and built special molds to make the tires. This all transpired around 1938, at the outset of dam construction. He continued making tires at that location, even after the dam was completed. He rented part of his property to C. Meeks Lumber Co., once rebuilding his shop after a fire devastated both businesses.

Upon their arrival in the Redding area, Walter and Lillian had rented a riverside ranch off Stingy Lane in Anderson. Walter always recognized and respected his wife's Canadian ranching origins, her love of horses and ranching, and her affinity for country living. When opportunity finally availed in September of 1943, Walter and Lillian bought the Giles Ranch southeast of Anderson near Balls Ferry (most of which is now ***Battle Creek Wildlife Area***, just west of ***Coleman National Fish Hatchery***). The ranch had more recently been owned and operated by Ernest, Rosena, and Myra Giles up to that time. The Giles family had settled on that property as far back as the late 1880's (see Rosena Giles' ***SHASTA COUNTY HISTORY***, published in 1949. The rear portion of the main ranch house at what is now ***Carr Ranch*** dates all the way back to Rosena Giles' description of it in her historical chronicle of Shasta County. See picture below). The 223-acre ranch purchased by Walter and Lillian in 1943 spanned Tehama County and Shasta County creek frontage on Battle Creek, and provided sufficient ranch land for sons George and Joseph to set up a dairy business which they operated from the mid-1940's to the early 1950's (see picture below of the three Kohn men on the front lawn of the ranch home). Walter and Lillian had originally leased a river-front ranch in nearby Anderson on Stingy Lane, but later opted to purchase the Giles Place when Ernest Giles passed in 1943 and his two spinster sisters (Myra and Rosena) determined to sell the place as it posed too much work for them to shoulder without Ernest. Walter's commute to work at his Redding tire business took on a few more miles, but the Kohn's seemed satisfied to finally gain ownership of their own place.



**The Kohn Men – George, Walter (aka “Poppa”), and Joseph c. 1943.**



**Rear Portion of the Main House (referred to as “the front porch”) at Carr Ranch, likely dating back to the 1880’s, as described by Rosena A. Giles in her book SHASTA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA: A History (1949)**

In 1951, while crossing south Market St. to his business, Walter Kohn was struck by a car moving at approximately 50 mph, suffering injuries which likely would have killed a normal man. His injuries, and convalescence exacted a heavy toll on him physically and emotionally. The wind had been taken out of his sails. Later in the early 1950's, he determined to move his tire shop further south along Highway 99 (now State Route 273), midway between Anderson and Redding. He gave it a go for awhile, but it wasn't the same. He eventually closed his business and leased the building.



**Walter Kohn's relocated business on U.S. 99S (now SR273) on Banigan St., between Redding and Anderson**

Additionally, a gulf had widened in the relationship between him and Lillian. Both of them products of rough, humble beginnings, their strong wills and independent streaks had driven wedges in the harmony of their later years. Respecting their marital vows, they separated but never divorced. Walter moved to Reno, started a building maintenance business and pursued a passion for gambling. And... on occasion, the rest of the Kohn family would be surprised by "Poppa's" return over the mountains to visit "Lou", the boys, and Marie. He'd stay a few days, work projects around the ranch, and clear up any business matters he had in Shasta County. Then, much as when he'd arrived, he'd leave unannounced and return to Reno.

His love for "Lou" never died, but they both realized too much time together only surfaced irreconcilable differences. When he was eventually consumed by liver cancer, it was a fitting tribute to their mutual love and loyalty that he "came home to die." Lillian attended to him in his final days and he passed away at age 63 in a room of the house at Kohn Ranch on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1958.

### **Lillian J. McDonald Kohn (1886-1968)**

Born in Michigan on March 29, 1886, Lillian Jean McDonald was the oldest of four children of Angus Patrick and Elizabeth Montgomery McDonald, immigrants of Scotland who entered North America through Canada in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1900 U.S. Census from Kentucky lists Lillian as age 12 [(it should have shown her as age 14. She was the older of three other siblings (Isabel, Margaret, and Joseph, along with an adopted brother George)]. At that time Angus Patrick McDonald had settled in the area of Waynesburg, KY and ensconced in ranching. However, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, a land boom had taken place, encouraging homesteaders into the wild prairie lands of Saskatchewan. Family testimonials indicate that Angus and Elizabeth emigrated from Kentucky, back across the Canadian border to the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan around 1902.

### **Re-settling in Saskatchewan**

The trek from Kentucky had been painstaking, and Lillian later shared with her grandchildren the utter devastation of her Mother as she watched her prized pump organ be capsized during the fording of a river, being washed downstream while their Mother sat on the banks and cried.

Once in the Cypress Hills (near the ranching town of Maple Creek), the McDonalds' filed their claim and homesteaded. Elizabeth wearied, became sick and died in 1905, during a period when Angus, and Lillian's brother Joseph had gone south of the U.S. border to work on the railroad near Havre, Montana.

Alone with her sisters, the three girls buried their Mother, as there were no other neighbors close by to help them. When their father returned home he commended the girls for doing the right thing, but then had to leave again to find work – life on the plains had proven tough.

The Plains Indians (with whom they traded horses) proved to be good friends also. Once when Angus was gone, five Indians entered the house when the three girls were there alone. The Indians joined the girls close to the fire, while Lillian made tea and retrieved "hardtack muffins" to share with them. It turned out that the Indians were aware that the girls were there alone and they had wanted to assure their safety.

As she grew older, Lillian became quite a horsewoman. Angus had emphasized to her the importance of being able to break and ride horses as a means to achieving independence. In her later years at Kohn Ranch in Shasta County, Lillian was still "gentle-breaking" horses into her 70's. We often remarked that she understood and favored animals more than she did people.

As she had progressed through her teens in the cattle-ranching expanses of Saskatchewan, Lillian's home-caring abilities transitioned to midwifing, as she was sought out by neighboring ranchers when their wives were about to deliver babies. This would eventually portend her lifelong professional vocation as a nurse.

### **Lillian Moves to Winnipeg and goes to Nursing School**

As Lillian grew older, Angus ventured to Winnipeg, Manitoba and managed to arrange a job for Lillian as a nanny for three daughters of an English Lord and Lady who had property there. Two years later, the Lord and Lady determined to return to England and Lillian transitioned to attending a nursing school at a convent in Winnipeg.

### **Lillian Emigrates back to the U.S. – Minneapolis-St. Paul**

Upon graduation she emigrated south to the Minneapolis area and got a job at a Hospital for the Insane, rising rapidly to the position of supervising nurse. It was there that she would meet Walter Kohn, who'd gained employment in maintenance at the hospital. Their relationship blossomed and they were married in Minneapolis in 1917.

After their marriage in 1917, Lillian's focus shifted to creating a family and child-rearing – in Minnesota, Southern California, and later in Northern California. First-born was Marie Elizabeth on March 12<sup>th</sup>, 1918, in a snow bank in St. Paul. Later came sons George Angus, born February 22, 1922 in San Fernando Valley, and Joseph Walter, born January 18, 1926 in Long Beach.

### **Settling in Shasta County**

When the family eventually moved to the Redding area in the late 1930's, it was Lillian who insisted that the Kohn boys continue their Catholic high school education. Since there was no Catholic high school in Shasta County, older sister Marie went to Red Bluff and succeeded in enrolling the boys at Mercy Academy. The nuns at "Mercy" initially discouraged Marie, but she eventually succeeded in getting the boys in. Since the school's dormitories were for girls only, the nuns arranged for Joe and George to live at the Tremont Hotel in downtown Red Bluff in exchange for washing dishes there. Each night, the nuns would come from the academy to "bed-check" the boys in their extraordinary "dorm facilities."

George and Joe finished high school and went to work on the family ranch in the Balls Ferry area, before they were called to military service in **WWII**. After the war, they both returned to operate the dairy at the family ranch.





**Joseph Kohn, U.S. Navy  
U.S. Navy**



**George Kohn, U.S. Army**



**Laurence Carr,**

Older sister Marie had stayed at the ranch with her two small children and her mother during the war. A circuit music teacher for Shasta County Schools, Marie later reunited with her husband Laurence Carr after he returned from active duty in the U.S. Navy in 1946 (they had married in 1941 before the war called Laurence to duty in 1943). When Laurence came home the young couple moved to Redding where he resumed his law practice at the firm of Carr & Kennedy (a prominent Shasta County law firm established in 1914 by Laurence's father, Judge Francis C. Carr, and his uncle, Laurence J. Kennedy Sr.). Laurence had served as Shasta County District Attorney during the "boomtown era" of Shasta Dam construction, later serving briefly as Legislative Secretary to Governor Earl Warren.



**Marie Kohn Carr with new Father-in-Law, Redding attorney  
Democratic Political Leader Judge Francis Carr – June 28, 1941**



**Marie Kohn, 1940 UCLA Grad**

**Marie Kohn Carr and sons Tom & Pat living at the ranch (c. 1945)**

With George, Joe and their families occupying the living facilities at the ranch, Lillian moved to Redding and lived with Marie and Laurence while attending night courses at the new Shasta Junior College to update her Vocational Nurse (LVN) license credentials. She subsequently worked “the graveyard shift” at Mercy Hospital in Redding. She would just be coming home from her night shift when her grandchildren were having breakfast before school. Those breakfasts were memorable moments for her grandkids, as she’d impart stories from her childhood, and of “cowgirling” on the plains of Saskatchewan; or she’d share stories of her morning encounters with “the little old lady in the gully”, a mythological character whom she reported seeing each morning on her walk from the hospital to the house. “The little old lady in the gully” reportedly served tea and cookies to Lillian as she’d stop to visit along that walk. Lillian’s storytelling proved legendary amongst the grandkids and after school they’d look forward to more stories, along with tea-leaf readings at 3:00 o’clock Tea Times (hearkening to the Canadian cultural traditions Lillian assimilated in her youth). Soon after Tea Time Lillian would venture off to another graveyard shift at Mercy Hospital. Her most lasting legacy, however, was her love of animals, the ranch, and nature.



**Marie & Laurence Carr gathered with six of their children on St. Pat's Day, 1954  
(around the time that Lillian was living with them in Redding)**

As the years passed into the late 1960's, after Lillian had retired from Nursing, this Cowgirl-turned-Nurse eventually settled in solitude back at Kohn Ranch. She seemed at peace with the land, with the wildlife that proliferated in the underbrush along Battle Creek, and with the domestic animals (horses, dogs, cats, chickens) that congregated around the pastures and ranch buildings. Her own children were all grown and had rather large families of their own.

Marie had taught county-wide as a circuit music teacher for Shasta County Schools before transitioning to homemaking for an ever-growing family. Over a span of 18 years (1942-1960), Marie and Laurence welcomed nine children into the world.

**THE NINE CHILDREN WERE:**

THOMAS FRANCIS CARR	B. 1942	M. MAUREEN JAMESON - 1968	D.
			1988
		M. JUDITH IONE WILLS - 1976	
PATRICK WALTER CARR	B. 1944	M. KATHLEEN MERIDELL VANSICKLE – 1969	
MAUREEN ELIZABETH CARR	B. 1946	M. WILLIAM VERNON MORRISON – 1968	
KENNETH PAUL CARR	B. 1948	M. GINGER FREEMAN – 1974	
		M. MONA TOMS - 1993	
PHILLIP JOHN CARR	B. 1950	M. JACQUELYN CARNEY - 1981	
THERESA JEAN CARR, LTC USAR	B. 1952	M. EDWARD HARRY – 1975	
		M. CRAIG RIDLEN - 1999	
BRIAN ANDREW CARR	B. 1955	M. HELENE WINTERS – 1982	
JOHN JOSEPH CARR	B. 1957	M. RENAE CARRIER – 1985	
		M. LISA BUCKHOUT – 1994	
JEFFREY LAURENCE CARR	B. 1960	M. JEANNE-MARIE BOURCIER - 1993	

George had married Mary Machado of Anderson, established a sizeable dairy business at the Kohn Ranch with Joe, and later went into the sheet metal business in Anderson. George and Mary had seven children, eventually moving his business activities to the Ft. Bragg area, before retiring in Redding in the late 1960's.

**THEIR SEVEN CHILDREN WERE:**

JEANIE MARIE KOHN O'BRIEN	B. 1946	M. DENNIS O'BRIEN -	
CAROLINE JUNE KOHN MCGILL	B. 1947	M. MICHAEL MCGILL - 1969	
DAVID GEORGE KOHN	B. 1951		D. 1965
KATHLEEN ANN KOHN	B. 1952		D. 1955
STEVEN JOSEPH KOHN	B. 1955	M. SUSAN SELLERS – 1972	
JAMES GERARD KOHN	B. 1956	M. LISA KOHN	D. 1979



GEORGE WALTER KOHN, DDS	B. 1958	M. G. LEE FITZGERALD – 2002
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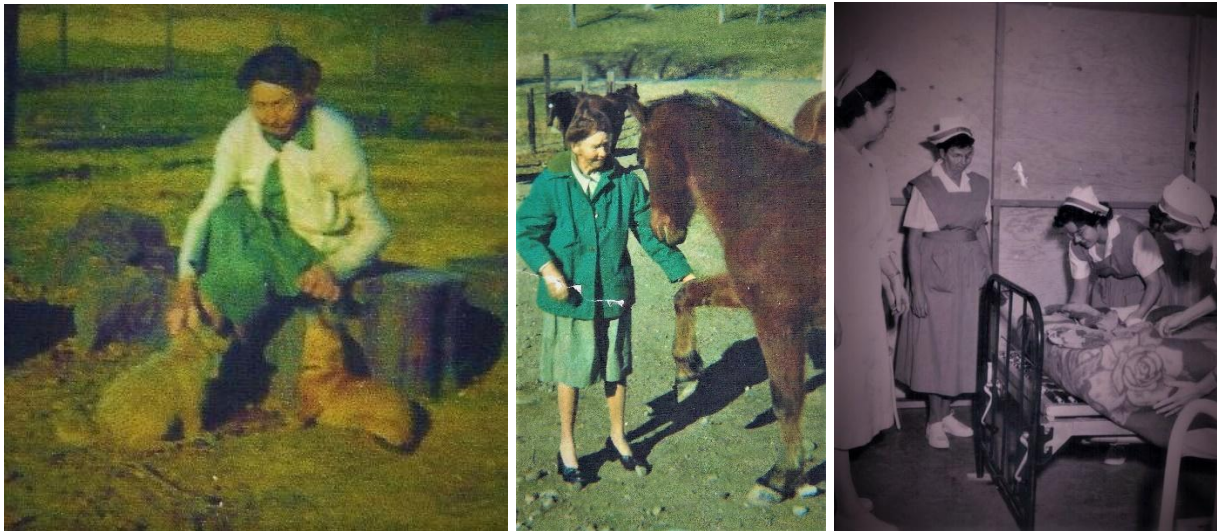
Joe had married Joyce Furlong, entered into the dairy business for a time with George, and later entered a career in law enforcement with the Redding Police Department (eventually serving as Chief of Detectives). Following along that vocation, Joe eventually served as Shasta County Coroner & Public Administrator. He and Joyce had five children.

THEIR FIVE CHILDREN WERE:

MICHAEL JOSEPH KOHN	B. 1950	M. DONNA RYLAND - 1985	
RICHARD WILLIAM KOHN	B. 1952	M. MARY MARGARET PERON – 1994	
ROBERT PATRICK KOHN	B. 1953	M.. SUSAN MARIE CURRAN– 1970	D. 2014
DEBORAH SUSAN KOHN	B. 1954		
EDIE KOHN	B. 1956		

Lillian had lived through hardships, tragedies, joyous events, and satisfying periods to see her progeny live productive and useful lives.

On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1968, she passed away at age 82 after suffering several severe, debilitating strokes which forced her to leave her precious ranch and spend her final months under medical care in Redding. Upon her death she was mourned by many who had refreshed themselves in her humor, home-spun medical remedies, and prairie-driven wisdoms. Several of her grandchildren later recalled visits to the ranch and almost always seeing a cardboard box in the side porch with a light bulb shining forth. Inside it they would find eggs hatching baby chicks or ducklings which Lillian would nurse to adulthood. Her love of horses (probably stemming all the way back to her childhood near the horse farms of Kentucky) manifested itself in her horse-breeding business activities, and a herd which at one point numbered up to 9 horses --mostly Thoroughbreds and Quarter Horses.



**Lillian in her 70's – Rancher, Horsewoman and Mercy Hospital Nurse**

### **Kohn Ranch Dairy – Operated by George and Joseph Kohn in the late 1940's-early 1950's**

The cinder-block "Dairy Barn" at Carr Ranch (see below, "[Dairy Building Plan](#)," from Division of Animal Industry, California Dept. of Agriculture) has its origins dating back to the mid-to-late 1940's, when the Kohn brothers, both back from military service in WWII, engaged in a dairy farming business, in support of their families and their mother, Lillian Kohn who also resided on the Kohn Ranch with them. As I recall George and Mary Kohn occupied the ranch house at the west end of the ranch, while Joe and Joyce occupied a small cabin at the east end of the ranch, adjacent to Coleman Fish Hatchery Road (at that time known as County Route #1).



George was apparently released early from active military duty due to a hardship request from Lillian in early 1946, wherein she declared that her daughter Marie (who'd moved to the ranch when her husband Laurence was on active duty with the U.S. Navy) would have to leave the ranch in approximately one month. That situation would leave Lillian (age 60) alone on the ranch with a broken-arm-and-disabled-indefinitely, stranded some twelve miles from the nearest town (she did not drive), with no telephone communications, and a Livestock population of "better than twenty head of cattle...a number of hogs...several head of horses and mules...chickens and a truck garden." At that time Walter and Lillian had separated and she would thus be trying to manage the ranch alone with physical impairment.

George had been stationed with the U.S. Army (738<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion) in Luzon, the Philippines, from 9/15/1945 to 2/23/1946. As early as May of 1945 (after Germany surrendered in Europe) George had suggested he would seek early release to come home to relieve Marie and his mother of the physically demanding efforts of operating the ranch. He was released from active duty in March 1946, at which time he and Joe proceeded to build the new dairy barn while running a dairy operation consisting of the dairy cattle referred to in the request for early release.



**Artist Dan Cherry's Rendering: The Old Hay Barn, Where the Cows Were Milked in the Early-to-Mid 1940's  
...and Before...**

Before completing the new dairy barn, the Kohn boys milked their cows in the large **Hay Barn** which existed on the property when Walter and Lillian bought the ranch from the Giles sisters approximately 4-5 years earlier, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1943. As a very small child, born in October 1944, I recall being taken by the hand out to the old hay barn to watch someone (I presume it was one of my uncles) milking the cows in the few stanchions located on the north side of the barn. In a later documenting of his employment history, George Kohn indicated he was engaged in dairy farming from March 1946 to March 1950, when he apparently "sold out" the business and took more lucrative employment in nearby Anderson.



**Joe & George Kohn with "Rollo-the-Pig" in the swine crib behind the hay barn – c. 1948**



### **Later History of the Ranch – When it Transitioned to “CARR RANCH” from “THE KOHN RANCH”**

After Lillian passed away in 1968, her three children determined to settle her estate, and in 1969 the estate properties were distributed between her heirs as follows:

- George would inherit Walter Kohn’s tire shop building on Highway 99S, between Anderson and Redding
- Marie and Joseph would inherit the Kohn Ranch property near Balls Ferry, including the ranch house and a small cabin, two barns, around 223 acres of agricultural land, and an irrigation system with a Battle Creek riparian water right approximating 7.5 cubic feet per second. This property was split evenly on a north-south axis between Marie and Joseph, with Marie also inheriting the barns and ranch house, with Joseph inheriting the little cabin at the south end of the property. The two siblings co-managed the two properties as one ranch into the early 1970’s until unforeseen events changed the personal and managerial circumstances of that arrangement.

In the early 1970’s Laurence was diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease, at the same time that business fortunes took a turn for the worse and forced Marie and him to eventually sell their home in Redding and retire to Marie’s portion of the ranch. The move from Redding to Balls Ferry posed significant challenge to the family’s sense of stability, as they still had children in high school and colleges in Redding and elsewhere. But the couple’s spiritual resilience saw them through this transition with a sense of adventure, determination, and optimism in adapting financially and emotionally to a new set of circumstances. It wasn’t long before Marie had the hay barn emblazoned with a hex emblem, and the old ranch house and barns refurbished in quaint, ranch-like motif. They rapidly made the old place charming and livable.

Youngest son Jeffrey was enrolled in a vocational agriculture curriculum at Anderson Union High School. He was very involved with the Anderson FFA chapter, earning the coveted "State Farmer" pin in 1977. Working with his Uncle Joe Kohn and his mother Marie on the ranch, Jeffrey learned many agricultural arts, learned vehicle repair and raised sheep, hogs and horses as his FFA projects. Youngest daughter Theresa graduated from Mercy High School in Red Bluff, and also developed equine interests, pasturing her horse at the ranch

As the years progressed, Laurence’s condition worsened and Marie cultivated the ranch as a family redoubt. The nine “Carr Kids” all went off to college, returning to the ranch intermittently for short stints of “life path reflection,” or interim shelter and economic support between jobs, or to visit and help the folks around the ranch. Laurence’s aging, paraplegic sister, Barbara Carr also needed physical support and a place to reside in the mid-70’s. As a result, she moved to the ranch from Redding and a small, disability-compatible house was built adjacent-and-connected-to the ranch house. Thus, the number of structures at Carr Ranch increased to 2 houses and 2 barns.

At some time during their “trauma and transition” through the 1970’s and 1980’s, Marie hired a painter to replace the hex sign on the hay barn with a gigantic black sign reading “**CARR RANCH**,” easily seen from the county road that intersected the north side of the ranch. It no doubt encouraged Laurence to see the family name embedded on the most prominent place in the family compound. With Marie’s annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July, **Carr Family Reunions** at the ranch, the rest of the family quickly assimilated a familiarity and loyalty to the place where their family roots were memorialized along that commonly traveled route in south Shasta County. It wasn’t long before this place was more widely recognized as **Carr Ranch**.





***Carr Ranch continued as a working ranch, with local cattlemen intermittently leasing pasture for their herds on parcels east of Battle Creek.***

### **Origins of Battle Creek Wildlife Area -- 1991**

Early in 1988, Joseph Kohn passed away after a long battle with cancer. In the wake of his death, his five children set about settling his estate, with the end result that two of his sons, Michael and Robert, took charge of his share of the ranch property.

At the same time, Laurence's failing health was putting continual pressure on the aging couple's ability to maintain the ranch. After Joseph passed it was agreed that 180 acres of the ranch should be offered for sale to California Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB). Such a move would be consistent with the wishes of Lillian to convert the ranch to a nature preserve for the enjoyment of the public. Marie, Joseph, and Laurence had shared this vision even before Joseph's death.



**Panoramic Views of the Cascade Range accented the heights on the ridge west of Battle Creek**

After working with State government representatives, in 1991 the Carr's and Kohn's received and accepted an offer made by WCB for purchase of the 180 acres, thus establishing an immediately accessible, "**Battle Creek Wildlife Area.**" In its May 10, 1990 WCB Meeting Minutes, the land was described as follows:

***"...The land is used by a wide variety of wildlife species including many species of waterfowl, numerous raptors, deer, furbearers and nongame birds and mammals. a bald eagle nest is located just 200 yards from the east parcel and the subject properties are known to be forage for these birds..."***

***...The land has been in the W.G. and Lillian J. Kohn family since 1943 and, due in large part to Mrs. Kohn's vision and initiative, the land has been offered for sale to the State by her heirs, the current landowners. Mrs. Kohn has instilled in her heirs her long-held belief that the land should remain a haven for wildlife and be kept in a natural state for the benefit of future generations..."***

### **Realignment of the Remaining 43 Acres Belonging to the Kohn's and the Carr's 1991-2019**

When the 180-acre portion of the ranch was sold to WCB, Marie kept a five-acre parcel with the houses and the barns, situated on the south side of the county road, for her and Laurence to continue their lives (Laurence would continue to live at the ranch until just before he passed away in Redding on December 2, 1991). On the north side of the road, however the remaining 37 acres was split evenly between the Carr's and the Kohn brothers (Michael and Robert). The Kohn boys moved to sub-divide their 18.5 acres into two parcels, which they sold to private parties. This left Marie and Laurence with 23.5 acres and two new neighbors, and four stakeholders using and maintaining the irrigation ditch which traversed all of the newly-divided parcels.

Not too long after the Kohn parcels (an 8.5 acre parcel and a 10 acre parcel) were sold, one of the buyers went through a divorce and the 8.5 acre parcel was put up for sale. Intending to reduce the number of parties sharing the water rights and ditch maintenance expenses, Marie's son Patrick made an offer on behalf of the Carr family to buy that parcel and reunite it with Marie's remaining portion of the ranch. Marie's "**Carr Ranch**" property thus increased to a total of 32+ acres, with the remaining 10+ owned by the folks who'd purchased it from the Kohn boys.

### **Following Through on Kohn Family's Vision – The Response from "The Carr Kids"**



### **"Forever Young" -- Marie Kohn Carr at 90**

**Marie Elizabeth Kohn Carr passed away in Redding on February 16, 2017.** She had navigated an eventful life which spanned 98 years, 11 months, and six days. In the wake of her passing, son Patrick went about the work of settling her estate. After querying Marie's seven (7) surviving children and the five (5) sons and daughters of her deceased son Thomas, Patrick proceeded to offer **Carr Ranch** to the California Department of Fish & Wildlife for re-integration with the 180 acres previously offered and purchased to create **Battle Creek Wildlife Area**. An appraisal was conducted by an independent appraiser and Patrick presented it to "Fish & Wildlife" in the fall of 2017. The State's response was positive, and after much discussion, re-appraisal, and governmental review and

inspection, the **Wildlife Conservation Board** voted unanimously to purchase the property as the “**Battle Creek Wildlife Area, “Expansion 4”**” project at its meeting on **March 7, 2019**. Consummation of the purchase took place after final **Department of General Services (DGS)** inspection and approval in late June of that year. On **July 3, 2019** Ms. Norma Chicoine of Placer Title Company (Redding office), effected transfer of title for Carr Ranch to Wildlife Conservation Board. The resulting footprint of the **Kohn-Carr portion of Battle Creek Wildlife Area** ultimately expanded to ~212 acres, with the addition of two houses and two barns.



**July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019: SHUTTIN’ER DOWN!!** Pat Carr “locks up” one last time ...  
after meeting with State Fish & Wildlife Management to turn over the keys to Carr Ranch.

### **Earlier History of the Ranch –Transition to “THE KOHN RANCH” from the “G.E.GILES RANCH”**

On September 1, 1943, Walter and Lillian Kohn bought the “Giles Ranch” southeast of Anderson near Balls Ferry (most of which is now **Battle Creek Wildlife Area**, just west of **Coleman National Fish Hatchery**). The ranch had more recently been owned and operated by Ernest, Rosena, and Myra Giles up to that time. The Giles family had settled on that property as far back as the late 1880’s. (see Rosena Giles’ **SHASTA COUNTY HISTORY**, published in 1949). The core portion of the main ranch house at what is now **Carr Ranch** dates all the way back to Rosena Giles’ earliest memories of growing up there:

*“I, the youngest child (of James Kenan Giles), grew up in Nature’s paradise on the farm amid noble trees and luxuriant flowers and fruits along an ice-cold stream. This stream was first called Nozi creek from a tribe of savage Indians that lived on an island lying at the conjunction of Nozi creek and the Sacramento River. There, in 1846, (General John) Fremont with Kit Carson and a company of soldiers in a serious engagement with the tribe, exterminated the whole body and thereafter the creek was named Battle Creek, and the island Blood Island. Its position is on the east side of the river just opposite the Reading Adobe on Buena Ventura Rancho.*

*Our home, built by my father in the late 80’s, was occupied by the family for more*

*than fifty years. It stood in a garden of elm and walnut shaded paths with lilacs and roses rioting everywhere. There was a real well where the bucket rose "dripping with coolness" on the hottest days. This house became rendezvous for an intellectual group, some of whom have become noted individuals in this state. Then among them were expert horsewomen, fine teachers, marvelous cooks, gracious hostesses, successful business men and brave soldiers. The farm became noted for its luxuriant pastures and laden fruit trees, for its shady "Lovers Lane" and spirited saddlers in the stable..."*

Source: Pages "g" and "h" of **Shasta County California – A History**  
by Rosena A Giles 1949, BIOBOOKS, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

(To get to the Giles Ranch off what is now Gover Road, Rosena, in a separate article, explained ...*'cross the cattle guard to the left and follow a small stream due east. Two more cattle guards and a wide rotunda in the hillside. The house here is hidden by trees and shrubbery. This place was settled by Thomas McTurk in 1866, but known for many years as the G.E. Giles (i.e. George Ernest Giles) place, where the rose garden, the lilac hedge, and the leaning walnut tree, under which is sufficient room for a dinner table where twenty or more could be easily seated, were famed over a large part of the county..."*)

Source: "Briesgau Grant (The first Grant set off in Shasta County)," by Rosena A. Giles, **Shasta Historical Society Yearbook 1945**, page 14)

### **But What of the Giles Family?**

The Giles Family members settled on what later became "The Kohn Ranch," and is now "Carr Ranch." The summaries of James Kenan Giles, Rosena E. Giles, Ernest Giles, Myra Giles, and Rosena Giles were taken from documents residing at the **Anderson Historical Society**.

#### **James Kennon Giles (1824-1905) and Rosena Echstein Giles (1835-1906)**

According to Rosena A. Giles (their youngest child):

**James K. Giles** was born in Massachusetts in 1823 and came to California in 1850...At age 26, the Hangtown (Placerville) goldfields called him...After a year of mining he met (his future bride) Rosena Echstein Jones, granddaughter of Alexander Hamilton Willard, member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition through Oregon in 1804. Failing to strike it rich in the mines, James became a stock buyer with Smith, Brown & Co., the first meat-packing firm in San Francisco. He later owned a flour mill in Princeton (Colusa Co.), and later still, became a farmer and stockman raising cattle and horses.

In 1879 he came to Shasta County and remained there until his death from cancer in 1905, at age 82. Around 1880, he bought and established Giles Ranch, straddling creek frontage on both sides of Battle Creek.

**Rosena Echstein Jones Giles** was born 1835 in the Midwest (there's conjecture as to whether it was in Prattville, Wisconsin or in Platteville, Iowa). How she got to Hangtown in time to meet James is not documented. For some reason, however, it was important to the Giles Family that her pioneer roots in the West hearkened back to her grandfather serving as a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition into Oregon. Very little is documented of her residence in Shasta County, other than she arrived here in 1878. She passed away at 71 years in the home of her son J.W. Giles on Clear Creek, with a funeral held later at the Giles home (ranch) at Balls Ferry.

**George Ernest Giles (1865-1943)**, son of James K. and Rosena E. Giles, was born in Glenn County on September 9, 1864 (then still Colusa County). He resided for 64 years at Balls Ferry (G.E. Giles Ranch) until his death at Mercy Hospital in Red Bluff on January 23, 1943. A retired rancher and former Anderson school teacher, he had been widely known in Shasta county. He lived and ranched at Giles Ranch with his two spinster sisters, Myra and Rosena.

In 1909, Ernest had his right ankle broken in a fall and the bone did not heal. After consultation with physicians, it was decided to amputate his leg below the knee. This explained the dismay of Walter and Lillian Kohn while they were touring the ranch in 1943, when they noted a peg leg hanging on the wall of a front bedroom in the ranch house. When they queried the Giles sisters about it, they were informed that it had belonged to brother Ernest, who'd passed away earlier that year. For years after that the Kohn and Carr families would simply refer to that bedroom as "Dead Brother's Room," always quick to share the underlying story with visitors.

**Almira "Myra" Eliza Giles (1866-1955)** was born in Princeton, Colusa County on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1866, before moving to Shasta County in October 1879, at age 13. She subsequently lived in Shasta County for over 50 years, passing away on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1955, at a rest home in Redding. She was 88 years old at her passing. She, brother Ernest, and sister Rosena lived at Balls Ferry until 1943 when the Giles Ranch was sold to the Kohn Family.

Myra had served as a member of the Shasta County Board of Education, the Shasta County Historical Society, the Retired Teachers Association, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Principally educated in Shasta County schools, she received her teacher's certificate and taught for fifty successful years in the county schools in Shasta, Anderson, and Cottonwood (where she was principal for five years). She served on the county board of education from 1920-1924, and again in 1926-1934.

**Rosena Abigail Giles (1875-1967)** was also born in Princeton, on November 2, 1875 before moving with the family to Balls Ferry area at age 3 in the Fall of 1879. Rosena was the youngest of the 11 children born to James K. and Rosena E. Giles. She remained in Shasta County until her death at Redding Convalescent Hospital on April 15, 1967. She was 91 at her passing.

Rosena was educated in Shasta county schools, the Mark Hopkins School of Art, and the University of California. She was the author of **The Closed Road, Soil the Master, History of Shasta County**, and many poems.. She was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and Shasta Historical Society (she was the first editor of **The Covered Wagon**, annual compendium of historical articles on Shasta County).

Besides her writing and art, Rosena was known for the white turkeys she raised for thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year celebrations. She also grew patented roses and was noted for her beautiful garden. She did genealogy research...In her diary she indicates being part of the 1930 census in Shasta County (cited in the SHS **1998 Covered Wagon** article "Rosena's Adventure From the 1930 Diary of Rosena Abigail Giles." In October 1996, Ms. Carol Spaulding Benner wrote for the Shasta Historical Society "A Few Notes About Rosena Abigail Giles:"

"...Not only was she a 'colorful' person, but she was bright and talented in writing fiction, poetry and history, and a gifted artist, active in many organizations, and a hard working farm woman. She had a low voice, a steady posture, and a very congenial smile....

...She was a member of the Major Pierson B. Reading Chapter (Shasta County) of the DAR, a board member of the California History Foundation, and was also on a panel of consultants at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual California History Foundation Institute at the College of Pacific in 1952...The Record Searchlight carried a column written by Rosena, entitled 'Echoes of the Past.'...(She lived on) the Giles Ranch, 'Wildwood,' in Balls Ferry, and then ended her days in Redding. She showed enthusiasm for all things artistic, and was a unique, one-of-a-kind person...

...She was considered an authority on Shasta County history. Many of her poems painted pictures showing her love of the beauty of Shasta County. Rosena's artistic bent reached its peak in the two pen and ink sketches on the inside cover of her book, **'History of Shasta County'** ...

...Rosena taught art in the Sheldon School (located on the Wilcox Ranch) for a while, but there is no record of her teaching for any length of time. She seemed to make her living on the farm, and with her writing talents.

...A story about Rosena points to her vibrant personality and actions. Florence Spaulding Anderson has said that Rosena often chose to wear filmy, sheer, graceful, often white dresses when she attended meetings or was a speaker. A friend of Florence's told her about Rosena's arrival at a meeting – she was seated upon a white horse and she was wearing a white chiffon gown while balancing a hat box in one hand and a cake box in the other..."





**ROSENA ABIGAIL GILES (1875-1967)**

(Photo from "Find A Grave" website, provided by April Salinas)

No doubt, it must have been difficult for the Giles sisters to leave the ranch, after living and working on it with Ernest since childhood. In a compendium of some of her poems entitled ***From Thought to Rhythm***, date unknown, in the following poem Rosena likely reflects on her feelings around leaving the Giles Ranch in 1943.

**LEAVING THE OLD HOME**

*Oh yes, we've lived here fifty years  
And three on top of that;  
Rank underbrush as thick as hairs  
Spilled over that clover flat.  
Wild lilies bloomed along the creek,  
Ferns tangled in a maze  
Before pigs scouted through their roots  
And cattle came to graze.*

*Then sweet at break of morning  
When the paling stars hung low  
Before the mountains' pointed spires  
Burned with the sun's first glow,  
A wild bird called to his neighbor  
In soft awakening notes  
And swift delirious ecstasy  
Burst from a thousand throats.*

*Oh, many a chop of the woodsman's axe*

*Has sung through the dew-wet dawn,  
And many a patient furrow  
Has run through the tasseling corn,  
Since that rapturous music rippled  
Full throats, full hearts in the giving  
Silenced by people and cattle  
In the all-out task of living.*

*The house? Yes, it's showing its age,  
The walls are inclined to lean;  
But think of the knowledge under its roof,  
The 'heap of living' I mean.  
The mutual love and gaiety,  
The kisses, sighs and tears,  
Weddings, births and death's stern touch  
Scattered along the years.*

*Now walls are silent and floors are mute,  
Laughter and footfalls they have echoed  
Are cherished memories of those  
Long gone the ways that life has beckoned.  
Ah, silent walls, your echoes keep,  
And mute floors hold the treasured sound;  
Though strangers' voices, strangers' feet  
Awake new echoes round and round.  
Keep you the old ones for our ears  
Though we shall never hear in part  
Those sounds beloved, save memory  
Makes records of them on the heart.*

*So now Goodbye Old House, Old Home!  
Our ways divide, The well love bond  
That bound us, frayed and broken quite---  
Who knows, who knows what lies beyond?*

By Rosena A.Giles

**From Thought To Rhythm**, pp. 11-12 (undated compendium of her poems)

Much as with Rosena's reflections, the ranch has always represented something special to the Carr and Kohn families. Over the years, it has been the **preferred venue for family reunions and special celebrations** – especially in the 1970's through the 2000's. Marie Carr was the driving force behind those gatherings, some of which exceeded 100 attendees.





### **Kohn-Carr-Kennedy Family Reunion – July 4, 2002**

One such family attendee, Ms. Pam Berry (also a gifted writer and artist) reflected on the deep feelings engendered from a Kohn-Carr-Kennedy 4<sup>th</sup> of July reunion at Carr Ranch in 1990:

***“The Carr ranch is not grand, but a country haven, an old farm house not made fancy. Old tools cling to a wall on the porch. An old furry black collie mix named “Sue” hides in the back room, upset by all the people running over the house. Here, one is family, one is accepted, beheld and respected. Whereas we don’t all start off deserving such privilege we soon learn to be worthy of it.***

***Volleyball, horseshoes, little babies, teenagers daring their first drink in front of their parents, picture albums and stories cluster under the family tree. The patriarch carrying his debilitating disease (Marie’s husband Laurence was in advanced stages of Parkinson’s Disease when this was written) with grace is still central to this hoopla. Festivities wane. cars leave, taking family members home to Sacramento, Aptos, San Jose; a goodbye honkity-honk sounds past the house in the unfurling dust of the country road.***

***Evening, then night in the oak-centered yard gathers hangers-on to visit more and to be aware of the night with its billion stars revealing themselves as shy performers... Ten thousand at a time in a steady gaze. The gibbous moon rises over the pasture and the creek beyond, where earlier, happy heads bobbed over hidden treachery of the extraordinary stream (Battle Creek). Shasta, of its 14,000 feet of skyward height is felt, not seen.***

*A Mother's energy and integrity generates fellowship. She is a silver butterfly, beautiful, powerful, and yet fragile. Her awareness covers all bases – no one is left out. She delights like the wise child, in sparklers and twirling spirals of light set fire by the teenagers. She ends her day with us under the deep yawn of night by withdrawing uncomplaining to her nightly sentinel of caring with no visible remorse.*

*We remain fastened to each other and a feast for the mosquitoes, unable to let go as if paralyzed by the moment. It was reunion of that which can never be separate. The feeling cannot be named."*

*--Pamela Berry (Carr Cousin), July 1990--*

Hopefully, future generations of visitors to the **Carr Ranch section** of **Battle Creek Wildlife Area** will discover their own positive feelings and experiences, much as Rosena and Pamela have shared in their writings.

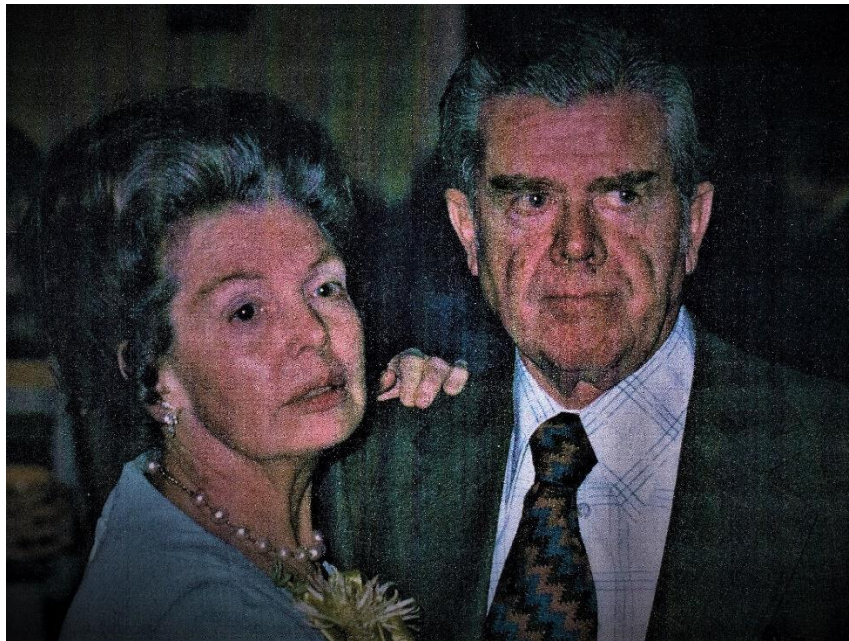
**A few Final Thoughts on Marie Elizabeth Kohn Carr –  
The Inspiration for Offering Carr Ranch to WCB**





**Marie Elizabeth Kohn Carr – Wife, Mother, Teacher, Rancher, Care-giver,  
Choir Director/Soloist, Community Leader**

Other than the Giles sisters who each spent over 50 years growing up and living on the ranch at Balls Ferry, Marie Kohn Carr spent more time residing there than any other family member of the Carr or Kohn families; from 1943 to 1946, and again, from 1974-off-and-on-to 2015 – over 44 years. The ranch provided a place for Marie and Laurence to finish raising their nine children; a “safe haven” to shelter their children when life’s traumas and “bumps in the road” necessitated a place to hide out and re-calibrate; a place to grow old together and contend with the ravages of Parkinson’s Disease; a place to host political “meet’n greets;” a great gathering place for family reunions and holiday observances. Marie’s energy and childlike sense of wonder provided impetus for family and friends to anticipate annual pilgrimages to Balls Ferry.



***Marie and Laurence Carr shared their lives together for over 50 years before his passing in late 1991***

Marie and Laurence had raised nine children, “headstarting them” all with four-year college degrees, and supporting them through marriage and raising their own families. Seven of the children received post-graduate degrees (three law school graduates). Their children’s successes and happiness were driving forces throughout Marie’s and Laurence’s lives and gave them great satisfaction in the autumns of their years.



**Marie & Laurence Carr and their nine children – c. 1962**

An enthusiastic, engaged citizen of Shasta County, Marie would be on the road to Redding and Anderson for local historical society meetings and events (She twice served as President of the **Shasta Historical Society**). Much like her Balls Ferry ranch predecessor (Rosena Giles), Marie's passion for documenting and reporting local history extended to writing columns for the **Anderson Valley Post** (a regular columnist for its "Remember When" column), as well as serving as Editor for the **Shasta Historical Society's** annual compendium of local history articles, **The Covered Wagon** (also contributing numerous articles to that publication and the society's monthly **Stagecoach** newsletter). As a 2010 Christmas present for her children (at age 92), Marie also wrote and computer-generated a 40-chapter, 200-page **Memoirs of Marie Carr** personal history, updating it with a second edition in 2013 (at age 95).

She was: a graduate of St. Anthony's High School in Long Beach; a graduate of UCLA in Education and Music; a circuit music teacher during the 40's for Shasta County schools (also supplementing her income as a popular soloist at weddings around the county); an elementary school teacher in Redding at St. Joseph's School, Cypress Elementary School, Live Oak School, Magnolia School, and at Castle Rock School in Castella. Between the years of raising her own nine progeny Marie would repeatedly return to her passion for educating young people...and she was good at it.

Amidst all the chaos surrounding her busy life, Marie sustained remarkable capacity for keeping informed and well-read. And she was given to keeping current in written communications with her children, their spouses, and her grandchildren and great grandchildren – always a thoughtful source of positive reinforcement and encouragement to lift spirits and keep everyone on track.

Throughout her life, Marie was a compassionate care-giver to family and friends alike, a competent mentor and teacher, and a conscientious community leader. Whether it was protesting a potential environmental threat, or advocating a potential solution for mitigating downtown traffic jams at the city railroad crossings, or organizing and implementing refurbishment of the historical society buildings, she exhibited extraordinary stamina and commitment to purpose. Her leadership was instrumental in promoting annual conferences of

the various historical non-profits within and outside Shasta County. Marie was about “moving the ball forward” and improving community services and involvements. She was a constant force for inclusiveness versus exclusivity. And her acceptance within the community showed by the admiration of those with whom she interacted. That community admiration was exemplified by the diverse and overwhelming gathering at her Celebration of Life on her passing, with over 300 admirers in attendance. The mark she left on the community was generously recognized by the “Citizen of Distinction and Merit” plaque presented to the family by the county Board of Supervisors (see below).



Not long before she passed on, Marie discussed with son Patrick an epitaph she'd seen on a pioneer woman's grave, that typified the spirit with which she'd lived. It simply said "To Mom, She Done the Best She Could." Often she would remind her family members, **"I'm doin' the best I can with what I've got,"** truly an understatement for the many accomplishments in her life – not least of which was raising a family of nine children and seeing all of them successfully matriculate through at least four years of college. She requested that Pat have the woman's epitaph be embossed on her grave after she was gone.



Marie's love of the ranch, her capacity for engaging every person she encountered (privileged or downtrodden) with equal acceptance, and her generous, loving appetite to share her life with others, overlays her descendants' desire to share **Carr Ranch** for the enjoyment of future generations. She was truly inspirational, and a beacon for living a full and meaningful life.