

Boy dies after Green Valley wagon accident

By Kristin Delaplane

Sunday, March 29, 1998

There was a show in the Union Hall in Suisun City in May 1867, when Martin the Wizard turned the place into "an enchanted temple of magic and mystery."

This was followed by a letter to the editor: "I have attended shows, theaters and all kinds of public gathering in Suisun for the past 10 years and I cannot remember an incident in which the boys who visit such places, encouraged by grownup men, have not proved a nuisance.

"No exhibition comes along, but what the front seats are filled with small boys devoid of the slightest knowledge of good manners.

"They seem to think stamping their feet, pounding on the floor with sticks, whistling and talking at the top of their voice are evidence of smartness. . . . Such things are disagreeable to those who seek information or enjoyment at such places."

L.A. Guptil was coming to Suisun City to ship out a wagonload of fruit from John Huckins' orchard, when he fell ill.

He picked up the 15-year-old son of B.T. Osborn and allowed the boy to drive.

In coming down the hill the wagon gained too much speed and, in an effort to avoid the bridge, the horses swerved and caused the wagon to tip over. Guptil was badly injured when he fell on his head.

The boy received only slight bruising.

A spark from a steam threshing machine started a fire in haystack with 8 or 10 tons of hay.

This occurred in J.C. Ewing's field, 4 miles west of Suisun City.

Fairfield

The Fairfield ladies had several projects underway. One was to landscape the cemetery, planting shrubbery and otherwise embellishing the grounds.

Then they had a strawberry festival at the courthouse to benefit the schoolhouse that was to be built in the town.

T.H. Morton was going to give a May ball and supper in the new hall opposite Morton's saloon.

Thomas H. Morton Sr. died at 91 years of age. He came to Suisun in 1855.

He was a soldier in the war of 1812 and could remember seeing Gen. Washington.

Being unable to walk for the last presidential election, he was carried to the polls so that he might vote for President Lincoln.

There was a new advertisement in the newspaper for Joseph McKenna who was an attorney with a practice at the courthouse in Fairfield.

Suisun Valley, Rockville and Green Valley

James Lang of Suisun Valley was offering a \$25 reward for the thief who had stolen his horse, saddle and blanket.

He claimed David Gilchrist, a boy about 14, weighing 130 lbs. and standing 5 feet, 5 inches, was the thief.

Gilchrist had been secured by Lang from the Industrial School in San Francisco five years previous and was bound to him until he reached maturity.

There was a golden wedding anniversary party in Rockville for Jacob and Catherine Cutler.

Both were 75 years old, born in 1793.

It was stated in the newspaper accounts that, despite their advancing years, they were still hale and active.

On the day of this momentous occasion, they went to church and later in the evening they were serenaded by the Suisun Cornet Band.

Jacob was a wagon maker by trade. They had come to California 14 years before.

The store at Rockville Corners was known as the Gilmore & Woods store.

There was an account of a fatal accident one night in Rockville when a number of men were returning to Green Valley from the Democratic meeting in Suisun.

One of the wheels of the wagon ran into a stump and the shock of it threw some of the party to the ground. Two were the sons of Charles Ramsay, a 15- and 16-year-old. The younger one did not survive his injuries.

By another newspaper account, a man was found hanging from a tree in a remote area of Green Valley, in Swift's Canyon. He was identified as Antonie Sabatier, a native of France.

He was a bachelor about 35.

George Dingley, who had owned the famed Dingley Mills in Green Valley, died in Yolo County. He was 45 years old. Vacaville

Michael Dolan, eldest son of John Dolan of Pleasants Valley, was out hunting when he crawled through a fence dragging his gun behind him.

The hammer of the gun was caught on one of the rails and discharged firing into his head and killing him instantly. He was 26 and a printer by profession.

The Rev. William T. Lucky, who had long directed Pacific Methodist College, put in his resignation, according to accounts.

This school's history began in 1855 as the first school to be established north of Benicia. At that time, it was called the Ulatis Academy.

In 1861, the Pacific Methodist College South purchased the school and it became the first chartered college in the Sacramento Valley.

It was noted in 1863, that Rev. Lucky was the president. At that time, he was giving temperance lectures, including at the Brick Church in Fairfield.

In 1864, it was noted that the Rev. Lucky, was not only president of the college, but also the professor of Moral and Intellectual Science.

In 1865, there were 150 students. The most famous student of the Pacific Methodist College was Edwin Markham, author of "The Man with the Hoe." Markham lived with his mother in Lagoon Valley.

Another pioneer resident, Mason Wilson, who arrived in Vacaville in the early 1850s,

announced he was leaving on a steamer bound for Texas.

The schools and societies in the upper part of the county were planning a May festival, a picnic at Mr. Simpson's in Vacaville.

This was the same place where they had had the fair the year before.

Louis Vaca was killed when he was thrown from his wagon, while driving a four-horse team near Vacaville.

The wheel crushed his head. He was 17 years old, the son of Pomocino Vaca of Putah Creek. He had been in the employ of Demetrio Pena.

There was a murder reported in the village of Vacaville.

David Gordon shot and killed William Bryon.

There was a quarrel between the parties that lasted most of the day.

Gordon came into the saloon where Bryon was playing billiards and at the conclusion of the conversation, they shook hands.

Gordon turned to leave and with his back turned, Bryon struck Gordon with a cue stick.

In response, Gordon drew a pistol and shot Bryon in the abdomen. Bryon fled pursued by Gordon, who fired four more shots, two of those shots entered Bryon's head, killing him.

Gordon was arrested and was in the Fairfield jail.

When his case came to trial, the jury could not reach a verdict and he was given bail of \$10,000.

Silveyville

Silveyville reported 106 pupils in the school. The people in the Duffield School District were going to hold a festival - a supper and dance - to raise money for a new schoolhouse.

They netted \$145.75. It would be located 2 1/2 miles east of Silveyville.

Either Professor Crouse or William Lucas or both organized a dancing school, which

proved to be quite a success.

The Rev. Hendrix organized a singing school. A phonographic school was about to be opened by J.D. Carey. C.B. Plummer was going to give the "natives" a party on a Saturday evening.

Dr. H. Hadley, a dentist, opened an office with Dr. Wells. Hadley was also famous for his temperance lectures.

The carpenters were at work on the Methodist Church and estimated it would be completed in June or July. The church was actually completed in August.

Several hundred settlers of the Ulpines Mexican land grant, met at Silvey's to discuss plans for their mutual relief and protection. J.C. Merryfield presided. A second meeting was planned.

Meanwhile, mass meetings were going to be held in Silveyville, Maine Prairie, Vacaville, Solano post office, Binghamton, Nurse's Landing, Collinsville, Rio Vista and the Union schoolhouse near H. Rush's ranch to choose delegates for the second meeting, a convention to be held in Binghamton that May.

In other news, Mrs. March was giving a Fourth of July ball with music and supper provided. Mrs. March was famous for her balls where one could always count on an excellent supper provided. Many of her parties were by invitation. A grand ball also was given by Sim Overlin and was anticipated to be a "brilliant affair." It was to be held at the Washington Hall. Tickets were \$4, including supper.

The Tunnel Saloon recently opened and was located on the north side of Main Street. They had wines, liquors and cigars.

Solomon G. W. Staples, who was having financial difficulties, hung himself from a rafter in his barn. He was 48 years old and left two children.

Suggestions and local historical information for this column are welcome. Write biographer-historian Kristin Delaplane in care of The Reporter, 916 Cotting Lane, Vacaville 95688, or e-mail her at www.ohistory@masterpiecememoirs.com.

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