



COMMUNITY  
MEMORIAL  
MUSEUM  
OF SUTTER COUNTY

SUMMER  
2018

# BULLETIN



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## ON THE COVER:

Nancy Stroud Johnson, wife of John R. Johnson, who worked as a barber in Marysville and a porter at Treadwell & Company

PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

## Community Memorial Museum Staff

**Jessica Hougen**, Museum Director / Curator  
**Sharyl Simmons**, Assistant Curator

**Kelly Gash**, Museum Aide  
**Janie Payne**, Museum Aide

## Visit the Museum

1333 Butte House Road  
Yuba City, California 95993  
530.822.7141

[www.suttercountymuseum.org](http://www.suttercountymuseum.org)



Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County



cmmssc

## Museum Association

The Association is a 501(c)(3) organization that fundraises and supports the operation of the Museum.

Applications to join are always accepted (available on the Museum's website). If you are interested in history and want to do something meaningful for our community, please consider applying! New applicants to the Association are approved by a vote of the full Association. Members serve for 4 year terms.

### Current Association Members:

Tony Kurlan, President

Eric Gruenthal, Vice President

Babs Cotter, Secretary

Phyllis Smith, Treasurer

Carol Bordeaux      Randy Lavender

Katie Bryant      Amber Milner

Christie Burns      Margit Sands

Scott Hankins      Sukh Sidhu

Mark Hartney      Chuck Smith



**Agricultural Geometry**  
by Dolores Mitchell

■ Our summer exhibit, **Natural Wanderment: Stewardship – Sovereignty – Sacredness**, has been open since June 9th. If you haven't seen it yet, you still have a few weeks, but you don't want to miss this one! It is an exhibit of photography by Matika Wilbur. Matika, of Swinomish and Tulalip heritage, has dedicated herself to traveling the country photographing members of all of the 562+ federally recognized Native American tribes still in existence. Her work is incredible. Here is a description, in her own words:

“Matika Wilbur’s newest Project 562 collection **Natural Wanderment: Stewardship – Sovereignty – Sacredness** is an exhibition of Native American portraits and stories that honors and seeks to protect ancestral ways of life and lands in North America. Project 562 offers a creative relationship with people from 562+ Tribal Nations in the United States that builds cultural bridges, abandons stereotypes, and renews and inspires our national legacy.”

■ Following **Natural Wanderment**, we will exhibit the photos chosen for the Sutter Buttes Regional Land Trust annual calendar August 25-September 9. Then we'll have our annual history themed art show. This year's exhibit is titled **Structures**, and it will be artistic interpretations of architecture.

■ We've also been working on a small exhibit to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the University of California Cooperative Extension in Sutter and Yuba counties. This will be on display in our Agricultural Wing through the end of the year. It's been fun learning about their history!

## Events

■ **Night at the Museum** continues to be a very popular kids program. We're holding one on August 17th and one on October 19th. These programs fill up quickly, so be sure to register in advance if you want to bring your kids or grandkids!

■ We're taking it easy this fall while we get ready for the best **Trees and Traditions** yet! It's on December 1st this year, so mark your calendar!

■ There is a lot going on in the Artisan Community Garden, and more being scheduled all the time. Keep an eye on them on Facebook or call the Museum to find out about the latest programs in the Garden.

## In the Museum Store

We'll be stocking up over the next few months for holiday shopping. If you have a suggestion, we'd love to hear it! Otherwise, keep an eye out for new items coming soon!

## News

If you haven't heard, we got the grant!! We are being awarded \$73,000 from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment to install high-density mobile shelving in our collections storage areas. This is a huge improvement to our storage spaces. We are also planning some facilities improvements for early next year – a full list and schedule will be included in the next Bulletin.

■ The Artisan Community Garden at the Community Memorial Museum is here! The Garden was installed over the spring months and began holding kids programs in June. If you haven't seen it yet, I encourage you to come take a look! Every Friday morning is Fun Friday – we have craft activities for the kids, and there's always lots to do in the Garden. Come give us a hand!



■ If you haven't signed up for our eNewsletter yet, you should! Since we're adding programs and events on a regular basis, it's the best way to make sure you know about everything we're up to. Just visit our website at [www.suttercountymuseum.org](http://www.suttercountymuseum.org) and scroll to the bottom. You'll see the box to sign up.





PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

## The Buttes in 1858

By Grove K. Godfrey

### INTRODUCTION

Grove K. Godfrey hiked up the Sutter Buttes in April 1858 and his essay appeared in “Hutchings’ California Magazine” in that year. Thompson & West reprinted the essay in *History of Sutter County, 1879*<sup>1</sup>. Godfrey, known as “Professor,” was born in Hannibal, New York in 1826. He left New York on the *Bark Belvedere* on February 24, 1849 and arrived in San Francisco on October 8th. Godfrey made the first recorded ascent of Lassen Peak in 1851. In 1858, Professor Godfrey and Dr. Darragh opened a portrait gallery in Shasta City at the Eagle Hotel. This partnership lasted until the end of 1859. Among his other pursuits was writing travel articles which appeared in “Hutchings’ California Magazine.”

What follows is an edited version of the essay along with the changes that the authors of *History of Sutter County, 1879* noted in the landscape in the intervening 21 years. During this time, the remodeling of Sutter County from wetlands and dry plains began as land was drained and then irrigated to make it the agricultural breadbasket it is today.

### THE EXCURSION

One morning before the sun rose over the summits of the Sierras, I set out on an excursion from Yuba City to the Butte Mountains. It was a lovely morning. The atmosphere was soft and balmy, and the sky beautifully blue. I started early to avoid the heat of the day, for experience had taught me that the delightful air I inhaled (sic) would become hot in a few hours. A belt of trees along Feather River covered the luxuriant bottom land, and they were mostly oak and sycamore, low and wide spreading, affording shades of the finest kind.

Birds, too, of rich and varied plumage, having most sweet and liquid notes made the landscape vocal with their songs; while the chattering magpie and blue jay, with an occasional whistle or peculiar call of the

California partridge, and the lonely sound of the moaning doves as they could be seen playing among the dense foliage or on top of sycamore trees, gave additional interest to this animated and truly magnificent scene. As I emerged into the open plain, the lofty, snowy peaks of the Coast Range Mountains just began to glitter in the first rays of the morning sun, which had not yet reached me.

After walking about four miles over a parched and arid plain, occasionally relieved by a few trees or shrubs, covered with different kinds of flowers, as if in mimicry of the desolate and arid plain, I reached a belt of timber – a fine grove. Here I tarried for some time beneath the welcome shades, being a little weary.

I passed through beautiful groves of white, live and

<sup>1</sup> Reprint available for purchase in the Museum Store.

evergreen oaks, often six and eight feet in diameter, that grow to the height of fifteen to fifty feet, and then spreading out, forming a large canopy. One is struck with the great regularity of these forest trees. Generally, the space between them is from four to ten rods<sup>2</sup>, and the boughs branching off from the main trunk with as much uniformity as an old apple orchard.



PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

I reached the base of the east end of the range. The Butte mountains are situated between the Sacramento and Feather Rivers, twelve miles west of Yuba City, which is located at the mouth of the Yuba River. From the base of the mountains, there is a slight descent after leaving the foothills; streams of pure water gush from the mountainsides in all directions, forming little rivulets, some reaching a few miles beyond the hills, the springs which supply them not being copious enough to carry them across the plains, whilst others traverse the valleys and finally empty themselves into the rivers – the most of these streams being plentifully supplied with fish the whole year.

I wound around on the north side of the mountains for about three miles and commenced the ascent. Whilst moving up between the mountains, leaving two on my right hand and two on my left, I came to a placer<sup>3</sup> where men had been engaged in mining on the banks of some of those mountain streams and in ravines. From these old diggings my progress was uninterrupted in climbing until I reached a ravine, where a stream of pure

<sup>2</sup> A rod is 16.5 feet.

<sup>3</sup> A placer mine.

and limpid water had sprung to life far above in the tall cliffs, and leaped and washed over a rugged mass of rocks, and finally wound around the foothills and lost itself in the plains.

From thence I continued my stroll in climbing up the mountain sides. There were patches of green tufts to be seen here and there, and occasionally a grass plat broke upon the sight.

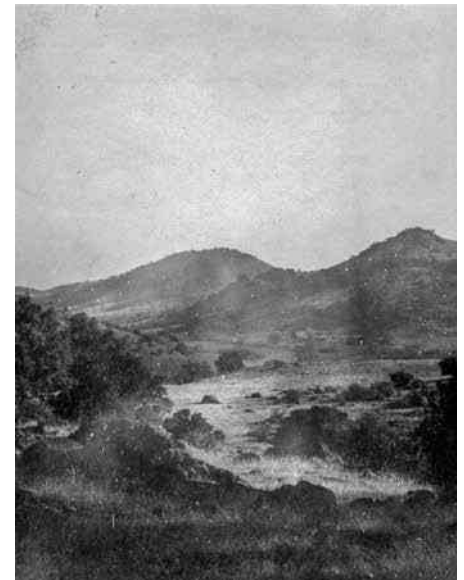


PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

I came unexpectedly to an enchanting spot, a mountain streamlet, which descending from above in mountain cascades, plunging and foaming over cliffs and precipices, found bowls in the solid rocks, forming limpid pools of cool and delightful water of crystal purity, and finally winding and forming a most beautiful little lake, set like a gem in the mountains. The sheet of water lay transversely across the direction I had been pursuing.

Proceeding a little further I came to the outlet of the lake, where it

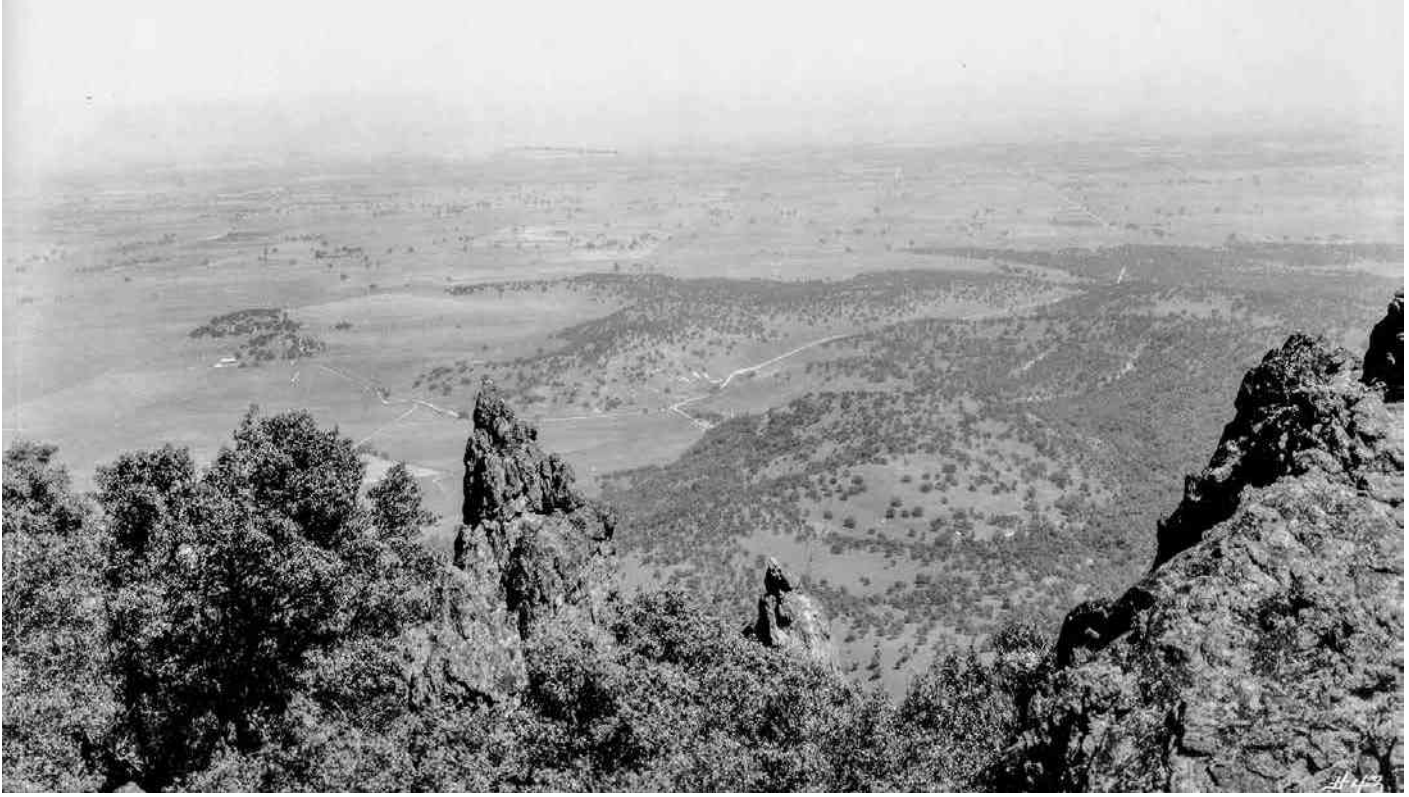


PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

found its way through a narrow passage between an accumulation of rocks, boulders and broad slabs, and large angular fragments.

Winding my way in a zigzag course up this wide and long ravine for some distance, I came to a fork where it branches off into two beautiful arroyos. A few yards below the junction, the rivulet takes a precipitous leap over craggy rocks and rushes onward. Walking along on the top ridge till I joined the most easterly peak, I finally succeeded in gaining the highest of the four peaks, two thousand feet above the level of the plains of Sacramento.

These mountains stand northwest and southeast, and the whole range is six miles in length. They bear the appearance of lava and probably have been upheaved by some

subterranean convulsions of nature. The different peaks stood before me in the distant prospect, and parallel to its length, the ridges were split up in chasms or fissures, between which rose not so high and lofty, walls that terminated with minarets and columns.

The view toward the west presents the long and lofty wall of the coast range, extending north and south as far as vision could extend and in some places capped with perpetual snow. Stretched between me and those distant hills two-thirds in width is the great valley of the Sacramento, through which can be seen the ever memorable Sacramento River, winding its way to the waters of the Pacific, whose banks are defined by a long line of oaks and sycamores. At my feet lay the valley dotted with a long and

rich growth of timber, which gives it more the appearance of an old cultivated park than the forests of nature, while on the other side of the mountain, the Feather and Yuba Rivers wound along the valley over which I had just made my way, and entered the Sacramento to the south, which passes through this valley, till it is dimly lost on the swell of the expansive plain. The bands of the rivers, as they sweep around in graceful curves, present a beautiful appearance, with ranches scattered along at various distances, half hid in the green robed forests.

To the north a remarkable peak looms up to the eastward, and it is called Lassen Peak, and nearly opposite, in the coast range, stands a prominent summit, called Mount Lynn, whilst far beyond these two ranges unit and become more

elevated and Mount Shasta enters the region of eternal snows. The mountain ranges on both sides of the valley are high and rugged, being capped in places with snow the year round. It was a beautiful afternoon in April, the light breeze played through the valley, gently waving the trees in a most graceful manner, and filling the air with the balmy fragrance of the thousand flowers of the plain.

### **FROM THOMPSON & WEST**

*(following Godfrey's essay).*

Twenty-one years have rolled along since Mr. Godfrey visited this lovely spot, and the very busy finger of time has wrought many changes. The shady groves and prismatic flowers that mantled the plains have given way before the ax and plow of the husbandman; the breezes that once fanned the leaves into rustling music, now sweep in waving billows the golden grain; the limpid streams, filled with sporting fish, are seen no more, and in their stead are mountain torrents in winter and dry water-courses in summer; the noble growth of trees that skirted the mountain sides has been succeeded by a fringe of stunted oak and bushes. ... but the hand of man has wrought a change; where once stood the humble cot of the settler, now noble cities, busy with the hum of life, rear their lofty spires; villages with their quiet thrift dot the landscape; while on every hand, the husbandman brings peace and plenty from the yielding earth, over which ranged the bounding antelope and antlered elk.



# A Biography of Louis Frederick Tarke (Part 1)

By Frieda Tarke Sanstrum

07

*Editor's Note: In 1966, Frieda Tarke Sanstrum undertook to write a biography of her father, whom she admired very much. A good deal of the biography is actually an interesting description of the life of a young woman growing up on a successful ranch in the Sutter Buttes. This memoir was printed previously in the Bulletin, but this time it is edited to focus on Frieda's life living in West Butte at the turn of the 20th Century. We've clarified some information about the origins of her family that she admitted confused her and then edited the biography to focus on her life and her experiences in the family's home, as those memories seem the most vivid in her account. The words that follow the short introduction are Frieda's.*

## INTRODUCTION

Frieda's grandfather, Peter Frederick Tarke, was born in Westphalia, Prussia in 1824. He immigrated to the United States in 1844, living at first in Missouri. In 1850, he crossed the plains with his best friend, Frederick Hoke, and engaged in mining in the Rough & Ready area. In early 1851, word spread that Rich Bar was producing a lot of gold. Tarke headed to Sacramento to buy animals and supplies, but when journeying to Rich Bar in March of that year, a heavy snow storm prevented him from getting through. He attempted to carry fifty pounds of flour on foot, but that proved too difficult. Eventually, he made it to Rich Bar – with his flour – where the miners were trading gold for flour, pound for pound.

In 1855, both Tarke and Hoke went back to the Midwest. Peter Frederick Tarke married Mary Stohlmann<sup>1</sup> and Frederick Hoke married Mary Louisa Erké. In 1856 the two couples came back to California via the Isthmus of Panama route. The Tarke newlyweds settled in West Butte and eventually had a son, Louis Frederick and two daughters, Anna and Emma. Frederick Hoke and his family also settled in West Butte near the Tarkes. Their houses were about two miles apart and, originally, identical in construction:

<sup>1</sup> Some members of the family spelled the name Stohlmann and others spelled it Stohlman. We've followed the individual's preferred spelling.



## A Very Small FAMILY TREE

Peter Frederick Tarke  
(May 31, 1824 – April 15, 1888)

married

Mary A Stohlmann Tarke  
(1832 – June 19, 1889)

Parents to

Louis Frederick Tarke  
(1856 – 1925)

married

Nancy (Nannie) Santee Tarke  
(1868 – 1932)

Parents to

Anna Tarke Shields  
(February 17, 1892 – October 27, 1971)

Frieda Tarke Sanstrum  
(March 7, 1894 – December 5, 1967)  
(author)

Fredrick Louis Tarke  
(December 24, 1896 – January 12, 1968)

Elden Santee Tarke  
(May 14, 1898 – October 29, 1957)

George Washington Tarke  
(February 1, 1907 – April 27, 1974)

two storied, with bay windows, balconies or verandas surrounding the sprawling center room. They were designed both for comfort and style, with fireplaces, porches, staircases with newel posts and many clever closets and cupboards.

Eventually, Peter Frederick Tarke acquired about 3000 acres of tule, hill and valley land where he raised about 100 head of horses, 500 head of cattle and at one time had 3000 head of sheep.

*A Biography  
of  
Louis Frederick Tarke*

*With apologies to other  
members of the family  
for omissions, mistakes  
and differences of opinion.  
This script is original,  
except for occasional  
data supplied by my  
sister, Ann, for which  
I thank her very much.  
It was a great help.*

*December, 1966*

## FRIEDA'S MEMORIES

Frederick Louis Tarke was born December 24, 1858 in the little crossroads village of West Butte in Sutter County, California. Much like his father's life was intertwined with that of Frederick Hoke, Louis Tarke became close friends with William Hoke and their friendship lasted a lifetime.

The Tarke family, Peter Frederick, Mary and their three children lived happily and busily on the big ranch at West Butte. There was always work to be done and much hired help had to be employed. At this time immigrant Chinese often drifted into the neighborhood or were purposely imported for they were excellent workers. They maintained their characteristic way of living in speech, dress, food and customs.

It is recalled that lacking work in the winter, large numbers of these workers would be kept busy building walls or fences over the hills and little valleys of the foothills. These were constructed from the native rocks on the hillsides, having probably been cast there centuries ago by volcanic action. They were of all sizes, some were miniature boulders, five or six feet in diameter, then others diminishing to smaller rocks, smaller than one foot. It must have indeed been torturous work to lift and pile and adjust these stones into walls that would stand and not tumble down through the years. Their tools were picks, shovels, sledge hammers and human hands. There were two kinds of walls, single and double, the latter much



stronger and durable to resist the destructive action of nature, and the play and force of horses and cattle. At any rate, they were built and withstood the ravages of time and weather very well for many years. Later barbed wire was strung along the tops to keep the livestock from jumping over. The only disagreeable feature was the harboring of varmints which would prey on the young cattle or lambs.

But to my mind they were beautiful, the multicolored rocks blending with the ochre hillsides and at a distance making graceful tracings over the slopes to mark certain pastures and fields.

How they surveyed the fields or knew just where to build the walls, I do not know. But perhaps the owner, having told them once where they should be, they never forgot.

Many a crop Peter Tarke must have gleaned from his fertile fields. He was successful and in a few years became a wealthy man.

There came a day when he decided to return to his native land. I do not know what relatives he had in Germany but upon his return, he brought back several German

boys. Mostly friends they were, perhaps distant relatives as nephews, about ready for military service under the Emperor. Somehow they had learned that if they came to America they would escape conscription. A certain number of years of military service was required of every native male in Germany, and the only escape was to leave the country.

These young boys were honest, hardworking, likeable young fellows, some young enough to attend the local grammar school. They spoke fluent German, but only broken English and they were anxious to learn. And they soon all learned to read and write English. They were satisfied to work for \$1.00 a day with room and board. They saved their money and even at this seemingly meagre wage, soon were able to have a nest egg to invest. Most of them married and became successful financially as well as respected citizens of the new and growing California. They must have liked the new world, especially as a haven from their worries, for few of them ever went back to the "Old Country" and I remember some descendants of theirs living in this part of California to this day.

Louis Tarke, my father, was an exceptional young man. He realized early in life that he needed more education to manage his large estate and meet the demands of life. So he went to San Francisco by himself. I do not know the exact age he was, but he enrolled in Heald's Business College and attended for six months. He must have been a very studious young man and didn't waste any of his time, I'm sure. There is also a record of his having attended Golden Gate Academy in San Francisco.

At any rate, he obtained a good business education. He learned Double Entry Bookkeeping and used this method of keeping records of the business transactions of the large ranch he was soon to manage. He also learned the Spencerian mode of handwriting and wrote a beautiful hand. It was the custom of the day to make all Capital letters (upper case) with heavy shading on the longer strokes with the pen (fountain pens had not been invented). There were for many years at the old home several copy books filled with his practice handwriting, beautiful specimens. He always wrote this slant method, and his signature was a thing of beauty. Typewriters had not been in use either to divert students from learning to write legibly.



PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

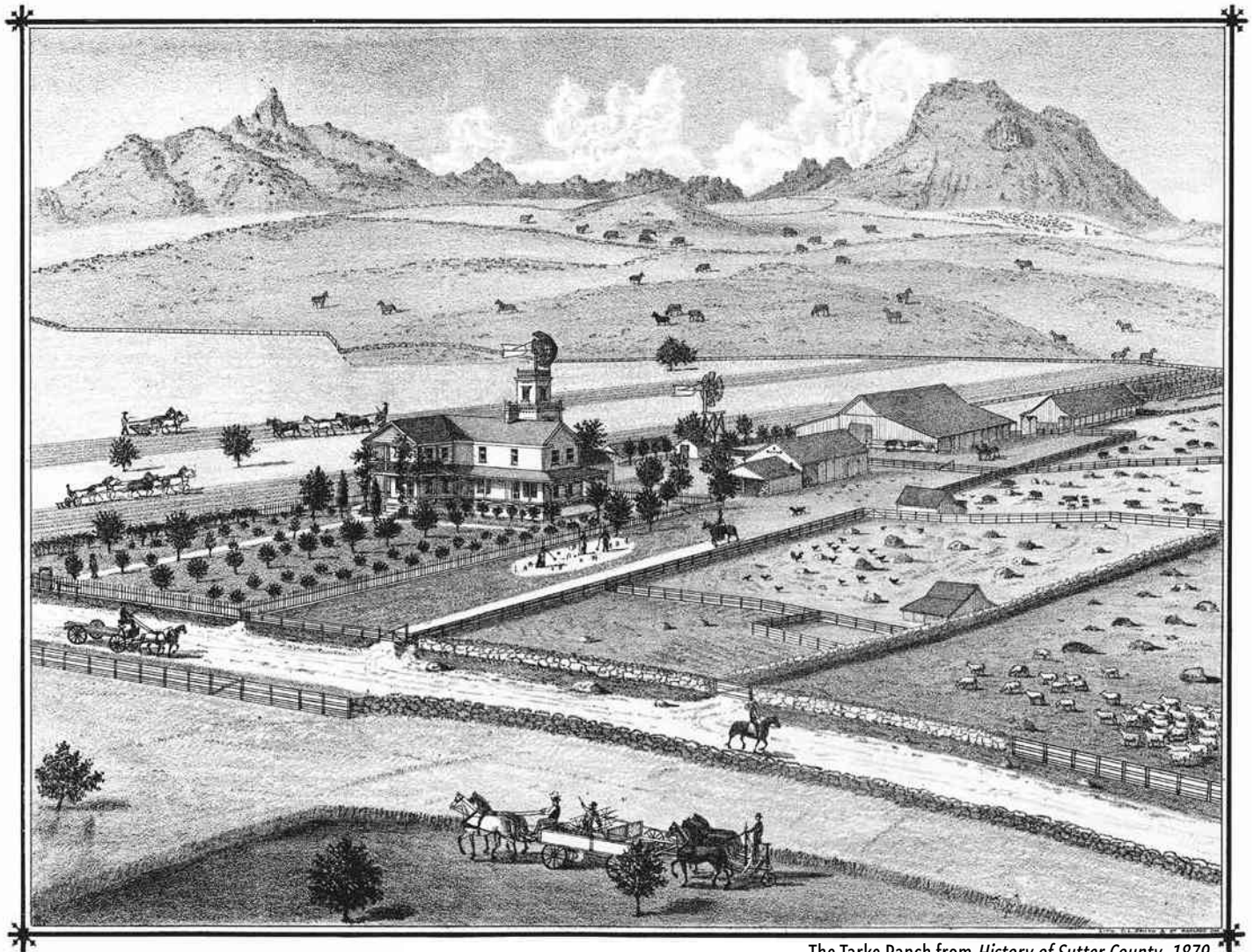
Peter Frederick Tarke died in 1888 at age 63. The story of his death is perhaps adequately illustrative of the character of the man.

It seems that among his brood mares there was one who was flighty and nervous. Tied in the stall, she refused to let her young colt nurse. This irritated Mr. Tarke and he thought he could force her to take the colt. He tried to push it up to her, must have got too close and quick as a flash, without warning, she kicked him with both heels in the stomach and abdomen. It was a vicious and fatal blow. Since he lived eighteen miles from town, medical aid was delayed too long, and he died from the effects of the blow. He must have suffered excruciating pain, but perhaps merciful unconsciousness relieved the agony.

His wife, Mary, survived him only another year, dying in 1889 at age 56.

It should be recounted that before his death, Peter

Tarke made the before-mentioned trip to Germany – in fact it would seem that he made two such trips. While he was gone, he instructed his family to make certain improvements on the family residence, completely renovating, enlarging and remodeling it. The chief responsibility fell on the daughter, Emma. She engaged carpenters and painters and decorators from nearby Marysville. A remarkable job they did. The result was a larger and more commodious house, two-storied, with double bay windows in front and on two sides, a wide stairway with long balustrade. Part of the original house was preserved intact, the part that was identical to Frederick Hoke's. This part was joined to the new structure. It became the large, roomy kitchen and dining room, with large hallway and stairway both to the second floor and to the cellar. They became part of the new house.



The Tarke Ranch from *History of Sutter County, 1879*

I must mention a style of interior wall finishing which I fear has disappeared from use entirely at the present time. This was called wood-graining and left a beautiful design on woodwork. It was made with a fine toothed steel comb being dragged over a wet varnish and the result was an imitation of the grain in certain woods.



There was a large tank house with a windmill that was used to supply all the needs of the home, the large flower garden, ornamental and fruit trees and picket fence was erected around the spacious yard, both front and back.

There were also several great barns to store hay and straw to feed cattle and horses. There were hog sheds too for in this part of California farmers believed in having shelter and protection for their livestock. There were many corrals, enclosed by wire fences, panels and the rock walls I have mentioned before. A map or drawing would show the location of all these buildings, and the roads and pens around them better than words can. There was a large shed for storing vehicles and farm machinery, a blacksmith shop equipped with forge and bellows and all kinds of tools for repair and maintenance of the machinery of the ranch. Also hand rakes, hoes, shovels, spades, pick-axes and wire and rope were stored there.

I remember one peculiar instrument that was used to grind the ends on pipe so they could be joined together. There was another fastened to a large post which could bore holes in metal. It was very powerful, though operated by hand and left large metal filings whenever used.

It would seem odd to store loose hay or straw, but this was before the days of baled hay, which is so prevalent today. There were also several well-constructed chicken houses, a lumber shed, another large shed to keep grain harvesters in.

The huge barn had eight rows of stalls to tie teams in to rest and feed, and a great loft for hay. A large hay fork lifted the hay up to the loft, pulled by one horse with a single-tree attached to the fork. I'm sure this is

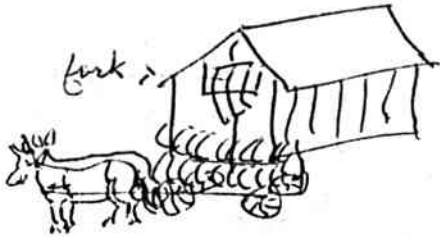
a forgotten art to the young people of 1966, but it was a fascinating performance to watch in those days of my youth. It developed into a trick or skill almost to perfection to get the great loft filled properly. After a wagon full of hay was driven directly under the opening under the gable, where hung the hook, first the man on the wagon would pull the hook down to the load of hay. This worked by a properly adjusted pulley with cables running back under the roof to the far end or the opposite gable. This big hook with teeth about 5 ft. long and curved or bent so they could "take a heavy bite of hay" would be shoved down into the hay, the man having to push it or even jump on it to make it hold onto the hay. Then the man on the ground, who was waiting ready with the single horse, would start the horse and walk it forward way out in the corral as far as the cable would play out, lifting the forkful of hay and moving it way back in the loft. A third man on the hay in the loft, or perhaps two men, watching carefully where the hay should be placed to have the maw filled evenly and properly, would yell "Dump!" The man on the wagon would jerk a rope from the fork, tripping it and down would come the heavy forkful of hay.

Well, I doubt if my incomplete description would suffice to set up the complicated process of filling a barn full of hay from a wagon. But it was an interesting performance to watch anyway. Over and over again till the wagon was empty, the workers in the maw would carefully and painstakingly place the fallen hay with pitch forks, keeping the mass level and even.

I once thought it would be great sport to drive the horse with the single-tree and the long cable. So George, the trusty hired man let me. I was a young girl there and willing to try any adventure. You had to hold the heavy single-tree up off the horse's heels with your left hand (of course it hung from heavy traces from the horse's back). You must hold the reins, or lines, with your right hand. The gentle, stolid horse soon learned to do his part of the trick. I'm sure he knew it all already or he would never have learned from my awkward performance and if he hadn't been the spirit of patience itself, he wouldn't have put up with my foolishness.

It was a great experience, but my curiosity was soon satisfied. Really, I was terrified. If I didn't hold up that heavy clanging single-tree right, or let it bang the

horse's heels, he might kick me. I was very close to him. Or if I didn't get it unhooked in the nick of time, the apparatus inside the barn would all foul up and I would be in serious trouble. So I had my fun the one time and I never wanted to help unload a wagon full of hay again. I'm sure George was glad I never wanted to try again either.



But memory brings back the enchanting scene – the sweet, fresh smell of the hay, alfalfa or barley, the neighing of the horses, the stamping of their feet, the clanking of the harness chains, the shouts of the men. I see strange things again; as the great wagon wheels turned, some of the sticky, black, oily axle grease where the hub of the wheel fitted over the axle would ooze out making many original, captivating designs. I loved to watch it. The hay itself was so graceful and so designed to form a mound on top of the unwieldy wagon, hanging like fringe all around the edges.

## HORSE POWER

The horses worked so very hard. They were powerful, muscular and strong. Their great shoulder muscles pressed on the heavy collars to tighten the traces and make the load move. Wonderful, patient creatures they were! I felt so sorry for them when the perspiration formed great

masses of white foam under the harness and their legs and sides and necks were dripping wet. But of course they liked to work, or I thought they did. I'm sure they were not overworked.

The men kept them "roached" very particularly which means the manes and forelocks were carefully trimmed. They curried the horses with the off curry combs used by horse fanciers, making their coats shine. How faithful they were and devoted! Queen, Duchess, Bessie, Fannie, Duke – I can't remember them all. When the day's work was over and the heavy sets of harness were unbuckled and unstrapped and lifted off their tired backs, they almost spoke their "thanks." If you've never seen a set of harness for a team of work horses, you cannot imagine all the complex assortment and arrangement of leather straps, snaps, buckles, chains, bits, blinders, traces, reins, collar and collar pads and bridles. It was a work of art and an expensive thing too. How glad the horses were to be free from the heavy harness. They would be turned loose for a little while in the corral in front of the big barn to get a drink and some exercise. They almost seemed to laugh in glee as they ran around, shook their heads, galloped, raced and often rolled over and over in a sandy or soft spot. Oh, what a relief it must have been after a long hard day of pulling against the collar.

Then for a cooling drink from the long, zinc trough which stood at one side of the corral. There was a queer little contraption called a "float," a hollow brass ball about the side of

a hand ball that was attached to the pipe. It kept the water in the trough at the right level when it floated correctly or shut off the stream of water. The trough was never too full or empty.

We children loved to climb on the board fence or sit, watching the horses and activities around the barn. Of course, we couldn't go into the corral for some of the horses were not gentle and might kick.

The horses enjoyed long draughts of water apiece. It seemed they couldn't possibly hold all the gallons they drank. But they seemed to know they couldn't come to the trough very often, so they took plenty of water while they had the chance.

The men, meanwhile, would have filled the mangers with hay for the night's feeding, throwing it down from the loft up above.

Our horses were well-fed and looked healthy and strong. Every stall had a feed box on each side of the manger for grain, ground barley, which they liked very much and was good for them. They would begin to munch it eagerly as soon as they got near it. It gave them extra vitality and strength which hay alone would not provide. I think it served the same purpose that vitamins for humans serve today. Straw had also been placed on the floor of the stable, for the horses to lie on.

I don't think though, that horses naturally lie down at night to rest. It has been said that they "sleep standing up" and I believe they do. For I have walked into a barn sometimes late at night and found

the horses standing and with their eyes wide open. They seem to feed at all hours of the night too. You can hear them munching and grinding the tough hay and grain. However, some of them do lie down to rest their tired legs and their eyes will be shut.

I am reminded of another interesting phase of life on this big ranch. I remember it because it was so thrilling and afforded no small amount of entertainment for us children. This was the breaking-in of young horses or colts to ride or drive, to wear harness, or just anything a horse needs to know to be of service and be useful and valuable. This occupation required several men, but it was always under the direction of one man, a Mr. Butler. He called himself a “professional horse breaker” and a strong, unusual character he was. I’m not sure how old he was, this wiry, dried-up looking little man. His hair was unkempt and he wore a mustache, reddish gray. Clothes never bothered him any because they had only been clean once, I guess, when he bought them. He always wore leather boots with lacing to the knee. He used spectacles too, which seemed incongruous, considering the rough, dangerous work he was engaged in doing.

By the way, have you ever studied a horse’s hoof? It is a peculiar structure. It is strong, powerful, agile and very, very serviceable. Work horses did not require to be shod, their heavy horny hoofs being ample protection on the underside. Of course, it depended on the

particular kind of soil they worked on. But riding and driving horses were always shod.

Well, Mr. Butler would put on quite a show when he broke a horse. The ones selected to be broken were really wild, untamed and savage. They had never even been in a corral. They had never been confined anywhere. So first, Mr. Butler had to get them used to a rope around their necks. A lasso (you know that is a loose long rope with a slip knot at one end) would be thrown so that it landed over the horse’s neck or head and when the end was pulled, it would draw him up close to a stout post or fence.

After noose came the halter, then a bridle with a bit.

Oh, how they hated the whole thing! Some of them were vicious, fighting and kicking with a particular aim to strike or lay low that tormentor, Mr. Butler. They snorted and pawed.

But his patience, understanding and skill were outstanding. He knew just what to do to conquer the spirit of a horse and bring him to the point of being submissive, gentle and obedient. He was never cruel or vengeful, though some violent profanity often polluted the air around the corrals when a horse was unusually stubborn and willful. Oh, how we loved the show and there was real danger from those flying hoofs and sharp teeth.

Mr. Butler knew just how long it would take to break a horse, and soon he would have the whole string of ten or fifteen submitting to halters, then harness, then to

be hitched up to a cart. This was a “breaking cart” with extra-long shafts where the driver could sit way back from the horse on a tiny seat, something like a jockey in a race. When they could be driven in the cart, knew how to be guided by the reins to stop at “whoa” or go faster at the touch of a buggy whip, they were “broken.” I know our father must have had lots of confidence in Mr. Butler’s ability for he came year after year. But I never knew where he came from or where he went. I have no idea how much it cost to break a colt, but he was the best.

## AFTER GRANDFATHER’S DEATH

At his father’s death, Louis was left the administrator of the estate of his father, Peter. Of course, legally the wife inherited half the property and the heirs divided the remaining half equally or one-third each. I am sure the will was recorded and was executed to the letter of the law. Mrs. Tarke inherited the vast real property and the children thirty thousand dollars each. It now became Louis’ duty to administer the terms of the will. It is difficult to appraise real estate and personal property too. I suppose this was left to some court appointed attorneys or the county judge. Naturally, it was discovered after the proper passage of time that such large amounts of cash were not readily accessible so Louis, always agreeable and compliant, assumed the duty and burden of paying off both of his sisters.

They were both married at this

time. Annie had become the wife of Wm. Hawn, an enterprising young man who had come to these parts from Missouri, seeking his fortune. There happened to be a large cattle and grain ranch about fifteen miles north of the family home. It was for sale, and Will and Annie were willing and anxious to take this place as her portion of the inheritance.

It was quite an obligation, but Louis assumed the mortgage for it having more than ample securities in the remaining estate. It took several years to clear up the mortgage, but Louis managed well from the earnings of the old ranch home. Will and Annie built a fine home with many other buildings and lived there for about twenty years. Will was a successful farmer and accumulated a fortune from raising grain, horses, mules, sheep, hogs, turkeys and summer crops.

Emma, the younger daughter, received her portion in cash. She had married a man, a new-comer to Sutter County. He had some distant relatives here but they did not vouchsafe for his reliability and integrity. His name was Ralph Graves. He was an undertaker by trade, a dandy and a deud (sic).

But Emma, her mother's darling, became infatuated with him and he made persistent love to her. Both Annie and Emma had spent some time at College City, where there was an academy or finishing school for young ladies. Emma became an accomplished painter. Some of her works in oil still hang in the family home at West Butte. Both girls studied piano, and I know they

were very attractive young ladies.

They went to San Francisco and invested in an apartment house. I do not know if it was a wise investment. I do not even know the location or address. At any rate, Emma's title to the property was clear and it should have provided for her generously, with proper management. I doubt if Ralph ever followed his trade of undertaker or embalmer. The only time I ever remember seeing him was one summer day when we were very young, he came calling. We were actually frightened of him for he wore a black suit with long black tails and a high black silk stove-pipe hat. I suppose that looked professional. Whether he came on business, I don't know, but that was the last we ever saw.

After losing their investments in San Francisco, Emma moved to a small chicken ranch near Ceres, a small town in Central California. I do not know if Ralph was there, or not, but the ranch must have eked out a living of sorts for her. My father traveled to see her once there and he was terribly grieved to find her so unhappy and in such dire circumstances. She never returned to her childhood home, so we, her nieces and nephews never knew her. It was a tragic story, and one that breaks my heart to tell it now.

Later, much later, when I was attending University in Berkeley, my father came one day to get me and we went together to attend Emma's funeral in San Francisco.

Now it will be necessary to revert to the private life of Louis Tarke, for it was my original purpose to tell about him, and I have sadly retrogressed.

First a little about the Hokes and their story.

## FRIEDA DESCRIBES THE HOKES

It was a fervent and deep thing, this friendship of Peter Tarke and Frederick Hoke. It endured for a lifetime, witness their having moved to adjoining ranches and built homes identical in style. And here they both lived till their deaths.

Frederick Hoke was born in Germany in 1815 and migrated to the U. S. in 1844. He went to Iowa and lived there modestly. Six years later he came to California across the plains with ox teams, traveling with his boon companion, Peter Tarke. On his arrival, Mr. Hoke engaged in mining and continued at it until 1855. Then he returned to Iowa and married Louise Erké. Four children were born to this family, William Frederick who died in 1922, Harmon August and two girls, Louisa and Alice. Frederick Hoke continued to reside in California after he had come there the second time.

Mrs. Hoke went back East to visit friends and it was while she was on this trip that Harmon August was born. She started back to California when he was about six months old. Somewhere in the interim of his childhood, he contracted scarlet fever, which left him completely deaf and dumb.



Later he attended the State Deaf, Dumb and Blind School in Berkeley and received a very good education. It was there that he met Miss Mary Edna Daggett of Oakland and they fell deeply in love. They were both very proficient in the art of the sign language with the hands and it was a revelation of talent to watch these two people converse. I used to watch them open-eyed and mouthed in wonder. I even tried to learn to talk to them. But they moved their fingers at lightning speed and I was never clever enough to keep up.

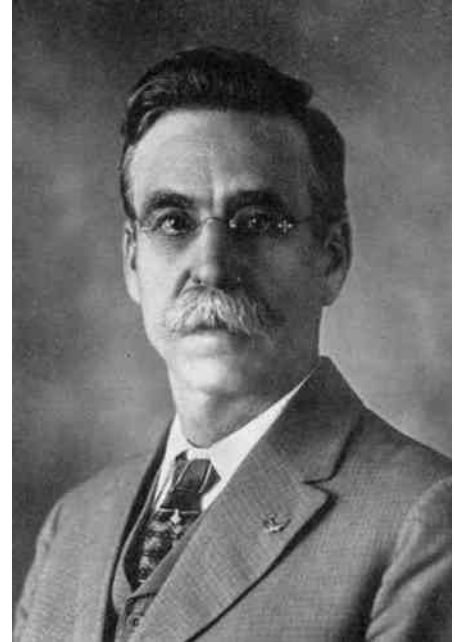
The couple had two daughters, Lova and Pearl. They were both very pretty girls. It was a peculiar trait that the Hoke family was prone to have auburn hair, but I do not know which grandparent had it. But William, August, Lova and Pearl all had this same striking red hair, and it was curly too. There were no boys born in the third generation of Hokes so the name has passed from the records.

William Hoke married and had one daughter, Hazel, by his first wife. She died very young and Mr. Hoke later married an attractive widow, Ella Jones, who had one son, Clair. One daughter was born of this union, Caryle. The family is widely scattered now with many descendants, but none to carry on the name of "Hoke."

## FATHER WOOS MOTHER

As far as is remembered Louis Tarke did not have a procession of flaming love affairs. He was a modest, unassuming man who, having once made up his mind about something, persisted in that one course until he accomplished his object. This was the way it was with his romance. It had been rumored that he showed some attention to a young lady who, I believe, was more of a friend of the family's than particularly Louis'. They lived in Yuba City which is near Marysville about eighteen miles away. Her name was Lena Newkom and she often visited the Tarke girls. However, I can't say for sure that she and Louis ever courted.

About this time Louis declared his love to his true sweetheart, Nancy Elizabeth Santee. She was the daughter of George Washington and Elizabeth Compton Santee. There were two sisters to Nancy, Geneva Robinson and Carrie Urilda. The Santee family lived on a small ranch at the cross-road between West Butte and Noyesburg. Louis and "Nannie," as everybody called her, became engaged. She was a charming and beautiful girl and had many admirers. But Nannie was ten years younger than Louis and she felt much too young to settle down to the seriousness of married life. I remember one suitor, a distant cousin of Ralph Graves, who was Emma Tarke's husband. Frank Graves' family were well-to-do land owners of West Butte and pioneer settlers. Frank courted Nannie but he must have surmised that Louis had won her heart. It was a rather complicated situation. I remember my mother shyly telling me of the love affair once.



LOUIS FREDERICK TARKE



NANCY SANTEE TARKE

So Frank Graves became interested in a Colusa girl, who was related to the Straubs of West Butte. Her name was Lillian Reagan (Zumwalt) and soon they were married.

Louis must have loved Nannie very much. I know he did because even though she did not want to be married so young, he told her he would wait. And he did – several years, I think.

But came the day for the wedding, May 13, 1890. It was a lovely sunny spring-time day and a happy, joyous affair in the West Butte Community church. All the friends and neighbors for miles around were invited. I have had the great pleasuring of treasuring some of their beautiful wedding gifts to this day. They were a very popular couple.

Nannie's gorgeous wedding gown of silk lace over taffeta was made in the prevailing style with a tight, very tight, bodice and full skirt. She wore a head dress of white chiffon with sprigs of white wax orange blossoms. I later wore some of those same charming flowers on my head at my own wedding and I was very proud of them.

Mother kept her wedding dress for years and years and we girls loved to dress up in it when we played "lady."

The happy couple went to San Francisco and Santa Cruz on their honeymoon. They stayed at the Sea Beach Hotel in Santa Cruz, high on a hill overlooking the Pacific Ocean. I saw this hotel once, but it was later demolished for more

modern buildings. After their trip, the young couple returned to establish their new home at the Tarke Ranch.

Five children were born of this union: Anna Marie, Frieda Elizabeth (which is me), Frederick Louis, Elden Santee and George Washington. Thus began the third generation of Tarkes in Sutter County.

And by the way, I should explain about this family name. When Peter Tarke first came to California he spelled his name "Take" and pronounced it German style with two syllables – Tahka. However, few people would use this pronunciation and mostly called him "Mr. Take." This irritated him so much that he said he would add an "r" – he would not be called "Mr. Take."

Anna was the first child. She was the pet of the entire establishment. She was an entrancing baby, as photographs of her show. She was above the average intelligence too, talking fluently, not "baby talk" at nine months.

At this time and continuing for several years, there were two hired girls or "domestics" as they were called who came to live at our house, doing all sorts of housework and helping care for the baby. The first was Louisa who came from Germany and spoke broken English. We were very fond of her. I remember her best as a rather plain maiden lady who was very good to us, though I think we were very mischievous and a great trial to her.

The second girl was Emma Meinert who had lived in Davenport, Iowa. She was lively and good natured and I think had her cap set for one of the eligible bachelors around Sutter County. She was quite pretty. However, she didn't marry till she returned to her native state. Then we lost all trace of her.

I was the second child of Louis and Nannie and I'm sure I was a disappointment because I wasn't a boy. My mother once told me she knew when she had me that she would have to keep on having children till she had a boy, as heir, so the family name wouldn't die out. And so she did, three of them: Fred, Elden and George.

It seems to have become an established custom to use the name Frederick Louis successively in generations reversing the two names as Frederick Louis and next Louis Frederick. At the present time, the fourth generation exists.

Elden was not named for anyone, but my mother's sister, Aunt Geneva had heard and liked the name so my mother permitted her to name the boy, Elden Santee, the maternal grandparent's name.

When the third boy was born to Louis and Nannie, he was named for his mother's father, George Washington. Mother said she thought it would be nice, when he grew up he could sign his name G. W. Tarke. But he never does. He uses the name George. He married a girl, Janette, whose father's name was Grover Cleveland Galbraith. She said their wedding invitations were certainly patriotic.



Teacher: Assumption Lang Coats. Back Row (left to right): Pearl Hoke, Caryle Hoke, Lova Hoke, Eldon Tarke, Mary Victorino, John Victorino.  
Front Row: (left to right) \_\_\_\_\_ Victorino, \_\_\_\_\_ Victorino, Lela Fisher, Ruth Wilbur, Ernest Stewart, Anna Fisher

We were a happy, happy family growing up in loving tender care and protective circumstances. We were very sheltered and I don't remember having a care in the world till I grew up and left home.

My father was a generous, thoughtful provider, and he never let anybody around lack for anything.

## OUR CHINESE COOK

It seems we always had a Chinese cook. He was always old, or looked old and care-worn. I never remember when he first came to us. But these two Chinese men appeared from somewhere. One, Ah At went to the Hoke Ranch and other, Tie On, was ours. We pronounced his name "Owen" and just guessed at the spelling. He became a faithful and devoted member of the family, so to speak. He took a great interest in each of us, especially George for he was the baby at that time.

He never could learn to speak very good English, but we understood him perfectly. It was Pidgin Chinese, I suppose, and his lack of English never made him shy of talking. He could not write nor read either Chinese or English.

He and At had to sneak their way to California for there

was a strict quota of Chinese immigration those days if they entered the county legally. It is a wonder he ever returned, for periodically (about every two years) he would make that perilous journey to China. He had to smuggle himself in and out by way of Mexico and work his way finally through San Francisco back to Marysville. He had a wife in China and of course it was his prime ambition to have a family. But all were at first girls, till finally once he returned in high glee because a son was born. He saved his money meticulously taking only small amounts of his wages and sent the rest through a financial exchange to his wife. The cook at the Hoke's home, At, had some education so he would read letters that came to Tie and also answer them for him, making all the arrangements to get the money eventually to his wife. However, I do believe At did feel somewhat superior to Tie having been born into a higher caste and having some education. At, of course, could read recipes and he really was an excellent cook whereas Tie had to just learn by experience and only knew the standard foods that he could prepare by routine.

At could make "lady fingers." I fear they are a thing of the past, but oh what delicious lovely confections they were. He would sometimes bring some to our house for us and we all loved them. They were long strips of

dough, like sponge cake, rounded on the ends like fingers I suppose. When baked, he sprinkled or rolled them in powdered sugar.

Well, old Tie thought there was nobody like Louis Tarke (Lou Tacky he called him). When he would finally arrive in Marysville after his journeys to China, he would have friends in Chinatown or a clerk at the Western Hotel call Louis Tarke. One of these persons would telephone to us at home that our cook had come back and please come and get him. We were always overjoyed to hear that he had returned safely. Other times he would wait at the Stohlman Ranch at Long Bridge, having come out from town on the Northern Electric R.R. which ran trains between Marysville and Colusa, to be picked up and taken home.

He always brought us something Chinese such as preserved fruit, dipped or rolled in cocoanut, Chinese candy and lychee nuts. The last time he started back to China he was a tiny figure of a man and getting frail. That time he never came back.

## FATHER'S GENEROSITY

Our father was a modest man and never thought of himself. He didn't seem to require much. Our Mother used to say he wouldn't even have clothes to wear if she didn't insist that he get some. He would never think of a new suit or overcoat unless she told him he needed it and then he would get one.

But he was most generous and free with everyone around him. One time he got my sister and me and our three cousins, Effie, Henrietta and Donnella, cute and handsome little silver chatelaine watches for Christmas.

He was a great singer in Chinese and I can hear him singing those strange melodies as he sat peeling potatoes, or went about the yard gathering eggs or some other little chore he had to do. Oh yes, as he washed dishes he always sang and perhaps it lightened his burdens or he would be carried far, far away to his native land in memory. I guess he loved it, where his family was, but he realized he would never have a chance there, so he ventured to the new country, unafraid and willing to work for his living.

He was very fond of all of us. Of course, he didn't understand what Christmas was all about, but when we had the annual family tree, a happy event in our lives, he wanted to have a part in it. He would always ask Mama to get presents for each of us in Marysville. It was always ladies' handkerchiefs for the ladies and men's handkerchiefs for the men and boys. He would come into the big front parlor where the tree was, all beautiful and the room decorated. We had strung popcorn and cranberries for days before and I have treasured some of the old ornaments to this day. There were

mesh stockings too for us children. Mama always had presents for Tie too, a new sweater, slippers or something else nice.

After presents were distributed, we would go back around the fireplace in the living room where Tie or someone else would pop great poppers full of fluffy, delicious popcorn and there would be oranges, apples, candy and nuts, peanuts home-grown and roasted in the big kitchen oven. What a glorious, happy time it was!

It was characteristic of him that when I had been away at college and came home for Christmas, he wanted to give me a present he said, a fountain pen like he had seen someone have. And so Mama got it for him, a nice Waterman, and I used it for a very long time. They were very new then.

Later at my wedding he brought me a real Chinese teapot and six little cups, no handles or saucers, Chinese style. It was packed in a straw cozy. I have it yet and have always been so proud of it. He was a true friend, if ever there was one.

It was the style then to wear them on chains around the neck, like lockets. We loved those little watches. They were not toys, but real time keepers. I could show you mine now, if you were here with me. The chain had a diamond-shaped slide with a little blue turquoise set. The slide was used to tighten the chain around your neck.

Another time it was Christmas too and Papa never paid too much attention to all the fuss and preparations going on. But after we'd had the tree and presents in the front parlor, which was almost sacrosanct and used only for special occasions, then he said to Ann and me,

“Come into the sitting room for a minute.” This was really the center of our family life and every evening a glowing, roaring fire was throwing out its warmth into the big room.

And when we came into the room, what a wonderful surprise greeted us. Papa had put on the mantle two beautiful gold watches, standing in their velvet cases, one for Ann and one for me. Mine had a large solitaire diamond set in the front cover with a crescent of smaller diamonds on one side. It was an Elgin. It had a long gold chain with a pretty engraved square slide. I don’t seem to remember what Ann’s was like, but I think it was set with a single solitaire diamond.

But a gift was something extra to Papa’s thinking and not just any trifle. Oh, we were delighted with our handsome gifts. They were so very beautiful. I was very proud to wear mine when I went back to College after vacation.

Louis became a man much in demand for his good common sense and judgment, his wisdom and advice to young people, his respect and regard for every person, rich and poor. He could see good in every individual.

He was a member and later President of the Sutter High School Board of Trustees for many years. And his opinion and forward thinking helped to build a modern High School building on a new campus about 1925. The original building was burned.

He was also director of banks in Marysville and Yuba City, always progressive and ambitious though others often were not so. It was typical of him that when he would attend a “Bank Meeting” he would invariably bring back the twenty-five dollar fee and a large box of chocolates to Mama.

To illustrate his humility and kindness, I remember that he would often ask a total stranger, in fact a tramp who came walking down the road with a roll on his back, to come in and sit down and eat at our family table. Of course the regular hired men always ate with us, but they were different. We knew them well, they were almost part of the family. But tramps were usually derelicts, dirty, uncouth, unshaven and rough of speech. But Papa was not afraid of them, in his trusting, loving-his-neighbor fashion. They were always welcome at his table. And if one came to the door between meal-times,

Tie had instructions to fix him a hand-out lunch. Many times I’ve seen him fix several sandwiches of great slices of bread with meat in between, pieces of cake and cookies, and whatever was on hand with great tin cups full of coffee. They never left his door hungry.

It was the same with peddlers who came traveling through the country. Sometimes one would have a horse and wagon piled full of wares to sell. The horse would be fed too and given shelter if the peddler stayed overnight.

I remember two of these traveling salesmen in particular. One was a little man who had things to sell which are called “findings” in the world of sewing, such as needles, thread, pins, darning cotton, buttons, safety pins, embroidery scissors, etc. He kept his things in a big case like a cupboard with many drawers and shelves. It was lots of fun when he came. He would bring his wares in on the screen porch, take out the trays and spread out everything out for us to look at. He often ate lunch with us and I believe he sometimes stayed overnight. He had beautiful pieces of lace, embroidered insertions and ruffling and Mama would put it on petticoats.

Another regular comer was an old man. Oh, he must have been very old! He was coal black, his head was covered with snow-white hair, his face was terribly wrinkled and he wore a curly white beard and moustache. He was bent and stooped. It was pretty hard to understand what he said. He didn’t come to sell, but to collect junk, that is why we called him the Junk-Man. He would buy anything he would find in the way of iron, steel or other metals. He drove an ancient, decrepit horse and his little wagon was loaded with his gatherings.

I was always fascinated by his poor, old feet. They were encased in heavy, hard, stiff shoes. It must have hurt to even draw them onto his poor, old, tired feet. However he was always pleasant and jolly and full of stories about his adventures. He could always pick up some pieces of old plows, harrows, rakes, pieces of pipe, old wagon tires and whatever had been discarded around the ranch. He would load it all onto his rickety old wagon. He sometimes stayed all night and next morning after a hearty breakfast, would go happily on his way. We

didn't ever know his name or where he came from. We wouldn't see him again till he appeared out of nowhere – that would be about once a year. He would seem to be about the same, with the same schedule as on the last trip, only of course older, more stooped, more wrinkled and more feeble. At last he just didn't come anymore and that was the end of another staunch and true old friend.

My father was explicitly a man of his word. If he promised something, he would fulfill that promise if it were the last thing he ever did. I so well remember that at my wedding, which was a large country community one, he had told an old cousin of his, Charley Stohlman, that the ceremonies were set for eight o'clock. Charley said, "It might be kind of hard to get there just on time – you know so many chores at home and everything, you know." "That's all right," Papa said. "We'll wait for you Charley, if you're a little late it won't matter." Well, Mother objected to this because she thought that it was bad luck to postpone a wedding. Luckily Charley wasn't late so there weren't any complications. But Papa would have kept his word no matter what happened.

Papa didn't approve of any kind of nonsense. When my brothers grew up and began to court some girl of their choice around the county, he would notice their absence a little too often evening after evening and remind them that there was too much gallivanting going on. But there was never any misunderstanding between him and his boys.

He liked a good joke. You could be sure if he told one, it was really humorous. He got so much fun out of Kolb and Dill, Dutch comedians who were in their prime

at this time. In fact they were so popular around the country that a group of friends and neighbors made up a party, including Mama and Papa, and went to San Francisco to see Kolb and Dill at the Orpheum Theatre. It must have been a merry party and they thoroughly enjoyed the show and the trip for they talked about it long afterward. Papa would laugh whole-heartedly when something funny or comical appealed to him. Often at the long dining room table in the kitchen, where the hired men always ate with the family, he would regale the folks around the table with a story that would make everybody laugh. My sister and my brothers have inherited this trait from him and have a good sense of humor.

He was very good to the men who worked for him. They had their own quarters in two places in fact. One was a big old bunkhouse built into the big tool and wagon shed. The other was on the second floor, adjoining the main house and over the kitchen. The men were always welcome and expected to come into the living room around the fireplace after supper. As they always retired early, they wouldn't stay long.

The room would be almost crowded with all of the men and all of the family, Papa in his big leather rocker reading the Sacramento Bee, a daily paper but it always came a day late because of our slow mail service, Mama reading "The Christian Herald" or the "Ladies Home Journal" or sewing, we children doing our school lesson or reading. There was a book which Ann and I nearly wore out with reading it so much. It was Grimm's Fairy Tales and we read it not only in the dim of the evening, but often stole away quietly to re-read it during the day.



# African-American Pioneers

By Carol Withington

# 1848-1900

21

Carol Withington researched and wrote a series of articles for the Territorial Dispatch. With her kind permission, we will be reprinting them in the Bulletin. The Museum is starting the research to include a permanent exhibit about our local African-American community. Carol and Gwen Ford are researching families and interviewing local descendants in preparation for this exhibit. If you, your friends or any members of your family have stories and photographs you'd like to share, please contact the Museum (822-7141). We'd be delighted to work with you so we can better tell our community's story.

In 2011 a data base of over 520 pages listing the names of California pioneers of African descent was published by Guy Washington, program manager of the National Park Service of the Pacific West Region. In addition, an index of African-American pioneer locations in California was also made available. This valuable information was gathered due to the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998 which directed the National Park Service "to facilitate an international effort to commemorate and interpret the Underground Railroad and to locate and preserve sites associated with this theme of American history."

Information was gathered from a multitude of sources such as newspapers, cemeteries, the Federal census and city directories. One of the most comprehensive works utilized was from the book authored by Delilah L. Beasley whose extensive research was compiled in the 1919 publication of the *Negro Trail Blazers of California*. Another resource was Rudolph Lapp's book *Blacks in Gold Rush California* as well as the 1995 publication of local historian Lester C. Pogue's *The African-American Heritage of Yuba County 1849-1870*.



Nancy Stroud Johnson, wife of John R. Johnson, who worked as a barber in Marysville and a porter at Treadwell & Company

PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION

## WESTWARD MOVEMENT

When gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in 1848, among the huge migration of people who headed to California were African-American Fritz Vosburg and James Monroe Breeden who appeared to be the first to arrive in Marysville followed by other two dozen pioneers who are listed as "49ers", according to Delilah Beasley.

Among those identified are William Bailey, Texana, Major and Charles Breeden, Samuel Brown, Robert Chandler, James and Mary Churchill, Sandy Clark, John Gains, Joseph Edward Hatton, Abraham Freeman Holland, James Hubbard and William Huff. Also listed are the names of J. B. Johnson, Nimrod Jones, John Loney, James Miller, W. W. Moulton, Nathaniel Nelson, the Rev. Thomas Randolph and Mr. and Mrs. Grant Alonzo Smith. Rounding out the names are George Symes, Sarah Thompson and her husband, Bill Vaugh and Mrs. Carpenter Williams.

PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION



Rev. Thomas Randolph served as Baptist minister at Mt. Olivet Church for many years. He was also a barber, businessman and owner of New Rag Carpet Factory in Marysville

According to research, many of these pioneers were from the southern states with the majority from Virginia, Missouri, Kentucky and Tennessee. Others arrived from Florida, Mississippi, North Carolina, Louisiana, Maryland and Texas.

Other 49ers came from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan and Ohio. Two arrived from Washington D. C. and a few from as far away as Denmark, England and Jamaica. Unfortunately, records are incomplete regarding the place of origin or arrival year to California.

Those who arrived in 1849 and the early 1850s found Marysville to be a bustling distribution center for the northern mines. It was also one of the largest cities in California with a variety of businesses and trades to accommodate its residents as well as the miners during their excursions to replenish supplies. All appeared to be welcome. One saloon even placed a sign in the window encouraging all customers "with no regard to distinction or color."

PHOTO FROM CMMSC COLLECTION



Jane Honesty, age 98, photograph taken in 1867 in San Francisco. She was a friend of early Marysville pioneer Riley W. (Nimrod) Jones, who was employed as a scavenger for the City of Marysville and as a janitor of the Marysville Savings Bank

Some African-Americans were eventually able to purchase freedom for themselves or send money for family members to come to the area. However, there were others that were sent back to the South by their owners or remained slaves while in California such as Addie Taylor who will be among those highlighted in the next installment of this series.



## Memorials & Gifts

*In Memory of* **Millie Cole**

Audrey Breeding

*In Memory of* **George Emery**

Connie Cary

Merlyn Rudge

Jerry & Patricia Whitten

*In Memory of* **Norma Jenks**

Julie Stark

Jon & Susan Whiteman

*In Memory of* **James “Jim” Kennedy**

Marnee Crowhurst

*In Memory of* **Eleanor Knox**

Connie Cary

Middle Mountain

Foundation

Sharyl Simmons

Phyllis Smith

Julie Stark

Jon & Susan Whiteman

Carol Withington

*In Memory of* **Dino Lekos**

Tom & Jolyne Williams

Helene & Michael Andrews

*In Memory of* **Geraldine Lemenager**

Marnee Crowhurst

*In Memory of* **Bill Messick**

Stan & Jeanette Pennington

Jim Staas

*In Memory of* **Leona Pennington**

Audrey Breeding

Connie Cary

Phyllis Smith

*In Memory of* **Ida Philpott**

Sharyl Simmons

*In Memory of* **Chris Pickering**

Julie Stark

Jon & Susan Whiteman

## Outright Gifts

Bank of Feather River –

Trees & Traditions

Children & Families Commission,  
Sutter County –

Community Garden

Chipotle Mexican Grill –

Community Garden

Colusa Reservation/Cachil Dehe  
Rancheria –

Natural Wanderment  
Exhibit

Friends for the Preservation of  
Yuba County History

Scott Hankins Farms –

Dinner Theater Fundraiser

## Membership

### NEW AND RENEWING

### MEMBERS

*April 17, 2018 – July 18, 2018*

Marsha Amaro

Melanie Conover

Linda Baker

Dave & Sandy Davini

Chet & Andrea Dunbar

Friends for the Preservation  
of Yuba County History

Gobel Family

Ed McConnell

Sharyl Messick

Norma Paden

Mike & Debrah Reid

Michael Scott

Rene & Anne Trejo

James Ulrey

Dale Whitmore

Yuba-Sutter Arts

**Become a member today!**

For more information, visit  
[www.suttercountymuseum.org](http://www.suttercountymuseum.org)  
or stop by the Museum



**AGRICULTURE**

**ASCENT**

**BARBER**

**BREADBASKET**

**BUSTLE**

**EDUCATION**

**FIREPLACE**

**FREEDOM**

**GOLD**

**GRANT**

**HUMILITY**

**JANITOR**

**NEWLYWEDS**

**ORIGIN**

**PORTER**

**RAILROAD**

**REGISTER**

**SYCAMORE**

**WEDDING**

**WOODWORK**

# Donate

The Museum is a partnership between Sutter County and the Community Memorial Museum Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The Association supports all of the public programming aspects of the Museum, including education programs, fundraising events, temporary exhibits, updates to permanent exhibits, and the Museum Store. Donations made to the Association are tax deductible.

There are many ways to donate to the Museum:

- Mail a check
- Come visit us!  
(Yes, you can donate using a credit card.)
- Planned Giving

We also have corporate sponsorship opportunities for our events and temporary exhibits.

# Volunteer

We would not be able to do what we do without our volunteers. Volunteers staff the front desk when the Museum is open. This includes greeting visitors, answering any questions they may have, answering the phone, and selling items in the Museum Store. Volunteers also work on special projects, help at events, make ornaments and help decorate for Trees & Traditions. We are always looking for more volunteers, so if you are interested please contact us or come by the Museum!

# Our Mission

The Community Memorial Museum of Sutter County shares local stories to strengthen community bonds, to inspire celebration of our diverse cultural heritage, and to demonstrate how understanding the past prepares us for the future.

# Membership Information

Our members are vital to the success of the Museum. The funds we raise from this program help us to properly care for our collection, bring in traveling exhibits, and provide education programs.

Membership benefits include: advance notice of events and exhibit openings, a 10% discount in the Museum Store, and subscription to the Museum's quarterly journal.

For information please call 822-7141 or visit [www.suttercountymuseum.org](http://www.suttercountymuseum.org)

Student (under 18)/ Senior Citizen/Library	\$20.00
Individual	\$25.00
Organization/Club	\$35.00
Family	\$40.00
Business	\$100.00





1333 Butte House Road  
Yuba City, CA 95993

Non-Profit Organization

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Permit No. 12

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## Calendar of Events

### AUGUST

Friday

**17 Night at the Museum**  
children's program, 5:30pm

Wednesday

**22** last day of **Natural Wanderment: Stewardship - Sovereignty - Sacredness** exhibit

Friday

**24** reception for **Sutter Buttes Calendar Photographs** exhibit, 6:00pm

Saturday

**25 Sutter Buttes Calendar Photographs** exhibit opens

### SEPTEMBER

Sunday

**9** last day of **Sutter Buttes Calendar Photographs** exhibit

Friday

**14** reception for **Structures** exhibit, 6:00pm

Saturday

**15 Structures** exhibit opens

### OCTOBER

Friday

**19 Night at the Museum**  
children's program, 5:30pm