

# *Yankee Hill Dispatch*

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P.O.Box 4031, Yankee Hill, Ca 95965

## **Wishing You Happy Holidays And A Prosperous 2009**

Our apologies for the delay in publishing this newsletter, we will have three editions in 2009. We will feature an article on Spanishtown with a wealth of previously unpublished information. Spanishtown has been treated as a footnote in history books; research has proven it had a short but exciting existence. We will also have an article about the Clark family, specifically John Adam Clark on Pinkston Canyon Road. John was the son of Alfred Burr Clark and Yohema Clark, the daughter of the Konkow Indian Chief, Buchi. We recently had the pleasure of meeting his granddaughter, Joanne Bond, who has compiled a wealth of family history. Our intention is to meet with other members of long standing families of the Yankee Hill area and record their stories as well. We hope you will enjoy these and other planned future articles.

## **The Concow Campground**

The history of the Concow Campground and the history of the Concow reservoir go hand in hand. Joseph Burr Mullen first lived in the Concow Valley when he was a teenager with his father Charles W. Mullen, mother Phoebe Mullen, an older brother William Harris Mullen, a younger brother John Merritt Mullen and four other siblings settling on 320 acres in the late 1850s. At that time there was no reservoir, just a small year round stream passing through the Valley. The family was involved with farming, lumber and probably to a lesser degree some mining. In 1861 the tax rolls stated Charles Mullen had 320 acres with improvements valued at \$1240, 1 Spanish horse, 1 mule, 2 head of American cattle, 10 head of Spanish cattle and 17 hogs.

When his father, Charles Mullen died in 1863, Joseph and his mother Phoebe moved to Santa Clara, Ca. William and John Merritt Mullen stayed behind to manage the family property.

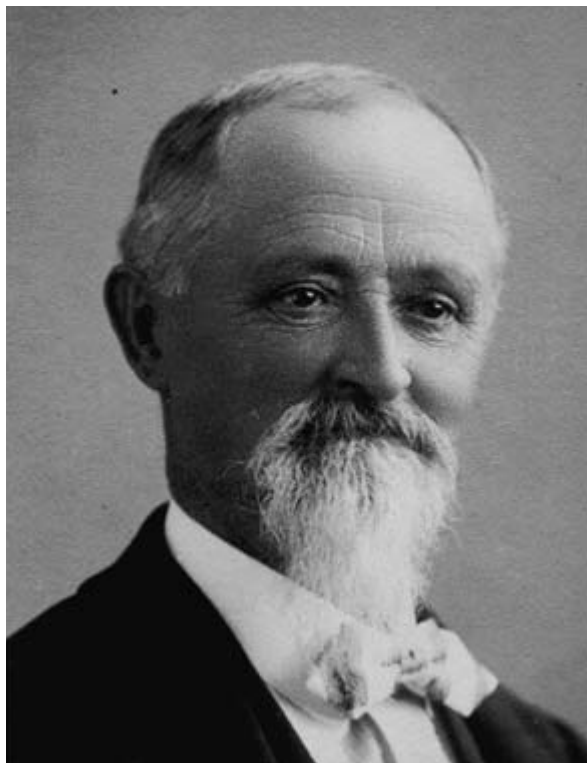
In 1868 Joseph married Nancy Elizabeth Langford in Santa Clara. About this same time there was talk of damming the Concow Valley to create a reservoir to supply year round water for hydraulic mining in Cherokee. In 1870, San Francisco investors raised the money and plans were drawn up to dam Concow Valley. Fortunately for the Mullen family, only a portion of their property would be under water. Joseph Burr Mullen left Santa Clara and returned to the family farm with his wife and a baby boy, Willie Mullen, leaving his mother Phoebe in Santa Clara. Joseph acquired ½ of the family property, 160 acres, from his

brother John Merritt Mullen. The other ½ or 160 acres was owned by his older brother William. In April 1871 disaster struck William Mullen when the saw mill he operated burned to the ground. William was forced to sell his 160 acres to William Farley to pay off his debts, he later purchased 40 acres in Big Bend.

When the dam was completed and the reservoir filled in December of 1871 Joseph Mullen owned lake front property. Sometime in the late 1870's Mullen started a hotel and founded the campground. He also became involved with the International Order of Good Templars, lodge 104 of Concow, an anti-drinking organization. There were four different anti-drinking organizations in Butte County in 1882.

A one room school, the Reservoir School was established in 1880 on Mullen's property. In 1882, he established a post office, probably in the hotel. He then arranged for the first annual meeting of the International Order of Good Templars of Northern California to be held at the Concow Campground in September. The meeting lasted 1 week with Templars attending from all over Northern California. At the meeting 24 new members were signed up at \$1.25 for a one year membership. The camp grounds were also dedicated to the "perpetual cause" by Reverend C.A. Bateman and renamed the "Oak Temple Camp Grounds". The ceremony was held beneath a giant oak tree, several of which were located on the property.

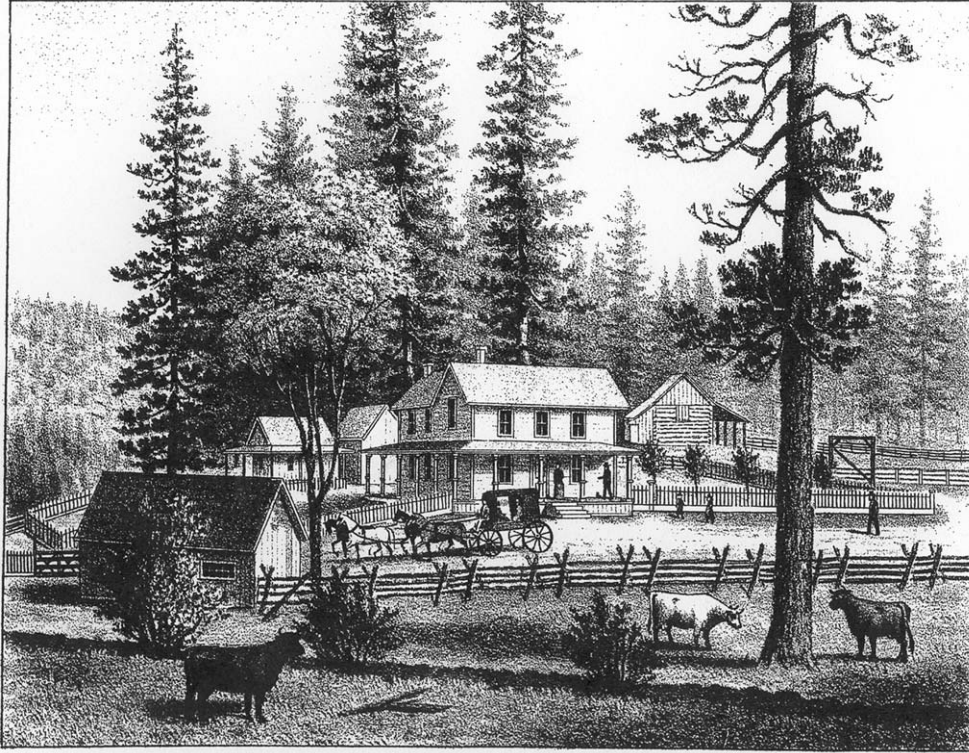
In August 1883 the Good Templars were to meet again at the campgrounds. Joseph Mullen, as well as M.H. Wells in Yankee Hill both made improvements to their hotels. In July, one month before the temperance meeting it was reported that twenty tents were set up in the campground and the lake was stocked with trout and catfish. Mullen first stocked the lake in 1876. The Deadwood hotel was also reported as full. (The Deadwood hotel, built by Gerhardt Tebbe would later be converted into a hospital for the Chinese Doctor, Ah Sang). Mullen built a 20 foot boat for the temperance meeting that carried 15 people to add to the 4



**Joseph Burr Mullen**



**Nancy Elizabeth (Langford) Mullen**



**Residence and Hotel of Joseph B. Mullen - Concow Circa 1882**

other boats already available on the lake. It was to be the largest meeting of Northern California Templars to date with over 30 tents occupied as well as the hotel. There were speakers from San Francisco and other surrounding areas at the meeting. At the end of the meeting, Mullen donated 10 acres to the temperance group to establish a permanent temperance camp. The group agreed to form a committee of members from Butte, Yuba and Sutter Counties to try and sell 1000 shares of stock at \$5.00 per share to improve the campground. When it was reported in the Oroville newspaper, there was a backlash from the community because there was fear that non-Templars would be excluded from using the campgrounds. It later was explained that the intent was to improve the campgrounds with walks and drives, seats and stands and then divide a portion of the 10 acres into 100 camping lots and sell them on a first come first serve basis. The balance of the property would be used for the Templars annual meetings. Apparently the deal fell apart. Joseph Mullen remained an officer in the organization.

1883 also saw several lawsuits brought against hydraulic mining, including one by Sutter County against the Spring Valley Mining Company's Cherokee operations. The Concow Reservoir was owned by the Spring Valley Mining Company. It was becoming apparent that hydraulic mining operations would someday soon be outlawed.

This may have contributed to Joseph Mullen's decision to sell his property, including the campground in Concow, in 1886. He sold the bulk of the property, 120 acres, to Calab Scott, a fellow Templar. Scott hosted the International Order of Good Templars (I.O.G.T.) convention that same year.

# I. O. G. T.

THE GOOD TEMPLARS OF BUTTE, YUBA  
and Sutter Counties will hold a

## CAMP-CONVENTION

-AT-

**Concow Valley,**

**COMMENCING AUGUST 14th, 1883,**

and continuing one week or more, under the  
auspices of the District Lodges of the counties  
named.

Good Speakers will be in attendance.

Splendid water and beautiful camp grounds  
Nice boating, fishing, hunting and bathing.

Bring your camping equipment along.

Board and horse feed can be had at very  
reasonable rates if desired. Also pasture.

**Everybody is Invited.**

By order of

JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Oroville - The Daily Mercury Aug 22, 1883

## CONCOW HOTEL,

ONE OF BUTTE COUNTY'S DE-  
LIGHTFUL SUMMER RESORTS.

**J. B. MULLEN**.....Proprietor.

**T**HIS HOTEL IS NOW PREPARED FOR  
summer visitors, and everything has been  
done for the accommodation of guests.

Good hunting. Good fishing. Boats on the  
lake.

Stage three times a week from Chico and  
Oroville.

Mail every day.

Public school, with first-grade teacher.

**TERMS:** Six Dollars per week for adults. For  
children, Three Dollars per week. 48wtf

## THE BOSS DRINK!

PETER'S CREAM PUNCH,

-AT-

TOM JOHNSON'S OLD STAND

**TRY IT.**

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## THE BRAHMIN'S ELIXIR.



For all cases of  
**SEMINAL WEAKNESS,**  
Loss of Manhood, Want of  
Energy, Weakness in the Back or Loins,  
Painful Dreams, Languor, Depression,  
Etc., etc.

Prepared only by the  
**BRAHMIN ELLXIR CO,**  
1004 Broadway, Oakland, Cal.  
**Price \$1 per Bottle.**  
Send for Circulars. [apl&dwly]

## MILTON MCGEE,

Plasterer, Whitewasher & Kalsominer,  
**OROVILLE.**

**A**LL ORDERS FOR WORK IN MY LINE  
promptly and neatly executed. [32]

**Editor's Note:** In a previous newsletter it was reported Charles W. Mullen moved to Arizona after 1870, this has proven to be incorrect, Charles died in Sept 1863 as reported here. Phoebe (Merritt) Mullen died in June 1892 in Santa Clara. Joseph Burr Mullen moved to Arizona where he farmed until his death in November 1934. His son, Charles Pleasant Mullen, one of five children born in Concow, became the largest landowner in Arizona; in 1926 it was estimated he had 50,000 head of cattle and was the Arizona Land Commissioner. William Harris Mullen lived in Big Bend until 1904 when he too moved to Arizona, dying in May 1911. John Merritt Mullen lived with his brother William for a time, taking over the Big Bend property when William left. He sold the property sometime after 1910 and moved to Chico where he owned an apartment house; he died in November 1944 in Chico. In September 1899 there was a large fire in the Concow Valley that spread to the Magalia Ridge, burning several days. It was reported that the hotel known as the Blair Hotel in Concow burned, it appears this was the old Concow Hotel.

## **YHHS Happenings**

**First Saturday each month, Bunko Party!!** - The first Saturday of each month at 1:00pm we have a bunko party at the old school. Prizes and a raffle are held to raise funds for the school restoration. The restoration crew has been feverishly working on the school and we want to make sure we can provide the materials to keep them going! The money raised from the bunko party is a primary contributor to the restoration fund. It is fun and supports a great cause. SEE YOU THERE!

**Due to the fires this last summer the historical society extended the terms of the current officers until April 30, 2009. In April we will have new elections as well as a vote on new proposed By-Laws. Copies of the By-Laws changes will be made available prior to that time.**

**Membership Dues** - The Yankee Hill Historical Society is changing its membership dates to match the calendar year, so dues are now due for 2009. See the attached form for renewal. If the label on this newsletter states 2008 then your dues are now due. If the label states "C" or "2009" or later you owe no dues

**Building Our Archives** - Insulation and lights are being added to the newly added room behind the school so we may store some of our archives and reference materials. We have also begun digitizing photos and other materials pertaining to the local history. If you have photographs or other documents you feel would make a good addition to our archives we can make arrangements to have them digitized for posterity. Please contact the editor at the contact information below.

### **Officers and Contact Information**

**President:** *Bob Huffman (530) 533-4132*

**Vice President:** *Jay Nicholson (530) 533-2273*

**Treasurer:** *Debbie Ingvoldsen*

**Secretary:** *Don Saul*

**Director:** *Marji Corey*

**Director:** *Patty Dummel*

**Newsletter Editor:** *Larry Mauch (530) 532-0706 [editor@yankeehillhistory.com](mailto:editor@yankeehillhistory.com)*

**General Correspondence:** [information@yankeehillhistory.com](mailto:information@yankeehillhistory.com)

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