

## Synopsis of the News of 1881

From the *St. Helena Star*

Reported by Mariam Hansen

The city brass band serenaded a number of citizens on New Year's Day. The organization consisted of seventeen members. Among them were Otto Rampendahl, Jeff Montgomery, John Pellet, Robert Bussenius, Frank Hoffman, John Allison, and George Chase.

There was a bad epidemic of small pox in San Francisco. There was an outbreak of the disease in the Ingraham family, from two miles south of Calistoga, who all died. The entire family, parents and three children were buried at the cemetery by the county road (now Bothe Napa Valley State park).

Martin Braughler sold his home in Logan's Addition (Charter Oak Avenue) and purchased land at the corner of Spring Street and North Crane Avenue, where he built a two story house.

Louis Bruck, father of Bismarck Bruck, died in Napa at the age of 54. He came to Napa in 1850, and nine years later married Isadora Bale, daughter of Dr. Bale. He was a searcher of records, and spoke English, Spanish, French and German fluently.

Sven Alstrom sold the White Sulphur Springs Resort to Jerome Lincoln for \$25,000, including 750 acres of land.

Henry H. Harris sold 153 acres south of Rutherford to Louis Atkinson of San Francisco, where he built a luxurious home (today St. Supery Winery).

In February the valley was visited by a big storm which caused the highest water ever known here.

Thirteen inches of rain fell in 24 hours and the Napa River in Napa rose to twenty one feet above the low water mark. The First Street Bridge was washed away. Here the water spread over large areas of the valley and was two feet deep over the old wooden 400 foot long bridge at Pope Street over the Napa River. The Lodi Lane Bridge and many smaller ones were lost. South of Napa three and a half miles of railroad was washed away and train service suspended for five and a half days.

Louis Sander bought 54 acres of land, opposite the cemetery on Spring from the Beringer Brothers.

James Allison and Katie Edwards were married in San Francisco. Among the St. Helena guests was Master Philo Grant.

Thirty seven Germans and German-Americans organized the St. Helena Turnverein Club. Carl Heymann was the first president.

Benjamin Bell and Eva Risley were married on March 3, 1881.

An addition of 40 x 75 feet was built to the St. Helena Bonded Warehouse on Church Street (still there).

Theodore Van Tassel, who had managed the Puget Sound Lumber Company, took over the National Hotel and changed the name to the Van Tassel Hotel.

The private high school on Inglewood closed and Professor and Mrs. Drew moved to Oakland.

D.S. Gallatin of Sacramento bought 16 acres of land at Main Street and York Creek for \$8,900.

J.M. Graham, a civil engineer with the Central Pacific Railroad, bought the Stratton place on Main Street. It included the frontage from Pine Street to Fulton Lane and extended east across the railroad tracks.

Sven Alstrom bought the Dr. Nickell site for a hotel. As Dr. Dawson's office was on the lot, and as it was necessary for him to move, he purchased the lot and recently built house on Oak Street south of Tainter.

He built an office in front, opposite Telegraph Alley,

At the annual town election, 210 votes were cast. Trustees elected were Henri Pellet, Owen Wade, William York, J.G. Potter and George Gluyas. Marshal was John Allison and Leopold Lazarus was elected treasurer.

On April 26<sup>th</sup> the Odd Fellows held a grand celebration, in which three lodges and two encampments participated. There was a parade in the morning with the St. Helena Band of twenty pieces and members

of the several lodges in line, led by the grand marshal and five aides on horseback. There was a picnic lasting all afternoon in Hunt's Grove and a ball in the evening at the Odd Fellows Hall.

On May 13<sup>th</sup> Henry, the elder son of D.B. Carver, died at the age of twenty.

Dr. Henry M. Pond came over from Sonoma and located in St. Helena.

John Tychson bought 159 acres of land from Captain J.W. Sayward, two miles above St. Helena and lying on both sides of the county road (later Freemark Abbey Winery on Highway 29).

Four members for the Oakland Bicycle Club rode to St. Helena on their wheels. (These were the high wheeled, solid tire bikes. Sprinkling of the dusty roads had not begun, so it must have been a hot, dirty ride.)

Sven Alstrom opened the new Windsor Hotel June 11 (later Hotel St. Helena—still open today).

The first graduate of the public school was James V. Haire, who received a diploma from the board of school trustees. Previously students who completed their studies went out in the world without ceremony.

On July 1, 1881 Dimsdill B. Carver, who started a general store in town in 1863, sold out to Townsend & Anderson.

Harvey Lewelling, Robert Bussenius, E.C. Bedell and George Pope, St. Helenans owning bicycles, appeared in uniform generally used by cyclists at the time: "cigarette" hat, cassimere shirt, corduroy pants, brown shoes and stockings.

Several groups visited the Geysers this summer, traveling in four-in-hand coaches driven by W.A. Elgin and A.P. Kluit.

Mr. Van Tassel offered board at one dollar and two dollars a day at his Van Tassel Hotel, formerly the National Hotel.

Phil Stockton drove his team to Napa in one hour and twenty minutes, which was great time considering the roads of those days.

St. Helena's first professional lawyer, Thomas Watt of Oakland, opened an office.

Clayton Adsit was then the St. Helena Star's popular "devil", or apprentice.

During the celebration of the Fourth of July, somebody threw a bomb through the glass door of a barber shop. It shattered the glass of the door, broke a mug on a shelf and a razor with which the barber was shaving a customer, inflicting an ugly wound on the latter's face.

In August the stage from Aetna Springs Resort was stopped by a masked man two and a half miles from town on the Howell Mountain Road. The stage did not carry a Wells Fargo box. The robber would not touch the mail sack. The only take was twenty dollars from Mr. Carrigan of the firm Dunham, Carrigan & Hayden.

On August 19 Mrs. Angeline Tucker, wife of George W. Tucker, died at the family home. At the age of eight she crossed the plains with the Kellogg Company. The family came to this valley and settled on the present Lyman property at Bale Mill. The Tuckers were married in 1858. Interment was at the little cemetery near the Old White Church (in Bothe Napa Valley State Park).

Five farmers were growing hops this year.

John Greer refused an offer of \$8,000 and then one of \$10,000 for the twenty eight acres of vineyard now occupied by Madrona Heights (Madrona Avenue west of Spring Mountain Road). He sold the property, together with the crop, to Ward & Worrell. The price was more than \$800 an acre for the bearing vines (astronomical for those days).

The Calistoga Hot Springs Hotel was completely destroyed by fire.

About thirty couples of the town's social leaders attended a dance at E. M. York's new cellar on Lodi Lane, with music furnished by a string orchestra.

In September William Bowers Bourn went to New York to be married.

Charles Krug built a substantial two story cut stone stable, 80 X 80 feet in size.

In observance of the death of President Garfield, Main Street from Adams to Pope Street was a continuous line of mourning. Buildings on side streets and many residences were also draped in mourning. There was a procession, headed by the band and followed by one hundred citizens on foot, the German Turn Verein, the St. Helena Fire Companies, St. Helena and Calistoga Odd Fellows Lodges, the Masonic Lodge and a large following of citizens in carriages. After services in the Presbyterian Church, the procession continued to the St. Helena Cemetery, where a memorial tree was planted. The furniture of the Van Tassel Hotel was sold, ending many years as a hostelry. It was first the National Hotel, then the Van Tassel.

An effort was made to close the stores each evening (except Saturday) at eight o'clock, but the practice lasted only one week as some of the merchants complained that they were losing money.

A report of Sunday school activities in the county showed that the local Presbyterian Sunday School had fourteen teachers and 144 pupils, while the Baptists had five teachers and 41 pupils.

J.E. Straus, for many years a merchant, sold out to J.M. Gellert.

Several pedestrians had narrow escapes from being knocked down by horses being driven rapidly from Telegraph Alley into Main Street.

In October the town's first restaurant was established. Previously meals could be had only at the dining rooms of the hotels.

The 54 wine cellars of Napa County produced 2 million gallons of wine this year—900,000 less than in the year before.

Miss Anna Dixon, who sued an instructor of the San Jose Normal School for slander because of criticism published in the San Jose Mercury newspaper, won vindication and was awarded damages. The jury was out only 53 minutes. Despite the judge's warning that there not be a demonstration, the crowd broke into applause and pressed forward to congratulate Miss Dixon. Crowds blocked the sidewalk while waiting for her to come out. She was serenaded by them, accompanied by a full brass band.

Kilpatrick Post of the Grand Army of the Republic was organized with fifteen charter members.

Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Captain William T. Simmons was chosen Commandant.

In December John Eaves made an assignment to creditors and closed his jewelry store. Jacob Graf opened a new jewelry store in the front of W. G. Chiles establishment.

Henry H. Harris built a fine new home on his property north of Rutherford (on Conn Creek Road). It is considered one of the prettiest in the valley.

Gustav Niebaum built a palatial new stable at Nook Farm (now Inglenook) at a cost of \$8,000.

A New Year's Ball was given by the German Turn Verein at the Palace Hotel (at Main Street and Spring).

During the year there were 75 new buildings constructed and many improved, to the tune of \$124,485.

Among the twenty-one new homes were those of John Steves (Allison Ave), F.M. Vanderlip, H. Risley (Allyn & Tainter), Martin Braughler (Spring & N.Crane), William Scheffler (Sulphur Springs Avenue), Mrs. Rohlwing (Rutherford) and Mrs Mary Fulton (Fulton Lane).