

The Sierran

— A Publication of the Sierra County Historical Society —

This issue of the Sierran begins publication of excerpts from Joshua Breyfogle's diary recounting his journey across America to reach the gold fields of California.

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr.

Covering experiences during his overland trip to California during the gold rush in 1849.

- Contributed by Skip Breyfogle

April 2nd, Monday, 1849: We left Delaware at 8 o'clock this morning passing through Belle Point, Pleasant Valley and Amity and arrived at West Jefferson; stopped at Mantels Hotel overnight, everything safe and in order.

April 3rd, Tuesday: Left Jefferson about 7 o'clock and arrived at Xenia at 6 o'clock and put up at I. Gox's Tavern. Had a very hard drive today, one of our horses very sick. We overtook Columbus Company at this place. We leave together in the morning.

Wednesday, April 4th: Left Xenia this morning in a fine shower of rain which continued all day. Arrived at Mason in Warren County, Company pretty well soaked.

April 5th: Left Mason for Cincinnati and arrived about one o'clock and commenced loading on the boat. John Hancock got off about one o'clock for St. Louis. As we left, the east part of the city was in flames. The Columbus Company and two or three others are on board with us.

April 6th: Arrived at Louisville, Kentucky, about two o'clock – walked down the canal to Shippensport where I saw the Giant James Porter – seven feet, 8 inches high, 38 years old, weighs one hundred and sixty. Our boat passed through the locks and left here about dark.

Saturday, 7th: All well on board. Getting rather tedious. The boys are well.

Sunday, 8th: We passed the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio this morning and are now running up the Mississippi. There is a good deal of drinking on board, but not in or among our men. Mr. McCollum of Columbus fell overboard today and was barely saved.

Monday 9th: Arrived at St. Louis, a large city, but as usual with old Spanish and French towns, the streets are very narrow and dirty. We remained till Wednesday when we left with glad hearts as the cholera was increasing very fast. We arrived at St.



St. Louis

Josephs on Monday and left the next morning for the upper ferry five miles and crossed to the Indian Territory on Thursday, the 19th, and on Wednesday the 25th, left for the great prairie about noon of this day. In crossing Musqueto Creek No. 2 wagon was upset and broke the bows badly. Encamped on a small river about fifteen miles from St. Josephs, on Thursday, the 26th, crossed Wolf River at noon, found no camping ground and remained on the open prairie, nothing to eat but sea biscuits. It was a bitter cold night. 27th – started early hungry and cold. Made this day about twenty miles and encamped on a tributary of the Wolf River. We have plenty of small game. We saw two wolves today.

Saturday, 28th: Left the camp this morning, crossed the Nimehaw and encamped on a small stream in a

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr. - (Continued on Page 3) —

— THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY —

The Sierra County Historical Society is an organization of people interested in preserving and promoting an appreciation of Sierra County's rich history. The Society operates a museum at the Kentucky Mine in Sierra City, holds an annual meeting, publishes a newsletter and conducts historical research. Members are sent notices of Society activities, receive THE SIERRAN, and are admitted free of charge to the museum and stamp mill tour. If you would like to become involved in these activities or would just like to give your support, please join us!

Officers and Executive Board of The Sierra County Historical Society

- President:** Mary Nourse, Sierra City
- Vice President:** Joleen Torri, Sattley
- Secretary:** Cory Peterman, Sierra City
- Treasurer:** Bill Copren, Sattley

Board members in addition to those previously mentioned are Maren Scholberg (Emeritus), Sierraville; Elda Ball, Loyalton; Suzi Schoensee, Sattley; Bud Buczkowske, Alleghany; James Connolly, Sierra City; Cory Peterman, Sierra City; Eli Scholberg, Sierraville; Jane Cooper, Loyalton.

- Museum Curator:** Virginia Lutes
- Assistant Curator:** Judy Lawrence

If you have any suggestions or comments, feel free to contact any board member or email at info@sierracountyhistory.org

Become a Member! Dues for 2012 Payable Now!

Membership in the Sierra County Historical Society is open to any interested person, business or organization. Members need not be residents of Sierra County. Dues are due and payable each January for the calendar year.

Membership categories are as follows:

- INDIVIDUAL**..... \$20.00
- FAMILY & INSTITUTION**..... \$25.00
- BUSINESS & SUPPORTING**..... \$35.00
- SUSTAINING**..... \$50.00
- LIFE (per individual)** \$300.00

Please send dues to: S.C.H.S. Membership Chairperson, PO Box 54, Sattley, CA 96124

Music at the Mine

CATCH THE LAST CONCERTS FOR THE SUMMER AT THE KENTUCKY MINE!

Sierra City, California

If you haven't been able to attend the first three concerts of our Music at the Mine series, you still have time to enjoy the wonderful amphitheater venue at the mine to listen to some entertaining and very affordable concerts! The remaining schedule is:

August 4

Bob Mora and the 3rd Degree Blues Band - \$15

August 25

Bourgeois Gypsies - \$10

You can order tickets online through Paypal at www.SierraCountyHistory.org, visit the Kentucky Mine Museum to purchase tickets, or call (530) 862-1310 for other ticket sales locations.



Annual Meeting of the Sierra County Historical Society Announced

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

When: Sunday, September 9th at 1:pm

Where: The Payen Ranch located in Sierra Valley on Highway 49 approximately 2.5 miles west of Loyalton

What: A delicious free lunch will be served to members – \$15 per guest – and the afternoon will include a short business meeting, an always interesting program about Sierra County history, and lots of visiting with friends and neighbors.

For more information about the meeting call Mary Nourse at 530-862-1123.

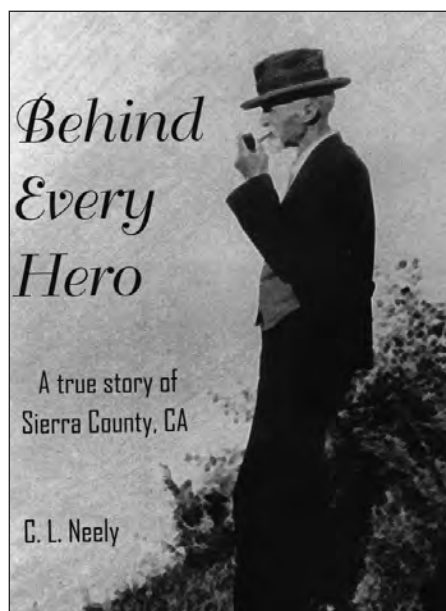
A Book Review by William G. Copren

Ms. C. L. Neely's historical novel, *Behind Every Hero, A True Story of Sierra County, CA* surrounds the families of James Galloway of Downieville and Tom Turner of Sattley. Much of the action takes place in the Sattley-Sierraville area with the politics of Sierra County in the nineteenth century as the background story to the love story of Agnus Galloway and Hartwell Turner.

I confess that James Galloway and H.K. "Boss" Turner are two of my favorite persons representing somewhat divergent historical directions in the county's history. Galloway and his family are best known for his western county freighting while the Turner family encompasses much of the county's nineteenth century political highs and lows. The Turners, of course, were also involved in the development of much of Sierra County's infrastructure and in the lumbering industry.

This political story ends with the political assassination of Jack Campbell on the main street of Randolph and H.K. Turner's election to the California Assembly from the new Sierra-Plumas Counties district and with the great Smallpox epidemic of 1887. The book includes a fact or fiction section and a bibliography.

If you enjoy Sierra County history this novel is a must. Regardless, if you enjoy historical fiction this is a good read.



*Behind Every Hero,
A True Story of Sierra County, CA*

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr. - (Continued from Page 1) —

beautiful spot, plenty of good grass for our horses and good water.

Sunday, 29th: Traveled over a fine wooded country with plenty of water, till about noon when we left both wood and water and encamped on the broad prairie, poor water and no grass. Passed several wagons today.

Monday, 30th April: We passed a terrible night, the wind blew a perfect hurricane towards day, tearing down our tents and scattering everything over the plains. We left in a hurry this morning and without regret as it was very cold and we killed three rattlesnakes in our camp; traveled about five miles and halted in a tolerable good spot. We spent this afternoon in repairing the broken wagon. Pleasant weather and good grass and water.

Tuesday, May 1st: Rather a rough morning for May, wind very high, whistling over our heads as if got up for our special benefit. Crossed the Big Blue and now we are in the enemies country. We encamped about five miles from the river. The camp looks quite warlike tonight. The boys are all loading guns and pistols. There is a band of Pawnees near us and they may wish to borrow a horse, which we are not disposed to let them have. We are nearly the foremost and must stand the brunt, but we are well armed and ready for any emergency.

Wednesday, May 2nd: We left our first military encampment at 8 o'clock this morning and halted for noon in a small ravine to bait our team. We had quite a shower last night which makes it very pleasant traveling. The roads are fine, better than any roads I ever saw. We have pitched our tents on the prairie about twelve miles from our last ground. The day has been very windy and warm. The wind is still very high: otherwise pleasant. One of our wagon wheels gave way which we patched till we could get tin here.

May 3rd: Left encampment at 8 o'clock, crossing several rivers, the last the Little Sandy. Saw several but camped on Big Sandy. Wind north and very high. Here we found the first cactus.

Friday, 4th: Left Big Sandy in a high wind and very cold. Traveled about 20 miles and encamped on Little Blue where we will remain to repair one of our wagons. Weather still very cold. Remained all night. Good grass and water.

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr. - (Continued from Page 3) —

Saturday, 5th: Repaired our wagon and left our camp at one o'clock P.M. Traveled up the Blue about 15 miles and not coming to timber, we encamped near a pond of water on the prairie and used Buffalo chips for the first time.

Sunday 6th: Left this morning without feeding and traveled about 18 miles and encamped again on the Little Blue in a beautiful spot, plenty of grass and excellent water.

Monday, May 7th: Left our tent this morning and struck across the prairie for Platte River. Noon on the edge of a rain water pond, good grass for our horses. Left at one o'clock and after a hard drive, arrived at the river about sunset. Here we have the muddy thick water of the Missouri; a beautiful evening this. There is one thing very singular about the prairie – it is never dark, even without a star. We are encamped opposite two beautiful islands, one the nearest small, the other very large I believe it is called Grand Island.

Tuesday, May 8th: Started this morning at half past seven, traveling over a splendid road and through the broad and beautiful valley of the Platte, bounded on one side by the river, the north side skirted by beautiful timber and on the opposite by very high and picturesque bluffs. We arrived at Fort Kenney, afternoon here. We had an opportunity of sending letters to our friends. The officers are going to send a mail to the States in the morning and kindly offered to transmit any letters we wished to send and we stopped the team for time to write and traveled about seven or eight miles and pitched our tents near the river. Good grass. The wind north and blowing very hard. Stand a fair chance of a very rough night. Our boys brought in two large turtles and some ducks and we did not feast. Night proved to be pleasant.

Wednesday, May 9th: Left camp this morning and moved ahead over a beautiful level bottom. Could see antelopes, deer and wolves scampering over the plains, but could not get a shot at them. They are very shy. We are now in the buffalo country and expect to see them every moment. Indians are very scarce in this region, in fact we have seen none since last Monday



when there was some ten or twelve came in to the road in front of our wagons, full gallop. We stopped the teams and the boys were out with their guns, but they proved to be a poor shabby lot. They begged all they could. We gave them a little hard bread and left. We have had a fine day for traveling, light winds, at night cloudy and windy. Looked very much like storm, but blew over and became very - . The wolves were almost in our encampment.

Thursday, May 10th: Left camp this morning about seven. Fine pleasant morning. Our camp lay on the bank of the river which I should think was 2 miles wide and filled with small beautiful islands. Grass at this camp poor. There is but very few teams ahead of us. The valley is about one mile wide and there is several flocks of antelopes gamboling around us. The wagons are some distance behind coming up slowly and the antelopes seem to be wondering what it all means, but with all their surprise, they take care to keep out of reach of our rifles. The boys are continually on the watch for a chance at them. We had a very ludicrous alarm last night. J. Allen and S. Bradley went out of the camp after the sentinels were posted when E. Evans, wishing to try his mettle, crept after him rapt in his buffalo robe wrong side out. Allen espied him and taking him for an Indian, made for the camp hollering for very life. The company just with their arms and in came Teddy crying to arms, Indians – get your rifles, seizing his own and another, made for the supposed Indians, and behold it was one of his own men. He got well laughed at and even well scolded, and so the affair ended, Jedediah owning up that he was badly scared. We are now nooning on the broad bottom. No wind and very hot. Some of the boys are out chasing antelopes. After two hours we pushed and reached a long reach in the river where we encamped for the night. Here we are in sight of the first buffalos. The boys are in fine spirits thinking to get some fresh meat. There is an Island opposite where we can see quite a drove of buffalo. We have had a fine day and prospects for a pleasant night. Tolerable good grass.

Friday, 11th: Traveled about 18 miles today and camped on the banks of the Platte in company with some Indian traders, on their return to the States, and we took the opportunity of writing to our friends. We had a fine chance after buffalo today, but failed in getting any – better luck next time. We have had a fine day, a slight sprinkle of rain, just enough to make it pleasant, fine night.

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr. - (Continued on Page 5) —

Diary Of Joshua D. Breyfogle, Sr. - (Continued from Page 4) —

Saturday, 12th: This morning the traders offered to kill some buffalo for us if we would stay and assist in bringing it in. We did so and myself and A. Moses went with them into the hills and saw two buffalo and after two or three hours returned to the camp. The traders have not yet returned at noon. As soon as they get back we set out – four o'clock and no hunters yet, so we will remain where we are tonight and it will be a good thing for our horses as there is good grass. We have a fine breeze from the North, though not very cold. The whole length of the road as far as we can see each way is lined with wagons, mules, and oxen. There is three companies camped in sight and then several have passed and more coming, which makes quite a lively scene. I was in the hills today hunting and it beats all I ever saw of the wild and picturesque high, craggy peaks, deep ravines, beautiful vales filled with



Buffalo near the Platte River

flowers of all kinds, and to complete the scene buffalo wild and rugged as the scenery itself, stragling through the vales and over the hills and the prowling wolf loping along. Now and then the whizzing prairie hen, whizzing past. Altogether it completes a picture of the sublime and beautiful. Our hunters returned about 5 o'clock this afternoon and we have had a regular feast of good things. They brought in the meat of two large buffalo. Their meat is very fine and sweet. We got one to ourselves; to-morrow we make an early start.

- To be continued in the next Sierran.

Notes on J.D. Breyfogle Diary

From The Breyfogle Genealogy prepared by Flora Breyfogle Grumman
 SONS OF JACOB D BREYFOGLE

Joshua D Breyfogle (1806-1868)

Charles Breyfogle (abt. 1808-) ('who went to California in 1849, and found and lost the 'Breyfogle Mine', still searched for')

Jacob Breyfogle

SONS OF SOLOMON BREYFOGLE

Daniel Breyfogle (1808-1852)

Israel Breyfogle (1809-)

Solomon Breyfogle (1812-1852)

Charles Breyfogle (1816-1884)

From What I Know about the Breyfogle Family by Lawrence Breyfogle
 Joshua D and Charles C Breyfogle were brothers and set out to California in 1849. Also, their cousins Israel, Solomon and Charles set out for California at the same time and, although they were associated with another company, the cousins occasionally met on the trail.

Charles Breyfogle (1816-1884) returned to Ohio by ship in 1851 or 1852 with \$20,000 in gold. He stopped to see his cousin Jacob Breyfogle (son of Jacob D) who promptly sold his blacksmithing business and went to California.

Charles Breyfogle (1816-1884) vs. Charles C Breyfogle (1808-)

	Charles Breyfogle (1816-1884)	Charles C Breyfogle	
Born	28 Feb 1816, Kutztown PA	Born 1808	
Married	10 Jan 1839	Married	
Died	22 Dec 1884, Columbus, Franklin OH	Died	
Buried	Green Lawn Cemetery, Columbus OH	Buried	
Abt 1831	walked to Columbus OH	4 Jul 1850 served on judges jury	
Sept 1850	Decker writes of his arrival in CA	1854	Assessor in Alameda County
12 Apr 1856	appointed warden OH penitentiary	1856	Treasurer in Alameda County
1870 census	real estate agent, Columbus	17 Aug 1859	Convicted of embezzlement
1880 census	tailor, Columbus	Aft Nov 1861	Pardoned by Gov. Sanford
1870-1880	councilman, Columbus 5 th ward	Dec 1859	or he was acquitted

From The Diaries of Peter Decker, edited by Helen S. Giffen

THE DELAWARE COMPANY

Joshua D. Breyfogle

Charles C. Breyfogle

Jedediah Allen Decker Diaries, note 21

Moses Bodly Decker Diaries, note 21

Oral History We Want Yours!



The Sierra County Historical Society is actively seeking Sierra County oral histories.

The histories are being recorded at the Kentucky Mine Historic Park in Sierra City as well as in individual homes throughout the county.

On Wednesday and Thursday June 27 and 28th Christine Lamm, Susan Hopkins and Virginia Lutes conducted interviews aided by Fran Burgard, Elda Ball and Mary Nourse at the beautiful setting of the picnic area at the Kentucky Mine Historic Park.

The first interviews of the day were with Elda Ball and Jane Cooper from Loyalton. We learned what Loyalton looked like in the 1950's and changes to date. Jane and her husband Bud Cooper were both teachers, and Elda was an aide to Jane's class for a number of years. Elda's husband was a member of the Ball and Dyson families. Both ladies shared memories of Loyalton in past years.

Joleen Torri from Sierra Valley told of her experiences with not only ranching and logging in the area, but also of living in Hobart Mills when her daughter was a baby during the 1966 earthquake.

Suzi Schoensee took us through the many branches of her family which dates back to the Gold Rush in Sierra County. She has done extensive research on her branches who settled in Sattley, and Mohawk Valley. Suzi had so much information that another interview will be needed to complete her story.

Marian Lavezzola shared her experiences in school in Downieville, of being the daughter of Mr. Butz who was road supervisor, of experiencing the 1937 Flood, of her marriage to Peter Lavezzola and her election to office in Sierra County. Again, there is so much information that an additional interview will be set to continue Marian's life with Len Kinzler.

Christine Lamm typed transcripts as the interviews were being recorded. All interviews will be on file at the Kentucky Archives for future reference for family researchers, as well as those who are interested in learning of real life experiences in communities in Sierra County.

This project is just beginning; Christine is busily completing the transcripts with assistance from Susan Hopkins and the recordings. Christine also transcribed from cassette, recordings interviews done between 1977-1984 from Howard Thompson, Margaret Elaine Lambert, and Evan Thomas. Fran had previously transcribed, also from cassette an interview with C.K. Smith. A few weeks ago an interview with Maren Scholberg by Virginia Lutes and Kris Scholberg took place. As many of you may know, Maren is a member emeritus of the Sierra County Historical Society Board, and has volunteered for many years in many capacities, including conducting oral interview a number of years ago.

A special thank you to all who have participated thus far, and an open invitation to YOU to contact the Kentucky Museum to schedule your interview, we want YOUR HISTORY! Call Virginia at 862-1310.



*Photo: Christine Lamm, Marian Lavezzola, Fran Burgard, Suzi Schoensee, Susan Hopkins, Mary Nourse.
Photo taken by Virginia Lutes, Curator Kentucky Mine Museum*

Editor's Note: The Kentucky Mine Museum is very fortunate to have Matt Walker as an intern this summer.

My name is Matt Walker and I live in Gilroy, California. My family has been coming up to Sierra County for over fifty years, and this is my twentieth summer in the area. My grandfather and great-grandfather built a cabin in the Clark Station Summer Home Tract which we have come back to every year.

Currently I am a senior in college at Haverford College in Philadelphia majoring in history and minoring in Ancient Greek. I had the opportunity through my college to spend this summer working with a historical organization and it did not take long to settle on the Kentucky Mine



Matt Walker

Museum and the Sierra County Historical Society. I had been to the Kentucky Mine a few times in the past with my family and was impressed by the quality of the museum and the site. I decided that I wanted to learn more about the history around the Mine, but also to learn how the museum functioned and was able to maintain its quality. I was also familiar with the importance of Sierra County in the Gold Rush and had spent time exploring sites on the Sierra Buttes, but I realized that working at the Mine and with the Historical Society would give me a much better grasp of the broader history of the county. I often spend my time looking at maps of the county and wondering where the name of a creek came from, or who was behind a particular mine. My interest in the county extends beyond its mining history, however, and I am looking forward to helping with conducting oral interviews of county residents. I hope that this summer provides me with opportunities to explore the history of the county and also to learn how to preserve this history and to present it to others.

Kentucky Museum Recent Acquisitions

Folks continue to be generous with donations of items to the Sierra County Historical Society. Recent donations include the following:

- Chinese Opium pipe and scales from Cal Florence
- Photographs of Sierraville families from Peni Morris
- Abstract of Title from Nevada County Historical Society
- Miners tools from Joel Bergquist
- Miners 5 piece gold pan and an open pontiled pepper sauce bottle from Sierra Valley donated by James and Adam Connolly
- Box Stove from miner's cabin for the Lagomarsino Cabin from Roger VanCraeynest
- School and other books from Butte, Poker Flat, Loganville and Sierra City High School from Francis Brett
- Adze, Sierraville School dictionary, bottles, household cans and "History of Sierra" book by Guinn (1906) from Joleen Torri
- Portable typewriter, Remington from Louis and Nancy Phillippi

All donations of artifacts, books, photographs etc. are appreciated.



S.C.H.S. Membership Corner News

July 2012

Brought to you by Member chair, Suzi Schoensee

Thanks to all of you who have gifted us with renewed memberships. We totally appreciate your belief in our work. It is you who are vital and who keep us going. We will gladly accept your gifts at anytime soon if you happen to be the few who have not renewed as of yet.

Questionnaire Results (continued from June 2011)

We left off last June reporting regarding 10 of 30 members whose families were here in the county's early years, and who had moved on since then to other places and no longer live here. Now I will relate to the reader the second 10 of the 30:

11.) **Tom & Judy Maxwell's Family** were ranchers, loggers and business owners in Sierraville.

12.) **Kelly & Lyanne Melhaff had family** in Sierra City between the years of 1850 - 1875 seeking gold who were originally Cornish miners from England. The Perryman and Palmer families related to Lyanne.

13.) Between the years of 1850 -1975, **Grace Micke's family** were ranchers, loggers, mill workers & business owners in Scales, Calpine, Sattley & Sierraville.

14.) From 1850 to 1900 **Coleen Webber-Nicholas's family** were pioneer ranchers and farmers in Randolph & Sierraville. Grandparents were Danie & Sarah Wilder-Webber and Dad was Gorden Webber.

15.) **Andrew & Patricia Ponta** are related to the Loeffler and Seitz Families who were pioneers, gold seekers and farmers in Sierra City during the 1850's. Patricia passed away recently and will be remembered fondly.

To be continued . . .