

DIXON HISTORY



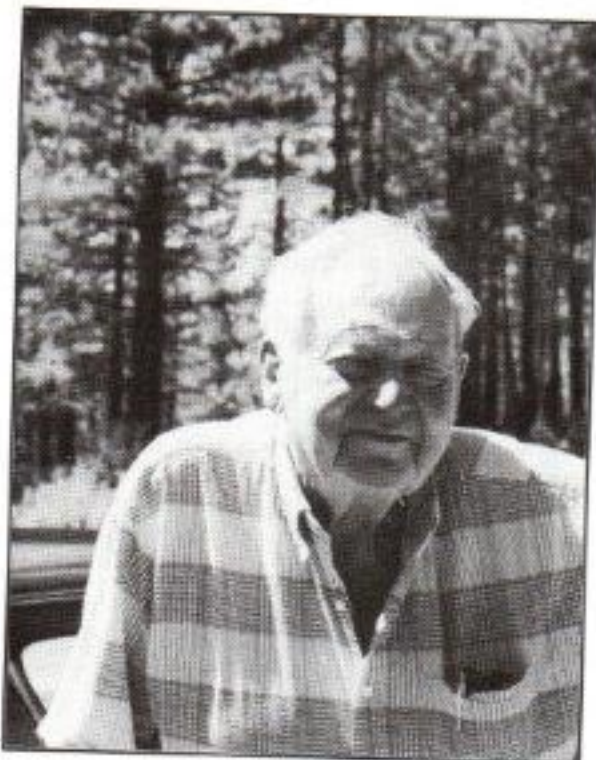
Dixon Train Station

VOLUME 2 • SUMMER 1994

Kirby's Drug Store by Helen Kirby Rohwer	1
The Rohwer Family by Leah Watkins-Bell	5
California Trucking Legacy by Olin Timm	11
Duck Calling by Harold (Dick) Rattenbury	14

Journal of The Dixon Historical Society

DEDICATED TO OLIN TIMM



Olin Timm

A human landmark in his own right in Dixon and Solano County, earning local and national honors and reputation, is Olin Timm.

Olin, a repeated popular choice for Dixon Historical Society President, is a rancher and retired president and chairman of First Northern Bank. He is a Solano County water rights advocate who helped pioneer development of Lake Berryessa's Monticello Dam and the Solano Irrigation District canal system.

It is the Historical Society's honor to have Olin grace these pages in deserved dedication of this booklet, of which he has worked unselfishly for present and future generations.

Olin, now in his eighth decade of loving the land, the creatures which graze upon it and the people who make this area a special place to live, resides on a 3,000-acre ranch and continues to own other property at Dixon's edge. Once, the Timm family had America's largest certified dairy herd located at Dixon. After it was sold to the Doyle family when Olin was young, he still was known to be able to down a quart of milk without stopping "even after a cold swim in a canal," according to life-long Timm friend and Dixon classmate, Dr. Edward Sedgwick, who became a UCLA professor.

A 1935 Stanford University graduate, Olin met his wife, June, while both attended a master's degree program at Cornell University. They married in 1937. June taught school and was involved in area activities, including Orderly Growth efforts. She died in 1990. The Timms raised son, Peter, and daughters, Arley and Susan.

Olin is known to share his land with Dixon High School's champion cross country runners, Boy Scout campouts, sheep, cattle, a few peacocks and his son's camel.

He has been California's Sheepman of the Year, President of the United States Animal Health Association and, most recently, honored in Sparks, Nevada, with the prestigious McClure Award from the American Sheep Industry Association.

Olin knows Dixon history, has lived it, and is recording it with the following pages as only one example. Dixon history is special to Olin Timm. Olin is special to Dixon, too.

A human landmark makes a lasting imprint.

KIRBY'S DRUG STORE

By Helene Kirby Rohwer

A lot of this may be rather interesting, maybe a little inaccurate as to date because a lot of what I'm going to tell you was told to me by my aunt, Mary Little, who was my father's sister. She loved to tell about the old days.

Abraham Kirby was my grandfather and he and Mary Ruth Martin were married in Run(?) County in Ohio in September of 1867. The next year they came to Silveyville by a clipper ship down the east coast and across the Isthmus of Panama by wagon and up the west coast to San Francisco. I don't know how Grandpa Kirby ever heard of a situation in Silveyville, California, for a druggist and I presume it must have been from some friend who knew about Trafton Drugstore that would have an opportunity for a pharmacist. They had settled in Silveyville just before the railroad came through.

They had a little daughter who passed away from diphtheria in 1882 so that was after they came. She was four years old and it was a very sad thing. They were in the historical movement of the town of Silveyville via two freight flat cars by Olin's grandfather and another man and they hop-

skipped and jumped with the rails. They laid them down and came from behind and put them in front and then they'd pick up the back ones and put them in front again. As you know the story, the reason that the Methodist church is on the west of the railroad (tracks) is that they couldn't get that big church across the railroad tracks.

The first name of the store was the California Drugstore. It was owned by W.A. Trafton. It later was owned by Snead and A. Kirby.

1880-1882, my grandfather was sheriff of Solano County and I always wondered how he left his drug store and went over there. Well, he had a partner, or Trafton still owned it, and they both worked for him. I'm not really very good at digging these (dates) out. As you know, many of the original build-

ings were burned in the fire of 1883. Aunt Mary said that they always said that the hottest fire in Dixon was in the California Drug Company because the basement was filled with house paint. I suppose he sold that, also. I wish I had been able to record much of what Aunt Mary told me because she really loved to give all this information.

I was born over on Adams and B Street in the house that's still there and my earliest recollection of Main Street has a roof over the big walk there. The Redmen used to have a parade every year. I think I was only three



A. KIRBY'S DRUG STORE. This is one of the buildings moved from the old town of Silveyville about 1870. Before it burned, it was located at 1st and A Streets where the Odd Fellows Building now stands. Left to right: T. B. Barnes (Constable); Sam Brown (professional gambler); T. B. Bucles (farmer); A. Kirby (father of C. M. Kirby and Mary R. Little); seated, Holverstat; Louis Duprey; Charles Newman; George Barlow (farmer); unidentified; and Mr Bloom (father of John Bloom).



A. Kirby & son Chas. in front of Kirby Drug Store. Circa 1880.

years old when we climbed out of the upstairs windows of the Masonic lodge and watched the Parade from there. They tore down those awnings [in 1915 when the highway went through (Ardeeth Riedel)].

As I was a child when my father had the first drug store--of course, as I say, he worked for Trafton first and that was by the Masonic hall--then when he had his own store it was a very large square building just about on the south side of where the Masonic stairs go up. Later, after my father joined Mr. Roseberry, it became Bayley Duke's grocery store. I think after that it was Mr. La Fontaine's store, later on in the 1900's. As I recall, walking north from A Street, first there was J.D. Johnson's hardware store and then Mr. Clark's dry goods store. After that there was a saloon and the building that Mr. Roseberry had his drugstore in (I don't know from whom he bought it) and then there was the little refreshment store and then the big building where my dad was, and then there was the Masonic hall, then there was Shangraw's meat market and Beckley and Grove Haberdashery and the First National Bank. That was the Main [First] Street that I remember.

Then my grandfather changed the name from the California Drugstore to the Dixon Drug Company. It was rather a big square room and it had drawers all along this side and big cupboards with glass doors that went to the ceiling and there was perfume in there in cut glass bottles and we didn't sell much of it, so I imagine some of it was 20 years old. What it smelled like I don't know. There was a cigar counter right by the door where the top shelf had cigars and Bull Durham sacks with papers. No cigarettes. Then on top was a cutter where you could cut the tip off your cigar before you smoked it. In the corner was the telephone exchange and Mrs. Ben King was the operator, and my husband, Otto, still asks for

"Central" when he dials a number, because that's what we called her. She had a slanted desk with levers and rows of plugs with cords on that you could pull up and plug in. That's the way you connected the different lines. You pushed a lever for the calling line and plugged in to the corresponding hole to connect the lines. After the telephone company started their own office on B Street they brought that [switch board] into our barn and we played with it. I think that Miss Grace Collier was the first central. I can remember her very well and also Miss Phoebe Collier because she worked in the dry goods store for Schulze.

I have some bottles that have "A. Kirby and Son, Dixon, Cal." right up in the glass. I understand that if they turn pink in the sunlight they were made before 1880 because that's when the process was perfected that would keep glass from discoloring in the sun.



Famous "Kirby's Croup Salve."

Since this is supposed to be about the drugstore, I will tell you about the services and products available there. My father

developed film for Dixon people. I can remember going in the back and seeing these long negatives hanging there getting dry. The town photographer (Charlie Kirby) used to take pictures of all the May Day things and the high school graduating classes and everything like that. My father also had a still. He made all the distilled water for Dixon. He also made extract of vanilla with alcohol and vanilla beans. Of course, everybody had to buy the vanilla beans for their fig jam from my dad, too. His most famous product from an old prescription was "Kirby's Croup Salve." Every baby was introduced to that salve and the whole family used it for chest infections and bronchial coughs. My dad used to say that it was good for shoulder, knee, ankle joint, side, chest, or back. And it was good for mosquito bites, too.

Father also was a good friend to very many of the people in Dixon who were sick but didn't want to go to the doctor. They'd say, "Mr. Kirby, do you think you could give me something for this?" And I heard him say many times, "now, you use this for one day, and if you are not better, you go to the doctor because I don't know what's really good." Dear old "Dockie" Hall, he was wonderfully kind. He took

care of us from birth until he retired. There were also doctors Stolle, Floreth and Parsons in my time and they all worked in partnership with my dad and the drugstore to give the best they could. I remember during the flu epidemic in World War I--Spanish influenza, remember?--there was aspirin in green and pink colors because a lot of people said, "I can't take aspirin" and that was the only medicine there was.

Many members of the section gang that worked on the railroad were really fond of my dad. Half of them couldn't speak very good English and they would come in and explain in motions and he would try to give them what they needed. They trusted my dad to take care of them. Many years later when I was old enough to work in the store a man came in and he asked for "vasillino ill." I went back and told my dad he wants vasillino ill. "Yeah, Vaseline oil, hair tonic." Then there was one man in town, and I won't mention his name, but he bought Castor oil regularly and he'd come in and say, "give me a bottle of that there baby ooze."

My dad was alone in the store now because Grandpa died when I was eight years old. Grandpa was sure he could take care of the store, and he would never let Dad hire anybody when he was gone so my dad never could get away. Once or twice he'd hire a man for two days so he could go hunting with the fellows. They always laughed at him because he never had any exercise. All he did was be on his feet all day long and he could walk those mountains better than any of the younger men like Angus Madden and those that he went with.

Finally, it was so confining that he and Mr. Roseberry decided that they would be partners and they left the store that my dad had and went over to Roseberry's store which was, Otto says, where the Country Oak is now. I'm not sure. I thought it was a little more to this side, but everything's changed so much on Main Street. It was a little bit narrower and it had a little balcony and so they [remodeled] and put stairs up to the balcony and put in a restroom. I don't think there were many service stations around,

so it was kind of convenient.

In the back of the store there was a prescription counter where they compounded their prescriptions. There were windows above and they'd be back there and look out through those windows to see if there were any customers. There was another amenity added, a soda fountain--ice cream. Lois Pritchard worked for my father for about six years and she was a very good help to him. She could wait on people and she was obliging and a very nice girl. We were by that time high school age, so after school we would work in the drugstore.



Kirby home at B and Adams Street. Built before 1900.

I always remember two of our very frequent patrons, Wilber Eibe and Claude Kidwell. They would come up and sit on the stool and say, "give me a schooner" and they'd each drink one of those great big milkshakes--you know those silver things that you make it in. One other client had much less of an appetite, little Gus Mehan, and he would come in and ask, "may I please have a glass of charged water?" He would want to pay me and I'd say, "oh no, Mr. Mehan, that's just a

glass of water. You can't pay me." "Well, thank you very much" and then he'd put a tip on the counter and leave. [He was the one who had Mehan's Restaurant (Dairy City Grill)].

One of the things up on the balcony in the drugstore after Dad moved all of his old stuff over there was a square Victor machine [Victrola] with a horn and they even had one of the white dogs that look into it. At home we had an Edison with the roll records.

In the store there were two sets of those ice cream tables and chairs. We used those all the time to serve people ice cream. Then there was a candy case. Ruth Kilkenny said Evelyn Johnson wanted to come today and she wanted to know what that glass case was, and that's the only thing I can think of. Near the end of the soda fountain there was the candy case with a slanted glass roof. My dad bought bulk chocolates. We had eight daisy and button square dishes that we put those chocolates on and people could point out what they wanted. Then up in back

there were shelves with apothecary jars with white peppermints and pink wintergreens and shiny pill candies and all that kind of candy. Mr. Neet Garnett came in once a week and took himself a little bag and filled it with the white peppermints and carried them in his pocket. I'll always remember that.

My father also made his own root beer syrup for the fountain and it was really very good. He also made Jamaica Ginger (it's very hot with a very high percent of alcohol in it) and sold it in little bottles. During Prohibition the section workers would come in to get a bottle of that Jamaica Ginger, and my father would say, "oh, I'm sorry, I don't have any." He said they burned their stomachs out and besides he didn't want them to get drunk. So then they'd buy a bottle of Beef Iron and Wine Tonic and go and have their little jag.

After about 7 years of partnership, Mr. Roseberry bought a store in Winters and so my dad was alone again. Bill Parkhurst came to work for Father and worked three or four years. He decided that he wanted to be a pharmacist so he took his training

and came back and started a rival drugstore. Frank Obelleiro worked for Bill Parkhurst as his helper, washed bottles and stuff like that and got a taste for pharmacy, too.

So I call that our Dixon Drug Company Family Tree. We have Trafton, Kirby and Sneed, A. Kirby and Son and then Bill and Frank, all of those were Dixon Drug Company people.

In about 1934 my father semi-retired, sold his store lock, stock and barrel, to Mr. Arnold Grusendorf. He asked the wholesale houses if they needed any part-time druggists, particularly in the mountains, that he would like to have a job once in awhile that didn't last too long. And this was the first freedom I think he had in his whole life. He had his car and sometimes he worked where there was snow in the winter and worked up at the Westwood Lumber Company store and in Hale's one time for a couple of weeks. Just enough that he could come and visit his grandchildren at my house. Then he finally had a stroke and passed away.

HISTORY OF THE ROHWER FAMILY AND THE TREMONT CHURCH

By Leah Watkins-Bell

Twelcome you to our beloved Westminster Presbyterian Church of Tremont. Prior to 1848, the land in the area now known as Tremont was owned by the Wolfskills, Tanyons, and Vacas. Because the Spanish land grants were so large, boundary lines were often unclear. But this wasn't considered to be too earth-shaking, because all that the land was used for was grazing their large cattle and horse herds. When the early pioneers arrived in the 1850's and started to settle in this area, many were considered by the Spanish as squatters, even though they were homesteading on government land grants. However, as we can see here today, by the number of their descendants still holding ownership of the property, they certainly were here to stay. The nearest church in the 1860's was Silveyville, ten miles away by horse and buggy. From 1860 to 1865, the congregation traveled to Silveyville and met there and helped erect a joint meeting place for the Baptist and Presbyterian church.

Probably the most important milestone in the early history of the Tremont church was when Cornelia Jane and Septa Filmore-Hyde deeded two acres of land for a church and cemetery. Members and friends of the Tremont church struggled to get money and labor together to actually build a church. This was difficult due to severe drought conditions locally and the Depression of the nation as a whole caused by the civil war. In the year 1863, the ladies of the Tremont area organized themselves into what they called the Tremont Mite Society, taking their name

from the Biblical woman's mite, the smallest coin in the realms, 3/20 of a cent according to Mark 12. Slowly, they got a building fund together: \$600.00. Another \$700.00 was obtained from the sale of their interest in the church in Silveyville. The Tremont church was finally finished and dedicated on May the 28th, 1871. It was not yet fully paid for and there were other expenses such as curtains, laying linoleum, song books (you name it) over the years, so the Mite Society continued to meet and raise funds. On the days of regular services, ministers came from other churches in the area. And occasionally, because of the large number of German-descended people in the area, the

members heard the preaching of the famous Reverend Gott of Sacramento. The first regular minister of the church was Reverend Fairbourne. By the early nineteen hundreds, members of the congregation were rotating preaching duties, and as a result, over the years, services gradually ceased to exist.

In November of 1929, the church and cemetery were acquired by the Silveyville Cemetery

District of Dixon. In April of 1973, the Tremont Hall Association donated its fire insurance money to the Mite Society. It was decided that this money, \$7,216.00, would be used to restore and repair the church. This work was completed in the spring of 1979 and was climaxed by the installation of the carpeting on the floor, the installation of a plain wooden cross above the pulpit, made by Chris Watkins, a great grandson of E.C. Watkins, who helped build the church, and the dedication of an organ by the Hyde family in memory of Craig Hyde, Jr. We also have today, in the foyer of our church, one of the original tables that was part of the furniture when it was dedicated, and on the table is a hand-crocheted doily by my grandmother Watkins. We also have several paint-



Tremont Church

ings out in the foyer and a casket holder—it's a restored thing, that you would put up here and put the casket on, that belonged to the church.

Although the church is no longer used except for an occasional wedding, funeral or society meeting, it is maintained as a historical site and carefully watched over by a full-time caretaker that lives on the grounds. The Tremont Mite Society has met continuously since its organization. We meet, on the average, nine months each year and presently have 56 members, most of whom are related by birth or marriage to the original charter members. Every two years on the last Sunday of April, we hold an open house for residents of the area and the public. We thank the Silveyville Cemetery District for maintaining the church and cemetery and even though we are well aware that the church does not belong to us legally, we think it does. We treat it as if it were our own. We sometimes think the Cemetery District wishes that we weren't quite so possessive over our cemetery and our church. We are most grateful for this opportunity to show and tell you about our church. A more complete history has been given to each of you at the door. Little did these pioneers dream that 129 years later their descendants would still be gathering at their 108-year-old church and that the 127-year-old Mite Society would still be active each month. Their dreams, determination, and perseverance seem to have been inherited by us. I think they are here with us today in spirit and are all very proud and pleased.

OTTO ROHWER

The reason I am here today is that I was born and raised in Dixon. My mother was born and raised in the Tremont area. Before I start, I would like to introduce my wife, Helene. Helene is also of Dixon-Tremont origin. Her father and grandfather owned the drugstore in old Silveyville. When Olin told you that his family moved those buildings over, they moved that drugstore over. In addition to that, her mother was Marie Timm who was the daughter of Hans Timm who owned the ranch that Irving Bulkley now owns, three miles southwest of here.

It was explained to me that Irving had talked about the Bulkley family. Would I talk about the Stick-Eggert family? Well, I didn't know. I wasn't prepared for any of that. I forgot all about it, but then, lo and behold, I get a fancy letter from Olin telling me: "Our next Historical Society meeting will be on the

eleventh of June, hopefully at the Tremont church. Our board has decided to ask you to present a history of the Tremont area." My first reaction was, "no way!" But then I thought of all the work that Ardeth and Olin and all the rest of the folks in Dixon have put in to getting the Dixon Society started and keeping it rolling, and that if I could make any contribution and help them out in any way, I should do it. So I said, "yes, I'll do it." As soon as I hung up the phone, I knew I'd made a mistake. I didn't ask even what he meant by "Tremont area."

As I say, I was born and raised here and am kind of a history nut. I didn't know if he was talking about the old Tremont area surrounding the old Tremont school, which is about two and a half miles east of Dixon. And it's important that I know which one he spoke of, because if I had to talk about that, I'd have to talk about the Andersons, the Robbins, the Fritzes, and the Bowmans, and the Hankes. Then I thought, well, maybe he's referring to the old Tremont station on the railroad where Tremont Road crosses S.P. Railroad up here. If that was so I'd have to talk about the Colliers, the Holdridges, the rest of the Fosters, and those that lived in that neighborhood. Then I thought, "Does he refer to the Tremont Judicial District," which is what this technically is, and occupies a large part of the northeast corner of Solano County. I came to the conclusion that that was undoubtedly what he referred to because of the fact that they were going to hold the meeting in this church.

I decided I'd find out something about the area and the people. I had a pretty good start on it. Lo and behold, then I get an invitation to attend this meeting and what does it say? "Rohwer will talk about the Dixon families." Well, I figured that was a typographical error. They certainly wouldn't expect me to talk about the Curreys, the Petersens, and the rest



Eggert Home on Tremont Road. Circa 1887.

of them out in Silveyville where we have so many good old families to talk about, a lot of which I can't even cover. That would be arrogant to do that. So I never even told Olin or anyone else about it, I just went on the theory that I would talk about the families of the Tremont area.

In my early days, of course, I had a couple of uncles that lived out here: Eggerts. And my early remembrance is of them telling me about the Hyde family, in particular, one Craig Hyde, who apparently was a great distance runner. And I thought, "well, I know Wally Hyde in Sacramento." He's a prominent attorney there, descended from the group of Hydes out here. I got a hold of him by phone, and I said, "tell me something about your family." This is what he wrote me:

"Septa Fillmore Hyde, my great-grandfather, born June 7, 1819, Grand Island, Vermont, died January 18, '90, in Tremont, California. In 1852, Septa and his family started for California. When they arrived in St. Joseph, Missouri, Caroline died from an attack of cholera. Septa continued his journey with his two young children, Asa and Phoebe, in company with two of his sisters, Harriet and her husband Archibald Burns, and Chleora, wife of Thomas Burns (they were brothers.) Their wagon train was led by Dick Pratt of Decalb County. They came through Carson Pass to Hangtown, Placerville, California, moving in 1853 to Diamond Springs, where they engaged in the lumber business. On 7 July, 1857, Septa married Miss Cornelia Jane Saunders of San Jose, California, daughter of Alfesius Saunders and Lucina Sheldon of Union City, Michigan. Jane, as she was known, came to California in company with two of her brothers and one sister in 1853. How Septa and Jane got together in California is a matter of speculation. She may have been distantly related to Septa's first wife through the Kellogg family. Septa and Jane first lived in Amador county in a log house. Their oldest daughter was born there 7 May, 1858. Later they moved to Tremont, Solano County, in California, where Septa took up a homestead and where the rest of their children were born. In 1867, two acres of their land were deeded to a church and cemetery. In 1865, Septa was stricken with paralysis and had to walk with two canes. He was elected Justice of the Peace for Tremont township in 1871 and held that office until his death in 1890. He was instrumental in forming the first school district in Tremont."

Wally was only talking about his grandfather. He didn't talk about his father or any of his uncles or any members of the family. He doesn't talk about Malcolm Timm and all of his brothers and sisters whose mother was a Hyde. He didn't talk about the

Reeds, who are Hyde. He didn't talk about Fred Hyde, who was the first man that did all the land leveling in the Dixon district. I came to the sad realization that if I would go into that much detail and find out that much about the rest of the Hydes, we would have been here all afternoon just talking about Hydes. So I decided that I would have to go back to the original request that I would talk about my mother's family.

This really saddened me. It meant that I couldn't talk about a lot of families that I had knowledge of, and some here today that I'd long forgotten were from this district, who will probably feel pretty badly when I only mention five or six of the families. There was the Raabe family, Violet and all the rest of them, the Kanupes that lived a couple of miles west, (their girls used to teach in the Dixon schools for years), the Maxwells, with their three sons and a couple of girls. One of the girls was my fifth grade school teacher. Then there was the connection of the Beckers and the Dietrichs. Ernie advised me that his mother was a Becker, and that the early memories of their family came from the 1860's. Then, most of all, the one that I really hated to give up on was a story about a couple of kids by the name of John O. Rowe and Lillian, who bought what to me was an off-breed bird of funny-colored cattle, gave them a fancy Irish name, and turned them from a working dairy into a world-wide institution. What a story that would be for somebody to get up here and tell you about! A lot of the people, of course, the Dietrichs and the rest of them, living across the road from them, know it and watched it grow. The rest of us didn't, and it certainly had to be a great story. Also, not to talk about the Watkins family bothered me particularly. I walked in today, the first lady I met was Mrs. Watkins. Having come to the conclusion that I would only talk about my family, that's what I am about to proceed to do.

My mother was Lena Stick. She was born in the ranch house up the road a mile and a half or so on the right hand side. You can see a Victorian home today. She was not born in that house. She was born in the house that stood in the back of the lot. The back of that house today, which constitutes the kitchen, the dining room, the pantry, the back porch and everything was a part of the old house. I'd like to thank Bill Jones and his family for the great job they have done in keeping up what I consider to be one of the historical monuments of this town.

Incidentally, here's a reminder about the ministers who passed through this church and the community. I have my mother's original baptismal certificate. I would have liked to have brought it here today, but they have it on exhibit at the museum over in Vacaville. It would be of interest to you. First of

all, it was entirely written in German. The other thing is who signed it, the minister, Matthias Geke. I've never traced that down, but I have a hunch that he had to be either the father or the uncle of Charles Geke who was married to one of the Dwight girls. When Helene and I came to Sacramento some years ago, he and his wife were patrons of the arts. There wasn't anything that had to do with the arts that wasn't headed up by a contribution from the Gekes.

My mother's parents were Johann Stick and Lena Jahn Stick. It's important to remember that name because it goes throughout this community and the Dixon community. Johann was born in Germany in 1829 and left home at the age of twelve, served in different capacities in the German army, and finally in 1852 or 1853 he put to sea. The captain of the ship's name was Cook. The ship came into San Francisco harbor in 1853. If you remember your history, you will remember that it was a big gamble to bring your ship into San Francisco harbor after 1849. Because of the lure of the gold fields, whole crews, captain and all, would desert their ship and go to the gold fields. The captain of this ship thought he was smart and withheld all the wages for the entire crew. That didn't stop my grandfather; he deserted anyway. The story goes, he hid out in a carrot patch for four or five days eating vegetables, and so forth, until the impressment officers left and then he headed north, eventually coming to Tremont. Since he came into the country illegally, through the salt water of the bay, I facetiously refer to him as "the salt-water wet-back."

My grandmother, Lena Jahn, was also born in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, January 1, 1845. She worked on a ranch and learned all the ranch duties. In addition to that, she apparently took care of an old lady who was a great seamstress and taught her her trade. I have to presume that acquired characteristics and abilities are not inherited, but it's a strange coincidence that I've never known one female in my family that wasn't an expert seamstress. When she was nineteen years of age, she decided that she was going to come to America to be with her two relatives, Wilke Saltsen and Anna Bowman.

I'd like to digress here and tell something about those families, since there is so much interrelation among their relations and this community. This is the "chain of command" of Wilke Jahn. First marriage was to Heinrich Saltsen. The children were Anna, who was married to Henry Hanke. The Hanks lived in the house on the corner where the Catholic Church now has its school. My folks purchased the south half of their ranch some three miles south of Dixon long before I came into being. Ed Schroeder

was married to one of the Hanke girls. Then there was Josephine, who was married to Detlef Raabe. Herman Schroeder's wife was a Raabe. Then there was Dora. She was married to Gil Jansen. The Jansens used to live on the ranch three quarters of a mile east of the old Tremont school and then they moved into town in the area of Timm Lane and lived there for years and years. Their son, Harry, was the village blacksmith. Then there was Lena, who was married to Morgan Childers; they were a famous family in this area. Then there was Herman, and so on. There are so many of them, it would take me all day to tell you about them. They run a thread throughout the Dixon District. I'm always afraid to talk for fear I'm talking to one of my cousins, whom I don't remember.

In addition to that, there was the Jahn family. Villum/Vikum Jahn (I haven't been able to connect up exactly where he came in), I have to think that he was a half-brother. One of the members of the family who is a lot of fun is Mel Monk. His mother was the youngest daughter in that family. If you want to have some fun, go out to their place sometime and have his son show you through their house. I can remember going there when I was a boy and loving it because they had a cellar and they had ham and bacons hanging in there. If I live to be a thousand, I will never forget the wonderful smell of that place.

I'll go back now to tell you about our family. My grandmother struck out for California when she was nineteen years of age. She had the two sisters here and that was where she was headed. They took a boat across the Atlantic and came across the Isthmus of Panama and then up the west coast to San Francisco. I wonder if any of us really appreciate what a trip it must have been. She was traveling with another young lady and they parted in San Francisco. Because this was in the early 1860's, there was no train or any road beside what they called the Two and Jake Road.

A year or so after she came out here, she married my grandfather, John Stick. They had a happy life. They had seven children. Then tragedy struck. They lost two of their children to smallpox. Then my grandfather had a friend--one of the Grady family that came over here from Germany on a ship to visit them--and lo and behold, he brought smallpox with him. My grandfather and one of the children died of smallpox. My grandmother was left with four children, one of whom died a year later, and then there were three of them. One of those three was my mother, Lena, who was married to my father, Jake Rohwer, and they had eight children of which I am the last survivor. A son Herman, who was married

to Annette Runge, and their daughter is Elsie Hamel, who has two boys. The last was my aunt, Amanda, who married a neighbor man, Adolph Runge, who was the brother of Herman's wife Annette.

It's hard to keep going in regard to all the different people in the family. First I'll talk about my grandmother who, after my grandfather died, was remarried to Klaus Eggert. The Eggerts had three children, the oldest was Otto. Otto had three daughters, Della, Florence, and Alta. Della was married to Bill Jones. They have some six children, one of whom has passed away. Four of the boys are farming in this territory today. The girl is living down in San Jose. Florence was married and her daughter lives in New York City. Alta was married to Bud Wolff; survived by three daughters, Pat, Betty, and Sue. Back to the Eggert children: Ed, who was married to Josie Brown from Winters, is survived by Jean McConahay, whose husband is a retired naval officer. They live down in New Mexico.

These two uncles of mine, Ed and Otto, were really great friends of mine. They were great card players and hunters. We still like to tell the story about how they'd always play German solo. It was a proud moment in my life when I got old enough and smart enough to be able to play it with them. One night, my brothers Eggert and Hans, and all of them, played the game, and Ed Eggert was having a bad time. His hands didn't work out, and finally, in disgust, he said, "I never did like the damn game anyway."

The last member of that family was my Aunt Elda. Aunt Elda never married. She taught school in the Alameda School System for years and years. She's what I refer to as one of the "belle wethers" of our family, the leader of our family on the Eggert side. I think all of us looked up to Aunt Elda. Every time there was a family decision to be made, we always wanted to know what Aunt Elda thought about it. I guess there was a reason for it. She was the first member of our family to be able to attend college. She graduated from the University of California, and while there, helped to form the first chapter of the Sigma Kappa Sorority. I think Helene and I added it up. Between her and me there were some 30 members of Sigma Kappa Sorority in our family. We still follow Aunt Elda, even though she is long since deceased. In addition to that, since she was a school teacher and had the time, she traveled all over. Above all, when she went to Europe, she went into Germany and looked up the history, not just of my family, but the Eggert family and all the rest, and much of the material I have here today was gathered by her.

In the year that my grandfather died, when he was only 52 years of age, he sowed 500 acres of summer fallow land to grain. He didn't do it with a mechanical seeder, he did it all by hand, which meant he had to hang a sack of grain over his shoulder and broadcast it. What a job that must have been!

My mother loved to milk cows. She had a couple of cows to milk when she was in her seventies. I used to ask her why she used to come out with us in the storms in winter, even when there were two or three hired men around who could have done it. She said, "Well, Otto, in our family my father came off as a ship's cook and my mother knew how to ranch, so she did the milking and he did the cooking and I helped her."

She told me about the severe droughts that they had. We don't think of that so much anymore because we have irrigation water coming from the mountains and deep well pumps. We don't suffer as much as they did. On many occasions in summer, they'd have to take all their livestock up here to the east and out to the tulles so they'd have water and feed.

I have a few personal memories of the Skunk Island school house. It was my privilege to go there as a boy in my teens for dances. The whole community used to meet there on Saturday nights for dances. You wouldn't believe what great food there was. A couple of things I remember. Irving Bulkley's dad was a vigorous dancer. It was his goal to dance with all the ladies and it was my observation that he generally did. The other thing was, in that school I learned to dance. One of my best instructors was my Aunt Amanda. Amanda and Adolph Runge used to dance the Viennese waltz. I've never seen anyone, even in the movies, dance it as well as they did. Of course, she couldn't teach me that because I was 14 and too clumsy. She taught me what I would call the "Lawrence Welk Waltz" at a slow pace. How she taught me was, she never let me slide my feet. I always learned by walking first, then she let me slide my feet.

The first or second time that I went out there to dance, I met a very beautiful young lady named Violet Raabe. Being enamored of her, I asked her if I could bring her to the next dance and she said, "yes." The Raabes lived some miles east of the school and, come that Saturday night, I borrowed the folks' old Chalmers and I drove out there. It was pitch dark and I drove up to the gate, down the lane, got out and walked up to the gate and I could see a light a few hundred feet away, so I opened it and started walking down, swinging my arms, and a great big ranch dog grabbed me by the wrist. Luckily, he wasn't

vicious and didn't break the skin, but believe me, I didn't move an inch until the family came.

IRVING BULKLEY: That's the truth because I was bitten by the same dog. [laughter.]

OTTO: Irving, I don't remember that I ever took her out again and I can't remember if it was because of the dog or because I found out she was one of my first cousins. Anyway, before you leave I'd like to tell you one last story. In the old days in Dixon, when I was a young man and until a few years ago, you had to be very careful about who you talked about in Dixon, because, if you said something bad about one person to another, you'd probably find out they were cousins or somehow related.

My wife is going for some kind of endurance record. Helene and I will be married 58 years next

Tuesday, if you can imagine staying with me that long... [applause] There was a standing joke among her friends and relatives and mine how Helene and I are almost related. Even though we've been married 58 years, we haven't quite made it. This is how it goes:

Helene's grandfather was Hans Timm. Hans Timm had a half brother named Joakim Schroeder. My father had a half sister named Gretchen and my mother had a half brother named Otto Eggert and this is the way it goes. (Listen, 'cause if you want it repeated I'll meet you outside.) Helene's grandfather's half brother married my father's half sister and one of their daughters, Rose, married my mother's half brother. That's it. Thank you.

CALIFORNIA TRUCKING LEGACY LEFT BY DIXON'S WALTER FUCHSLIN

By Olin Timm

As appeared in the Dixon Tribune, 9/12/90

This is the story of a mom and pop trucking organization that grew into the most efficient trucking company in the Western United States.

Walter Fuchslin was a Swiss, born in Germany, October 14, 1910. His parents subsequently returned to Switzerland. Walter immigrated to the United States in October 1928 when he was eighteen years old. He came to work for his uncle Frank Dettling in Dixon, California.

After six months he started working for Roy Gill, a large dairyman of Dixon. He worked at various jobs for Roy and eventually became a truck driver hauling the dairy's milk to a distributing plant in San Francisco. But his jobs varied. Each Fall he hauled the Gill children to their aunt, Miss Fulmore of Ferndale, who was a teacher and then picked up a load of lumber as a back haul. Mrs. Gill did the cooking for the farm workers at the Gill dairy.

Along the line, Roy Gill acquired the Agency for Diamond T trucks. And about 1941, Roy set up Walter in the trucking business.

There was another incident in Walter's life. In June 1940, he married Anna Fassler, whose parents also were Swiss and ran a dairy near Nicolaus, Ca.

Anna, after graduating from high school, went to Heald's Business College. There she met Frank Dettling's daughter, Margaret. The two girls went to a Swiss dance and Walter happened to be there. Before Anna and Walter got married, Anna worked as a bookkeeper for Crystal Creamery Dairy. So when Walter started trucking, he not only had a wife but a bookkeeper.

During World War II, the Valley Livestock trucking became the hauler for James Allen and Sons, wholesale butchers of San Francisco. Many of the truckers refused to make the long haul because of the tire shortage. Walter would send the trucks to Imperial Valley with one spare for the lot.

James Allen and Sons were also responsible for Valley Livestock entering interstate hauling. South-



Walter Fuchslin. Started the Valley Livestock Transportation

ern Pacific railroad applied to the interstate Transportation Commission to lower rates on dressed beef East to West. The Western States Meat Packers applied for a similar reduction in the East to West live rate. S.P. opposed the live rate reduction. The dressed rate was lowered. The packers lost their request for the live reduction.

Allen decided not to use S.P. from then on and asked Walter if he would start hauling interstate. Walter asked Anna and they decided to try. These long hauls meant owning more trucks and hiring more drivers.

No longer did the sheep operators drive to their lands off the mountains to the railroad corrals. Valley trucks went into the mountains for the sheep. For the sheepmen less pounds were lost on the lambs and much labor was saved.

I shipped lambs out of McDermott which was on the Nevada-Oregon border. The sorting corrals



Tricky conditions often faced Walter Fuchsin's trucks which hauled sheep from the mountains including northern Sierra locations as well as the Nevada-Oregon border and Utah. Walter often chuckled at such signs as the one above.

were on a high meadow in a pocket. To get to the lower desert required hauling up a steep grade with shale. Each time we shipped from there it took two trucks to haul out a trailer.

Al Green tells of a haul outside of Heber City, Utah with an 18 percent grade. No. 35 hauled out its load and then went back and pulled out five more trucks.

But such service was sometimes costly. Once in 1959, coming off the hills at McDermott, the truck driver, after he had maneuvered the ridges and was on the flat desert, asked Dennis Pluth to check the tires on the trailer. Dennis came back and informed the driver there weren't any tires. The studs on one wheel had popped one by one.

Fortunately, there was a shop in McDermott, to drill the studs but the wrong ones arrived on the stage from Boise, so Walter called Wells Cargo. Mr. Wells met us at his yard at 7:30 p.m. We drove back to McDermott, put on the wheels by autolight and the truck got on its way at 11 p.m., fourteen hours late.

But the trucks that pulled out of an 18 percent grade were not the type of trucks that Valley Livestock started with. For many years the maximum gross weight had been 78,000 pounds. In 1941 the payload was 28,000. The truck's weight was 50,000. Twenty years later the weights were reversed. Walter led this body revolution.

In an effort to add more pay weight Walter first added a partial third deck on top of the wooden truck, the penthouse. However, it was not until the shift to aluminum that the body weights went down and the opportunity for more payloads became available. Trucks and trailers became three decks and then between the two axles of the trailer the body was dropped and a small deck, the "basket", was added. All of these efforts were laughed at by his competitors.

Baltiatte and Moffet & Murdock, "M & M", said to Al Green that Walter's changes were far too expensive. These same operators later changed or went out of business. Gradually more weight was eliminated. The body of the trailer was unitized and the body frame eliminated. The whole trailer was engineered to diminishing strength to the rear.

I remember a stuck trailer at my feedlot. I suggested pulling it out backwards. Walter said, "No, you will pull it apart."

The idea of the basket trailer was conceived in 1954.

The order of progression was first the basket, then aluminum sides, aluminum decking and, then, a third deck.

The last part of the truck to be changed was the motor. For years, the Cummings diesel motors were the engines to use. They were efficient and long-lived but they were four-cycle motors. General Motors developed a two-cycle diesel motor: the same power for half the weight.

I can remember, almost as if he were confessing a sin, when Walter told me that he was switching from Cummings to Detroit diesel because Detroit's weighed less.

The design and materials that Walter developed are incorporated in all livestock trucks now on the road.

For the livestock industry, what these changes meant was, that while other costs increased our handling cost remained steady.

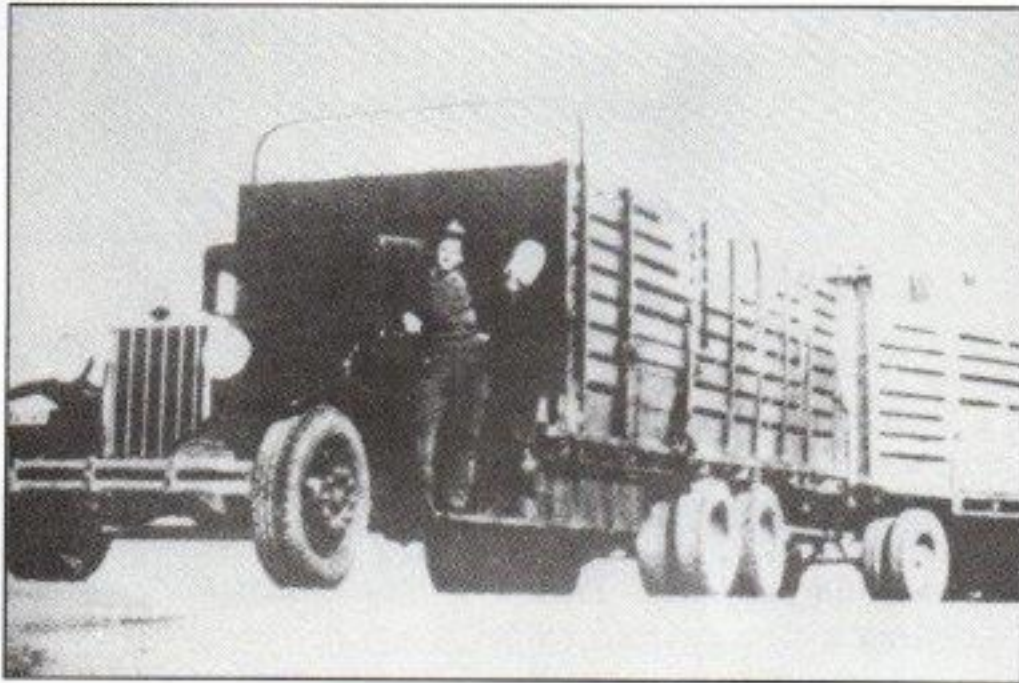
No haywire outfit

Walter's trucks were well maintained. One time when shipping, I asked a driver for some bailing wire. The trucker replied that bailing wire was not part of their equipment. "The boss says we're not a haywire outfit."

The maintenance was the responsibility of Norman Dalgaard who had married Walter's cousin, Margaret Dettling. While Margaret worked in the office, Norman was shop foreman.

When trucks were in trouble, Norman went after them. He had a remarkable capacity to go without sleep. One time he joined us all at Point Arena to search for abalone after having been out repairing trucks for 35 hours without sleeping.

Walter became Dixon's Rotary Club President. For several years he was head of Dixon's AFS committee. He was a member of the Solano County Grand Jury with me. He also was chairman of the Livestock Conference with the California Trucking Association.

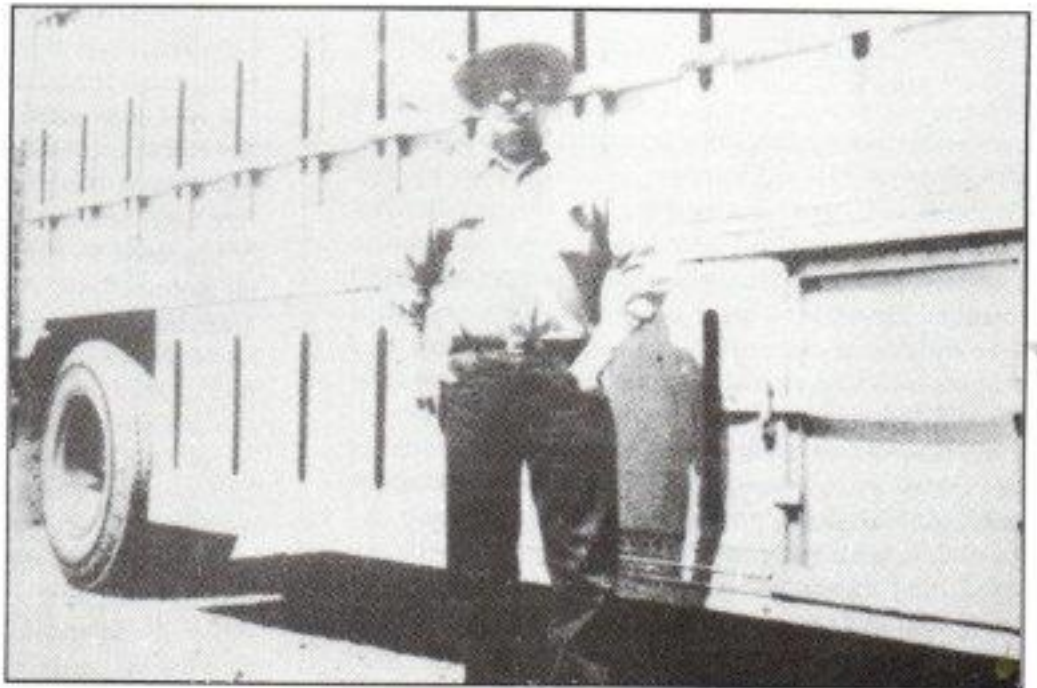


Up to Ferndale, Walter would take the Gil children to their aunt, sometimes hauling horses and gear and returning with a load of lumber.

As Valley Livestock grew so did the Fuchslins. Anna tolerated son Rich's making beer with his friends in the room above the office until she found out they were selling it. In high school, college and San Luis Obispo, Rich for a time held two records for Alky speed boats and five American Power Boat American Records. Anna and Walter followed him all over the U.S. and once hauled his boat to Chicago. Their daughter, Lorrain, was active in the Horseman's Association. Walter, a dutiful father, hauled her horses to the shows.

Walter died of cancer in 1972. Anna and Rich continue the business.

Al Green, lamb buyer and friend of mine, has helped me with much of the above. This year marked the 50th anniversary of Valley Livestock Transportation.



A proud Walter Fuchslin in his later years standing by one of his trailer rigs. The innovative designs and materials that he developed still are being used in livestock trucks currently on the road.

DUCK CALLING, HUNTING AND ADVENTURE IN DIXON

The Rattenbury family came to the Dixon area in about 1886. The father worked for the Jeffreys until the ranch buildings burned. Then they moved to the Allendale region along Sweeney Creek. One day in a tremendous rain with the creeks flooding, the oldest son Arch and his mother were swept downstream. The bridge washed out as they were crossing in horse and buggy. After this accident, the family moved to the town of Dixon and lived near the Fair Grounds. The older, Arch, who all his life seemed to be in the limelight, suffered a crease in his head from standing with a tomato on top of it while his companion attempted to plug it with a bullet. Traditionally, Arch was an end-man at the town's minstrel shows, and often did the shimmy with a glass of liquid on his head.

But it is Dick whose speech we are publishing. Previous to the presentation before Rotary, Dick had been on Channel 13 giving a goose and duck call performance. Though here the calls cannot be included, there is much local history in his speech that we felt should be preserved.

Harold E. (Dick) Rattenbury - 1971

I was going to delve right in to the duck and goose calling first, but I decided to make this an autobiography of my hunting, starting from my first gun. When I was about six years old, my brother Arch, who most of you know has passed away in the last few months, was a very dedicated and avid hunter. He bought me a single shot BB gun and it was a contraption, really, made of wood, red, and you cocked it over your knee, and you took one little BB and stuck it in. It did have a metal type barrel. Well, it wouldn't hardly shoot from here to the end of the room, so he started me out and told me, naturally, not to shoot any songbirds. If I was lucky enough to hit a sparrow or something like that it'd be good. So I started out with that. It had a sight on the thing that didn't mean a thing how you hit a bird. You could see the BB leave the end of the gun. So if it went over the bird's head, you just lowered a little bit and then you'd hit it. I became very proficient, picking up maybe four or five sparrows a day after school. Each time my brother saw me doing this, he says, "You after those dickie birds again?" It boiled down that he began calling me "Dickie" and at a later date it turned out just plain Dick, and that's how I acquired the name that's not my name. Bill told you that my first name is Harold, which isn't a very nice name, so I was glad that somebody did tie the moni-

ker "Dick" to me.

As I became more proficient, I moved into the 410-gauge category. It's probably hard for some of you people to believe, but a 410 is fun shooting. Then I moved into game shooting which was more or less dove and quail, and some of our best shooting was right out here where the old Watson's almond orchard has been taken down. Where all those houses are, doves used to come in to roost by the hundreds. I mean hundreds. That was one of our favorite places. Then out on the main Watson Ranch, old man Watson had a lot of blackbirds all around that orchard and we had coveys of quail in there, maybe 300 or 500 quail, so we didn't have to go far for our hunting. We had to get a permit from Mr. Watson and stay on the right side of him. Our big shoots were just north of town on Putah Creek. It was just fabulous, the doves and quail that were along that crick just north of town, just unbelievable.

I was moving up pretty rapidly, so next I was into the 20-gauge category. That was just like going from the BB gun into a cannon for me to move up that fast. I began to get to go on various hunts with my brother. He was a very dedicated hunter and hunted every minute of the time he could, so I got to go on some of these duck and goose hunts with him. In our general area, there were three market hunters from Elmira. Two were Lewis brothers, one named Squawk and the other named Goose, and another gentleman by the name of Roy Cripps. They were typically market hunters.

they'd get the final call from the hunters with that, and you'd even hear the old wing-beats. That's when they're letting down and that's the time one of the head market hunters would say, "Let's take 'em." And then, of course, everybody gets up (at least four to five fellows shooting in the blind). We had no plugs in our gun. Five shots and we'd dump ten, twelve birds with that. There's a sad tone to all of it, too. Honkers travel in families, and maybe four or five birds left would go out and circle back, and it was just as much as saying, "Here I am fellows, take me." So it was a family deal and you probably cleaned out one whole family of game.

When honkers do leave and go away, a lot of fellows who call honkers would give the riot call. You never do that. That riot call means, "They've shot me in the butt, boys, let's get the hell out of here." So you never use that call, ever. After these fellows had downed about 35-50 at a time, they would take the one wagon and load it and then all the rest of the wagons were for their paraphernalia. When they brought 'em to town, they were shipped right out of the Dixon Depot here by Wells Fargo. They'd load geese up and ship them S.P. right to the San Francisco market. There was one day out of the week where they had what they called a "Dixon day" to take care of the natives. I have a picture of the old hotel with the wagon in front. They'd pull the old spring wagon up by the hotel, just loaded with honkers. That's all they shot. All these other type of geese came in but they never shot them. Just honkers were what they were after. They'd take the horse right down where the Frosty is to the livery stable and leave that old spring wagon sitting in front of the hotel, I sitting on top of it. He said, "All right, kid, sell these things--get us a buck and a half apiece for them." So I would start in sitting there. Well, the natives were smart. They didn't want to pay any buck and a half for a honker, 'cause they knew how they would get them and they waited it out. One of the guys would come out of the local bar (they had the best whiskey in the world there for 25 cents a shot), about every ten minutes and say, "How ya doin', kid?" I says, "The sale's not very good." "Well, you're a hell of a salesman. Let's get 'em down to a buck apiece, and get rid of these babies."

Then some of the people that weren't natives would come along, and I might sell two or three at a buck, and in another ten minutes one of the boys would come out, same story. "Well, how ya doin'?" "Let's get those down to 75 cents", and it just kept dropping each time when these fellows would come out of the bar. By the time these natives come around,

I would see this whole crowd of fellows come around that wagon. They were waiting. "All right, kid, you're still a hell of a salesman, but any of these guys who buy us a two-bit drink get a honker." That's how we got rid of a whole truckload of honkers.

From that situation I had learned a lot. I think, at this time, instead of interjecting these calls at various times, I'll run the whole repertoire of the ducks and geese that are indigenous to this particular country out here. 'Course, the next one we'll take in line is the speckle belly. It's technically called the white fronted goose. It's a very good eating goose and nobody would ever turn up his lips at it. There was one call that you can't do with a tin horn and only the professionals ever used it, and it was a deadly call to get them in. If any of you have been around the tame gray goose, you'd have heard this call. That call means, "There's ten ton of grain; here now, come and get it." That call always got them, but very few callers ever learned to use it. I had the privilege to hunt with many of the best market hunters in the country during my time of hunting.

The next one on the line is your white goose. A lot of people don't think it is the best goose in the world, but I never tried to pick one. The thing to do with a white goose is to breast it out. If you're pretty good at marinating, you can fix that baby up and nobody will even detect what kind of a steak they're eating. The old white, he's got a different tone entirely.

Then, we have a small goose that looks like your honker, the small brant. We call him the cackler. He's a little bitty fellow, but he looks just like the big honker. His call is a very rapid type of call. That about runs the goose family that flies in this particular area.

Now we will step over to the good old ducks. We will take the old mallard first. You've seen the beautiful green head in magazines, but he is not the caller. The female does the calling. The first call we use is called the "hail call." That's trying to get your attention so you really blast 'em out, to let 'em know where you are. They look for that noise and, if we get their attention, we run in what we call the old lonesome hen call. She does one little quack. She's trying to attract some attention for herself. That makes some of the old green head boys perk up a little bit. Then to give them the final call for the mallard (food is still the main essential), we have what we call the chuckle. While they're doing that they're eating all the feed.

The real top duck in my thinking is the Sprig. He's the whistler. That's the beautiful duck and he's

the smartest one of the whole gang. That's the quarry that all the boys in this area are after, but he's pretty hard to get to. He has a whistle that goes something like this [call]. He don't put on much of a show but that's his whistle.

We move on to the widgin and we call them Buoys. They're a whistling duck, too. I've boobooed a little bit on this one on Channel 13, because we recorded this thing ahead of the program, and it was awful cold that morning and I didn't get my lips too well organized for that. He had a little harder whistle than usual. He also has a pond call that very few callers know anything about and never use. To me, it's probably the most exciting call because everything will respond and decoy to it. It's just a one-big-blast pond call, and I think what that widgin is trying to say is, "the coast is clear."

You run a lot of moisture into your throat and then call. You close it off, you don't do anymore, that's it, that's the final word. That's one where they're ready, they'll come. Sprig will just go daffy to get in there.

I had a world of experience during all my kid days, lots of hunting. We had a gang at high school that used to go on these forays with spring wagons. We buried one of these dear and charming friends of mine yesterday, Watsi Kilkenny. We had Watsi and Jim and there's other names. Bud Eames, Ted Parker, Warren Beckley, John Smith, Vernon VanSant, and out of that group, I guess Vernon VanSant and I are the only two that are alive.

We, like other kids, had to have our fun and one generation always thinks the other generation is going to hell. We got this whole gang together, got the spring wagon, two saddle horses, and took off one afternoon and went right by the school. When we got to the school one of the kids got out and shot the great big gold dome off of the flag pole. All the kids ran to the windows to see what happened and all the teachers were pulling the blinds down so the kids couldn't look. Jim hit that old team of horses in the butt just like you're putting on a western. The other two guys are on saddle horses and we go out to the bypass.

There's an old home out there called the Mound Ranch and it was up on a hill. We had two sticks of bologna and two loaves of bread and like any normal kids in those days we had a gallon of Julius Dodini's rot-gut wine. When you even took the cork off, it knocked you down. We went out there and this was supposed to be on a mound up out of the flood water. Let me reiterate, there were no levees out there, just these big tide waters. There would be

big ponds for miles. We got into this building. But there was a high tide that night and lots of rain and about two or three in the morning there were no dry spots. There was two or three feet of water in this old building. We had to stand up so we couldn't sleep. And all the wine's gone so you couldn't stay warm. So we got out of there and the next morning the sun came out and we had to figure something to do. We'd killed one crippled goose up to that point (although the floodwater had millions of 'em flying around back and forth). We had to think something up and Jim was the master of this group and he kept admonishing, "Now you guys be careful with your guns. Don't be pointing 'em." I guess I made the diabolical sin of figuring something up by getting Bud Eames to get a gun and get off side of Jim (he's sitting on a single-tree) and I took the shot out of one of the shells. "Now I'll watch you and you accidentally put the trigger on your shotgun and I'll throw that shot and hit Jim along side the neck." And I'll never do that again, fellows, because that guy literally died. It was an hour before he ever came to. Scared us to death. That was the last practical joke I've ever pulled. After getting my schooling, I opened up the insurance office right next to where that little bar is next to the Western Store at this time. I began promoting duck ponds on the side. That was an avocation and part of my life. In 1933, we decided we'd better get a sportsman's club in Dixon. I got together with Shorty Phillips and Angus Madden and we started the Dixon Game Conservation Club. We're still an active group to this day, as you know. Our crab feed is coming up here on February 13th, which we'd like everybody to come to. For years we were the finest organization in the northern part of California. We had much success in planting pheasants by the thousands, and we were backed very highly by the Fish and Game Commission.

Along in about '39, one of the top hunters I had was an assemblyman by the name of Harrison Call from San Mateo County. He was not only a great hunter, he was an authority on all types of shooting. He and I got together and framed up something else, to see if we could get some commercial pheasant clubs going. That was a real hassle. We had to take that before the Legislature in 1939. We had no backing from anyone. They just thought it was an introduction of the old feudal system of hunting, and nobody wanted any part of it. Fish and Game was against it, but we lobbied and lobbied hard. We did get the bill passed, and I had the first pheasant shooting club in California, which was the old Conway Ranch between Sacramento and Woodland, and it comprised 20,000

acres. And now Fish and Game take credit for that program and claim it was the greatest thing they ever got started in the state.

You can visualize the type of shooting we had out there. Out of that 20,000 acres we had about 3,000 in rice and all the rest was just native ground and there were just ducks and geese by the millions. I can tell of one incident that happened that shows you how thick they were. At one time when we were running the Pheasant Club, I wanted to get back early to the headquarters as fast as I could, and Walt Pardi was my guest that day. I told him that I couldn't tarry in the duck line, and that I had to get in just as rapid as I could, but if he thought my blind was any better than the one he was in, he could move over to it. So I picked the birds I wanted (the limit was 12) and shot six cock Sprig and six green hen mallards out of the blind in six minutes, so you can gather

how thick the birds were. It would be a feat today, but the birds were in masses and hanging low and you could take one, two, three. Then you'd look over after loading up and take some sprig. It was just that rapid fire and you had that many birds down. This is probably an unbelievable statement that I will make. One day the sprig were so thick they were in layers. The first layer was 20 feet off the ground.

In closing, I will give one more call that has nothing to do with ducks. Last week Don and I went out the door and there were some crows flying over. Don said to give them a call. So I gave them the wounded crow call and the crows came back.

DON ERICKSON: *Thank you, Dick. I was going to mention that. You should have seen those crows turn around. Dick, you can do anything.*