



SACRAMENTO, WINTER OF 1849. (Facsimile of an illustration from the original edition.)

Sacramento County Historical Society

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HISTORY—ITS MEANING

Our observance of the centennial of the dramatic Pony Express Centennial in 1960-61, reminds us of other centennials that had significance even if they were not so colorful. One of these was the completion of the telegraph line to California. From our present position we can look back and easily see the importance of these epic events a hundred years ago. However, in 1861, how many people could even imagine the total effect of a transcontinental telegraph line on the development of this great nation? For example, we might imagine an Indian brave out on a hunting expedition on the windy plains of Wyoming, coming upon a line of telegraph poles striding out of the East and going off into the unknown land of the West where the sun goes down. These poles were trailing, shining wires from tip to tip that gave off a strange humming sound which a man could hear if he put his ear up against the weathered wood.

What did it mean? The empty plains he knew because these he had always known. But this strange new thing had him puzzled. It was strong medicine, no doubt, but there was nothing in the Indian's background that would give him an explanation of what was happening. The wind of the plains was

touching the wires and giving off the singing sound. This phenomenon the Indian might have been able to understand, but nothing in his experience could explain to him that these wires were carrying human messages. The East was talking to the West and nothing in the Indian's world would ever be the same again.

The future was talking to him, but he could not understand it. Nothing in his world gave him a clue to this strange innovation of the white man. His own unrecorded history consisted of old tales spun from misty legends of the past and was static. It gave him no help in interpreting the present. When he heard the voice of the future, he could only listen in bewilderment. When the future arrived, he was unable to adjust and accept it but could only fight it blindly and hopelessly.

History is the past but it brings a message to the present. It gives us a clue to the future, as well, because the things men do and say and think develop from what they have done, said, and thought. If we fail to understand the past, we not only misunderstand the present, but we fail to make preparations for the future. We may see and hear strange sights and sounds in the air, but the meaning will be unfamiliar. We will look in vain for an interpreter.

Never in the history of mankind have we needed so badly an interpreter as today. Fifty megaton bombs, guided missiles, moon shots creating fear and tension, and the outcries of anguished peoples striving for freedom and change seem to shake the very foundations of our civilizations. What is the answer? We have one sure voice—the voice of the past—the voice of *history*.

By- R. Coke Wood
from-The Pacific Historian

KNOW THIS SACRAMENTIAN?

Note: Although the subject of this sketch was not born in Sacramento, he was closely associated with the early growth and development of the Capital City.

THIS world famous horseman, one of the most picturesque of American millionaires, was born in Harrodsburg, Ky. in 1827. His maternal grandfather was a native Turk of the Christian faith. He first became an attorney, and after practicing in Kentucky and in New Orleans, he made his way to California in 1849. During his early years he became associated with Senator Hearst and Marcus Daly in gold mining. He next turned his pursuits to farming, and according to his biographers, he became the largest farmer in America.

Within four years time he became a noted breeder of thorough bred horses, maintaining from 600 to 1,000 stallions and mares on his ranch. His racers became great money makers, and it is said that three of his prize thoroughbreds earned more than \$550,000 on the track. Although during his life he was said to have

been worth 100 million dollars, the appraised value of his estate was set at slightly less than 22 million dollars.

Death claimed this great entrepreneur of horseflesh in New York City in 1914.

GENERAL KELLEY'S "ARMY" of 1914

By Jon J. Jamieson

Unemployment in 1914 was a major problem in the United States and California had its share of the unemployed. California was known as the state of Summer employment due to the nature of its climate and its effects on the states agriculture and industry.

The seasonally unemployed migrated into the coastal valley cities to await the next season's work. In December 1913, there were forty thousand unemployed in San Francisco, twenty five thousand in Los Angeles, three thousand in Sacramento and more in Stockton, Fresno and Bakersfield.

The winter of 1913 was especially hard. During October, a sizable army was organized in about two weeks with the objective of marching to Washington, D. C. and protesting the case of the unemployed. The organizer of the army was General Charles T. Kelley, who had organized a previous army in 1894 which had failed in a similar objective. Charles Kelley's background does not indicate that he was associated with a labor movement but rather he was a scab leader of longshoremen and printers.

The mechanics of organizing the army are unknown but perhaps his experience with leading protest marches and organizing scab labor made him a natural leader for the group. His plan, according to the Sacramento Bee which is a disputed version, was to gather at Chicago and storm the arsenal at Rock Island, Illinois, then storm Washington by force. They would then dispose of President Wilson, dissolve Congress and lead a rebellion of workers against employers.

Kelley billeted his men in a two story dismantled hotel near San Francisco's city hall. There were 50 rooms on the second story and stores on the street level. Approximately 1200 men squeezed into 50 rooms and the ground level so tightly that doors could not be opened.

A schism developed when a Major Thorn wanted to inspect the Army's books and was denied the privilege. The splinter

group composed of 500 insurgents marched down Market Street and out of San Francisco on March 13, 1914. One hour later General Kelley followed with his army of 24 companys comprising about 2000 men.

Each army reached Oakland separately and was greeted by the law who escorted it out of Oakland to Emeryville where both groups stayed one day. Oakland and Berkeley police forced the army to move without being allowed to pack its equipment or baggage. Kelley demanded to be arrested and allowed to stay with the baggage but was told to get out or be thrown out immediately.

The problem was now gaining public attention and an appeal was made to Governor Hiram Johnson to handle the situation. There was fear for the people who occupied isolated farms between the bay area and Sacramento. Southern Pacific Railroad refused to haul the army without the capitol city's consent. Governor Johnson responded that he would not accept the army in Sacramento since this was a matter for the City of Sacramento. Sacramento replied that it did not want the army shoved off on it and did not want to be instrumental in showing the army off on some other city. Contra Costa County did not take this idealistic view but rather raised rail fare for the army and paid its way to Sacramento. The Union Army (Thornes Splinter group) arrived in Sacramento first. It was met by 20 policemen who escorted the army to a fenced lot near the S.P. station. The city did not feel it could deny the men the right to enter but would throw them out if they became disorderly.

General Kelleys army started arriving about 7:30 p. m. and was also escorted to the vacant lot that comprised about 20 acres, bounded by a high wooden fence and 50 law enforcement officers. The law made no effort to disband the army but was ordered to keep the men inside the fence. About 200 men escaped into the city during the night.

The committee from the insurgent army next paid a visit to the city commissioners who said it would do nothing but provide for the safety and health of the men and maintain order. The city provided shovels for the digging of privys and hoses to transport water to the encampment.

The city passed the buck of feeding the army to the County. The County Supervisors instructed the associated charities to supply food.

The armies were then reunited when the Union army marched over to Kelley's baliwick singing their latest song to the tune of "Casey Jones". Kelley's army joined in the reuniting harmony. A carnival atmosphere prevailed with thousands of curious Sacramentans viewing the army's antics on the old China Slough lot. Members of the army sold post card views of the army on the march.

The army remained peaceful and conducted itself in an orderly fashion being pleased with Sacramento's reception. Pastimes of cards, music, baseball, and boxing were engaged in. Nearly all members of the army took a Saturday night bath under hoses provided by the City Health Department. Laundry was done, a tailor shop constructed and haircuts and shaves indulged in.

Sunday arrived with the County and City officials finding a 1901 Statute making it a misdemeanor to transport indigents and requiring the County Supervisors to return such persons to the area of origin at the expense of the original senders. A citizens committee, the City Commissioners the County Supervisors and Governor Johnson met that same day with two resolutions: first, to rid the city of the horde by placing it on barges and sending it to San Francisco; secondly, to ask the Governor for the wherewithall to do it.

General Kelley's response to the conference was he would leave in one week for Ogden, Utah, if left alone. Many threats were made by various members of the army for the seemingly unkind ultimatum. Although the Governor did not call the National Guard, General Forbes mobilized 400 Sacramento militiamen and had infantry ready in Chico, Woodland, and Oroville, and artillery in Stockton. The army unsuccessfully attempted to affiliate with the Sacramento unit of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) for support.

Monday, March 9, saw the relations between organized society and the army of the unemployed reach a climax. Kelly's army was united, hungry and threatening terror when a citizens committee called Kelley and told him that a special train would leave at 10 a. m. that day for San Francisco. Kelley returned to the lot at 9 a. m., told his army of the ultimatum and his stated refusal to go willingly. The Southern Pacific, the City, the County and Citizens organizations resolved to use force if the army did not move by 10 a. m. When ten o'clock arrived, warrants for the arrest of the army leaders were issued for vagrancy and backed up by 150 police, firemen and deputy sheriffs. The law enforcement officers arrested Kelley and his leaders

and jailed them. Chief of Police Johnson then issued a formal order to the remaining men to quit the lot and

board the train. The men responded with hoots and jeers of defiance. The law advanced into the lot, scattering the army and pushing it toward Second Street. The initial fiasco soon quieted since the law had not set a destination to drive the army. After lunch and a conference, the law again advanced to the remaining units of the army who were packed together in a seated position on the ground. The city forces maneuvered into position to force the army toward the river and cut off any possible escape into Sacramento's business and residential districts. The army was covered by a fire hose with swinging police clubs on each side of the stream. The army begrudged every inch of ground it retreated hurling stones, wrecking three street cars and tearing apart the Bay saloon on Front Street.

The army moved over the Sacramento River via the Southern Pacific bridge and the M Street bridge where guards were placed to prevent return to Sacramento. Many men scattered throughout the city during the melee. Ironically, the entire fiasco did not seriously injure anyone and only one officer shot his revolver into the ground for a little emphasis.

Kelleys army now occupied a strip of land bordered by the Sacramento River on one side and flooded low land on the other. A supply of food was sent over to the men by the Sacramento City and County officials. The attitude of the army was now sullen and openly resentful. Carleton H. Parker spent four days amid the army later reporting them to be of generally inferior character, health and mentality. The Yolo County officials were greatly disturbed at Sacramento's drive to put the army in Yolo County. A further appeal was made to Governor Johnson who adroitly left the matter to the two counties. All bordering counties to Yolo refused to allow the army admittance. The army began to disappear over the next week as scattered groups hitched rides on trains and melded into the country side. General Kelley and other key leaders were still in jail and a hard core refused to break up until the army leaders were released.

Yolo County, being highly irritated by Sacramento's action was meanwhile doing an excellent job of providing the remainder of the army with leadership and slowly dissolving it. Tuesday, March 17, saw the Union Army break camp and scatter in all directions after Sacramento authori-

ties released the army leaders to lead the men away. Kelleys army of about 170 left the next morning but without the leaders who were still in jail.

In the aftermath of hot editorials written pro and con on Sacramento's handling of the situation, the army of the unemployed had the last laugh on the city. A few members pooled what money they had and for \$70 down, bought a one and one half acre lot in Oakridge acres which was an exclusive residential district just outside the city limits. The neighborhood erupted in consternation when it found 150 unemployed for neighbors. Sheriff Ahern took to a sick bed from frustration. The County closed the Oakridge Acres campout giving them men back their deposit. General Kelley was later sentenced to six months in jail for vagrancy and the other leaders for shorter times. Tragically, Sheriff Ahern and Judge Hughes died of heart attacks and overwork before the trials were over.

This article is condensed from a paper submitted by the author to Dr. Joseph McGowan at Sacramento State College, December 1959. Condensation by Jack E. Ferguson, Editor.

ANSWER TO KNOW THIS SACRAMENTAN - - James Ben Ali Haggir.

N.B. An interesting biographical sketch of our celebrity this month can be found in the CONTEMPORARY BIOGRAPHY OF CALIFORNIA REPRESENTATIVE MEN, vol. 1, by Alonzo Phelps. MILLIONAIRES AND KINGS OF ENTERPRISE by James Burnley is another good source.

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Editor's Note - This edition of Golden Notes is dated January 1962 to maintain continuity irrespective of the delay caused by editor changeover. The last edition of Golden Notes was mistakenly numbered Volume 7, number 5 and should read Volume 8, Number 1. This edition is Volume 8, Number 2. The April edition of Golden Notes will be forthcoming within 30 days. - Jack E. Ferguson, Editor

For those with an interest in the Civil War, you are cordially invited to attend the next meeting of the Civil War Round Table at 7:30 p.m. McKinnley Garden & Arts Center, April 24, 1962.

Lt. Commander James M. Moose, Jr. U.S.N.R. will speak on the Naval Engagement of the Monitor & Marrimac Ironclads.

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY
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