

A Few Observations on the Black Population in Early Auburn

John L. Knox, 2022

Author's narrative in italics.

The California Gold Rush attracted people from all over the world from every county and representing every race of mankind. The proportion of Blacks coming to California was small, many came as enslaved persons. Miner's Law discouraged using slaves for mining purposes and then California state law forbade slavery of any type.

The Auburn area was no different than other early mining camps in the variety of people that came here but what was unusual was the number of Black individuals from within a small population that became successful entrepreneurs and/or large local landowners. This paper will examine the businesses and land holding histories of a number of these residents of early Auburn, some of whom became quite prominent.

A rich mining area neighboring the gold camp that would be named Auburn was Spanish Flat. This was the area parallel to present day Nevada Street near the post office which later became a part of Auburn in 1880. Obviously named for the early Spanish or Mexican miners there, several early Black residents here were representative of both the small local Black population and broader population generally. Although seldom able to learn much about these individuals, it appears from the census of 1852 that wood chopping was one of their early "fallback" occupations.

SPANISH FLAT - 1852 CENSUS

Stephen Watts, Wood Chopper, a "colored man from Maryland," is one of a few exceptions in that we know just a little about him. (Placer Herald, 28 Nov 1863)

CORONER'S INQUEST.—Justice Moore, of Ophir, held an inquest yesterday, on the body of Stephen Watts, a colored man, who was found dead in his cabin, on Sailor's Ravine, on Thursday morning. The jury found a verdict of "Death from natural causes"—old age. Stephen was about 65 or 70 years of age. He was a native of Petersburg, Virginia, and came to California from Missouri, with his master, in 1850. He will be remembered by many, as a miner on Spanish Flat, near town, for several years, where he worked with good success.

John Fountain, Wood Chopper, a "colored man from New York" was more representative of the local population that we know so little about - most often just a name and occupation. The best known, even famous, residents of Spanish Flat remain completely anonymous. Perhaps one of them was Stephen Watts, or maybe John Fountain? We're unlikely to ever know. This reference is to the persons in the photograph which many readers will recognize.



Spanish Flat 1852

Major Black Land Owners

In 1860 the population of Auburn was 1452 and in that population there were 21 Afro-Americans. In that small collection of early black residents were several who became substantial land owners and quite well known: King Gorham, Henry Jones, Chesterfield Jackson and Aaron Bracy.

KING GORHAM

From the Auburn census of 1860 we learn that King Gorham was born in Kentucky in about 1802. His wife Rachel was born in Maryland in about 1811. Living with them in 1860 was Henry Jones, also from Kentucky. In a document filed with the Commissioner of the U.S. Land Office, Rachel claimed they arrived in Auburn in 1850. (Placer Herald, 5 Dec 1874) King filed a land claim in 1856 which took in a portion of both Spanish Flat and Auburn Ravine. Although the claim was for 70 acres, King claimed 60 improved acres on the 1860 Agriculture Census and 20 unimproved acres. On his farm he had 2 horses, a cow, 30 swine, and produced 6 tons of hay. (Information is for previous year, so 1859) Three and a half years after King filed his land claim he sold his property to Thomas B. Harper. In the next couple of years, Harper split the property into four unequal lots, one of which he sold back to Gorham.

On a contemporary map the original land claim would have been bounded in the south by Chana Drive, east by Auburn Ravine, north by Palm Ave and west by the eastern property line of the Old Auburn Cemetery.

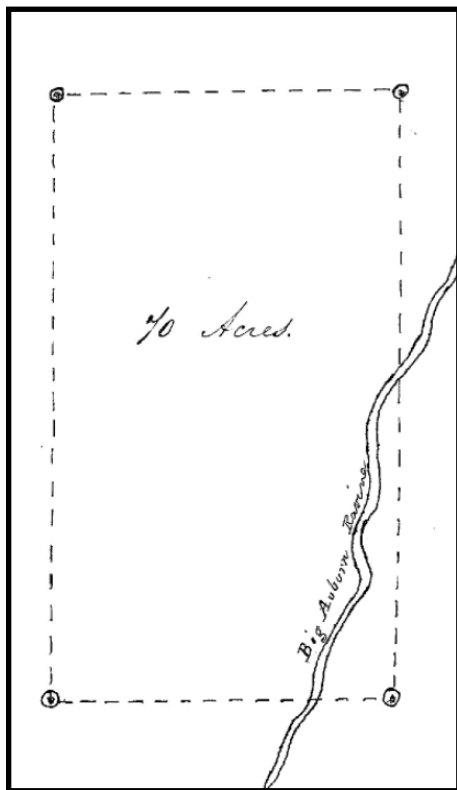
As well as farming, Gorham also “teamed on the road between Sacramento and Auburn for several years.” Unfortunately it was this enterprise which led to King’s death in Auburn in 1868, of smallpox. “He having contracted the disease at Sacramento, by hauling a bundle of clothing in his wagon for a man in that city who had the disease.” (*Placer Herald*, 28 Jan 1888) His death took the community by surprise as he was seen working in his garden just 3 or 4 days prior to his demise. Rachel continued to live in their house on property next to that of Henry Jones near the ravine until, at least, 1874, and was allowed to “purchase goods where she choose up to \$10 a month which was paid out of the Hospital Fund.” (*Placer Herald*, 9 May 1874)

25 Mar 1856

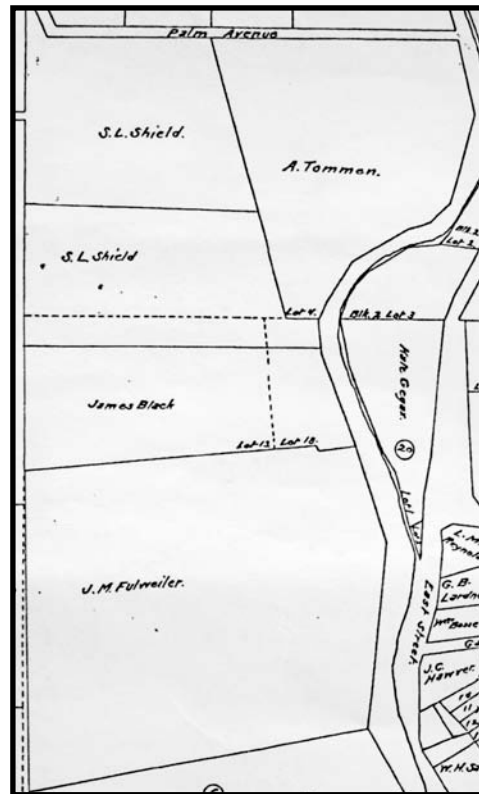
Located for King Gorham a lot of land containing 70 acres on the old Auburn Ravine. Land Claims Bk B, Pg 534.

29 Oct 1859

King Gorham sold to T. B. Harper for the sum of \$1000 a parcel of land containing 70 (80) acres and buildings. Deed Bk E, Pg 514.



1856



1907

Thomas Harper split the 70 (or 80) acres four ways. To Harty, Miller, Jones and Gorham.

Here is an accounting of that original 70 (or 80) acres as portions were sold by Thomas B. Harper.

1. 30 acres to Harty who sold to Fogartys, not 40
2. 30 acres to the Millers, and maybe slightly less
3. 4 acres to Jones
4. About 9 acres, (actually about 15) back to Gorham

Line of Ownership: Gorham - Harper - Harty - Fogarty

28 Feb 1861

Thomas B. Harper to Robert Harty for the sum of \$900 a parcel of land being on the west side of Auburn Ravine and bounded as follows: Commencing at a point where the NW corner of the lot of Wm E Miller touches the lot of James Collins, said point being the SW corner of the tract sold. Line runs N along Collins E line, then E to the Turnpike and thence S along said road to the NE corner of the lot of said Wm E Miller to place of beginning. Said tract being part of the land conveyed by King Gorham in deed to Thomas Harper. Deed Bk G, Pg 12.

27 Sept 1861

Thomas B. Harper to Robert Harty 28 Feb 1861. Bounded on west by Collins. On the south by Wm. Miller and Auburn Ravine on the East. Homestead Bk A, Pg 115.

2 March 1869

Robert Harty and Wife to John Fogarty for the sum of \$300 a tract of land about 40 acres bounded beginning at NW corner of Miller's lot then N on James Collins Line, then E to Turnpike, then S along said road to NE corner of Millers, then W along Miller's lot. Bk Q, pg 57.

25 Mar 1869

Ann Fogarty the wife of John Fogarty resides on the lot of land bounded by the Crandall Turnpike Road and the Auburn Ravine on the East and on the North by King Gorham and the old Salsig Ranch and on the West by the Ranch of James Collins and on the South by William E. Miller – being about 40 acres. Being the same property purchased of Robert Harty. Includes house and out houses. Homestead Bk B, pg 23.

Although both the deed from Book Q, page 57 and the Homestead record from Book B, page 23 state that the amount of land sold by Robert Harty to the Fogartys was 40 acres, it wasn't, it was only 30.

The Fogarty's split their 30 acres into 10 acre parcels. To Hayes, Leak and Fogarty.

18 Oct 1890

Ann Fogarty, George Fogarty and Emily A. Fogarty to Julian Hayes and wife for \$1000 a portion of lot No. 3 in Block 1. Deed Bk 55, Pg 377.

8 Oct 1906

Julian Hayes and Carrie Hayes to S. L. Shiell, et al for \$10 a portion of lot 3 in Block 1 containing 10 acres also a right of way 16 feet wide over the remaining land, also a 5/8 acre lot. Deed Bk 96, pg 347.

16 May 1894

Ann Fogarty, George Fogarty and Emily A. Fogarty to Jennie Leak for \$5 a lot of 10 acres being a portion of lots 18 & 19 in Block 6 and lot 3 in Block 1 lying immediately South of and adjoining land sold to Julian Hayes. Deed Bk 63, Pg 534.

1 Aug 1895

Lewis W. Leak, Jennie Leak to Seton L. Shiell for \$1900 a portion of lots 18 and 19 in Block 6 and lot 3 in Block 1 containing 10 full acres immediately south of and adjoining the lands of Julian Hayes. Deed Bk 66, pg 207.

1 May 1895

Ann Fogarty to (her son) George L. Fogarty for \$5 a fractional part of lots 18 & 19 in Block 6 and a fractional part of lot 3 in Block 1 containing about 10 acres. Deed Bk 67, Pg 621

5 Nov 1900

George Fogarty and (his twin sister) Emily Lowther to Joseph Black for \$1000 fractional parts of Lots 18 and 19 in Block 6 and a fractional part of Lot 3 in Block 1 in map of Auburn. Deed Book 73, pg 624.

Line of Ownership: Gorham - Harper - Miller - Fulweiler

24 July 1861

Thomas Harper to Augusta Miller for the sum of \$450 a lot of land 30 acres bounded by James Collins to the west, Murphy's land to the south, part of King Gorham purchase. Deed Bk G, pg 159.

29 Apr 1873

Wm. E. Miller and Wife to J. M. Fulweiler

For \$1800 a parcel of land being lots 16 and 17 in Block 6 and also water rights to a spring in Gaines' field with rights of way easements. (22 acres – Assessment Bk 1875)

Line of Ownership: Gorham - Harper - Jones & Gorham

13 Feb 1862

Thomas Harper to Henry Jones for \$100 land known as China Garden, on the ravine with Harty to the west and Dr. Marks to the east. Where Henry Jones now resides. About 4 acres. Deed Bk G, pg 633.

13 Feb 1862

Thomas Harper to King Gorham for \$200 about 9 acres east of Harty and along Auburn Ravine and the Turnpike. Deed Bk G, pg 634.

Almost certainly this is Lot 4 in Block 1 labeled A. Thommen in the Auburn map of 1907. I can find no record of a sale by Rachel Gorham and I suspect she may have abandoned the land sometime in the 1870s. On 15 April 1879 Charles Ames was granted a land patent for this lot by Judge Myres. Land Patents Bk KK pg 723.

30 April 1901

Mary E. P. Ames to Adolph Thommen Lot 4 in Block 1 being about 14 and 90/100 and commonly known as the Gorham place. Deed Bk 77, pg 230.

There is also a reference in a Sacramento Bee Article of 28 Jan 1888 stating that Gorham's home was in "the place now owned by C. C. Ames."

HENRY JONES

The basic information that we have on Henry comes from his obituary of 1879 (Placer Herald, 1 March). Other bits and pieces come from a variety of sources. For example, we find him in the Auburn census of 1860 living in the household of King Gorham. He was listed as a

At Auburn, February 26th, 1879, Henry Jones, a native of Kentucky, aged 50 years. Adair county, Missouri papers, please copy.
[Henry Jones was born in Fayette county, Kentucky; raised in Adair county, Missouri, and emigrated to this country in 1854; was about 50 years of age. Mr. Jones has always been an industrious, hard working man. He was born and raised in bondage, and if we are not mistaken he, by his industry and economy, accumulated sufficient funds to enable him after coming to this country to purchase his freedom, and by his uniform, industrious and economical course he secured the esteem of all who knew him.

laborer. Two years later he bought about four acres west of the County Hospital, (today that would be southwest of the intersection of Epperle Lane and Auburn Ravine Road). The properties of Jones and Gorham adjoined. It was on this land, known as "China Garden" that Henry established his orchard and garden. Henry was said to have sold the finest fruit in town, especially his strawberries and peaches. His apples were praised: "that two of the Gloria Mundi variety left on the table, last Saturday, by Henry Jones, were the largest we have seen, that were raised in the foot-hills." (*Placer Herald*, 10 Oct 1874) "Look out for his wagon which can be seen on our streets every morning. Henry also manufactures a superb article of ice cream, which he retails to those desiring it, two or three times a week." (*Placer Herald*, 17 Aug 1878)

When Henry left Missouri for California he left behind a wife, Mary Jane, and two children, George and Mary Jane. After some years of living the bachelor life he succumbed to a romance with a Chinese woman which nearly cost him his life.

A LOVE AND SHOOTING AFFAIR. — Henry Jones, a quiet and industrious negro, who has resided in this vicinity for several years, but who it seems is very impressible in matters of the heart, has for sometime been the happy possessor of one of the moon-eyed daughters of the Celestial empire. They lived together in contentment, until some over officious "Johns" suddenly spirited her away; and thus in a moment threw a shadow over the threshold of a happy domicile. Bent on recovering his treasure, Henry instituted inquiry, and learning that the woman had been conveyed to Folsom he proceeded there to recover her; and in endeavoring to enter the house where she was, on Tuesday night last we understand, he was fired at in the dark, by some unknown person, and seriously wounded. The ball entered his mouth knocking out two lower front teeth, and lodged under his tongue.— He has been brought back home, and is now under care of the physicians. The ball has not been extracted, and his injury is regarded as quite serious.

1 August 1866, *Placer Herald*

By the time of the 1870 census, Henry's wife, Mary Jane had joined him in Auburn. She would die only four years later in 1874, at the young age of 42 (Placer Herald, 9 May 1874) and just a year after their daughter married Peter Ringo. Henry's estate settlement, after a prolonged 3 years, two executors and multiple claims, was a paltry \$96 and 97 cents to each his son and daughter. His son's to Missouri and his daughter's to Montezuma, Iowa. This seemed to be a rather unusual place for her to be living. Actually, in the probate record it said she was visiting. But it turned out to be more than that. Henry's daughter and her husband lived there, for many years, in that nearly all white town.

In Henry's probate record, 310 pages in length, there was a lengthy list of personal property. We see that he owned four horses and a colt, a cow with calf, two wagons, saddle and bridle and a wide assortment of farming tools. There was a separate listing of household goods and real estate. By this time, Henry was one of the largest landowners in Auburn. All was put up for sale.

THE GRINNELL GRIST.
Peter Ringo Dead—Death of Amy Brush—Local Items.
Special to Times-Republican.
 Grinnell, Sept. 20.—Peter Ringo is dead. Peter was a colored man who for many years was a resident of Montezuma, and was the owner of a barber shop which he managed. He was so well liked that the people of the city elected him as a member of the city council, where he made a good record. He died of Bright's disease.
 C. H. Onthank met with a misfor-

(Evening Times-Republican, 13 Sep 1900)

EXECUTOR'S SALE!

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT I will sell to the highest bidder for gold coin, on

Friday, April 4th, 1879,

at the hour of 10 o'clock, A. M. at the late residence of **Henry Jones**, deceased, all the personal property belonging to the estate of the said **Henry Jones**, deceased, consisting of

HORSES, COWS,
 WAGONS, HARNESS,
 FARMING IMPLEMENTS,
 SADDLE AND BRIDLES,
 FOWLS,
 HOUSEHOLD and
 KITCHEN FURNITURE &c., &c.

JOHN P. GAINES,
 mr29-1m.] Executor.

29 March 1879, Placer Herald

HENRY JONES' REAL ESTATE

China Garden

13 Feb 1862

Thomas Harper to Henry Jones for \$100 land known as China Garden, on the ravine with Harty to the west and Dr. Marks to the east. Where Henry Jones now resides. About 4 acres. Deed Bk G, pg 633.

2 Dec 1880

Estate of Henry Jones to Felix Hohman for \$1300 paid to John Gaines, administrator and \$700 in hand to convey Lots 1 & 2 in Block 20 of old survey and lots 2 & 3 in Block 2 on additional site plat. Deed Bk HH, pg 387. (*Said to be about 8 acres and included Henry's house and barn.*)

Willis Property

12 Aug 1864

J. R. Willis to Henry Jones for \$225 secured by a promissory notes a parcel of land commencing Southside of Salsig's land at the Turnpike Road of Crandall & Co. then running east on line with the hospital fence up to and on the Bear River ditch then running a straight line north on Bear River ditch then west coming down on the ravine as to include the water and onto the road. Deed Bk K, pg 496.

25 Aug 1882

Administrator of the Estate of Henry Jones to R. S. Futhey for \$1100 a lot of land being Lot 1 in Block 2 (*appraised at 10 acres but Placer Herald, 26 Aug 1882, says 48 acres as does the 1907 map*). Deed Bk KK, pg 648.

Bought Him a Home.

Forty-eight acres of the land of the late Henry Jones, comprising Lot 1 of Block 2 of the Auburn townsite addition, and lying about half a mile from the business part of town, was bought at administrator's sale last Tuesday by Mr. R. S. **Futhey**, late of Kansas. The land and location are very desirable. We understand it is the buyer's intention to build him a home thereon and improve it thoroughly. Mr. **Futhey** seems like a very fine gentleman, and we heartily welcome him as an acquisition to our community. He come here some months ago in very poor health, but is now as hearty and sound as ever. His rapid recovery here induced him to make the investment.

26 Aug 1882, Placer Herald

Salsig Ranch

14 Mar 1878

M Dodsworth and Mrs. Salsig to Henry Jones for \$1150 a parcel of land commencing at the SW corner of Section 3, Twp 12 N of R 8E. Then running north to Slade's. Then east to the Southerly line of the SW 1/4 of Section 3. Excepting Crutcher's springs and part of the NE 1/4 of Section 10. Deed Bk CC, pg 722.

13 Mar 1878

Henry Jones to Elias Chatman for \$575 for an undivided one half of a parcel of land commencing at the SW corner of Section 3, Twp 12 N of R 8E. Then running north to Slade's. Then east to the Southerly line of the SW 1/4 of Section 3. Excepting Crutcher's springs and part of the NE 1/4 of Section 10. (A **mortgage**). Deed Bk CC, pg 724.

14 Dec 1882

J. J. Bennetts, Administrator for the estate of Henry Jones, in a public auction to C. A. Tuttle for \$50, the highest bidder, a certain lot of land. The Salsig ranch being a part of section 3 & NW 1/4 of Section 10 except that included in Lot 1 of Block 2 - land subject to Mortgage in Bk L, pg 229 held by Dodsworth (Ref Bk CC, pg 22). Includes lots 1 & 2 in Block 1. Deed Bk LL, pg 445.

8 Jan 1885

Charles A. Tuttle to Metcalf Dodsworth for \$300 that land known as the Salsig Ranch being a part of Section 3 and the NW 1/4 of Section 10 except so much thereof as is included in Lot one in Block 2 of the additional Town site of Auburn. Deed Bk QQ, pg 558.

28 Apr 1888

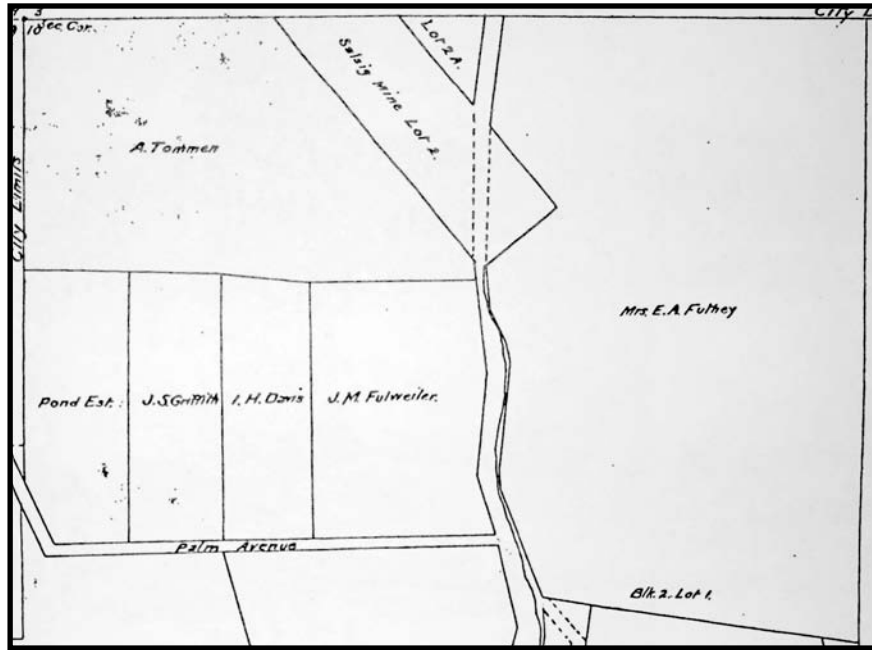
M. Dodsworth to Jason C. Smith for \$3500 certain parcels of land as follows: Lots 1 & 2 of Block 1 of the town of Auburn. Also a part of the SW1/4 of Section 3 Twp 12. Also all the right and interest in the Salsig Gold Quartz Ledge or mine in NW 1/4 of Section 10 in Twp 12 and connections therewith and thereto known as Lot 2 in Block 1. Deed Bk 49, pg 512.

6 Nov 1893

Jason C. Smith to John Fulweiler for \$1500 all that part of lot 1 in Block 1, south east corner of lot on Palm Avenue. Contains 10 acres. Deed Bk 61, pg 589.

13 Mar 1895

Jason C. Smith to William Spencer Pond for \$350 a lot of land bounded on the south by Palm Avenue. Contains 7 acres. Deed Bk 66, pg 40.



Portions of Salsig Ranch and Willis property. 1907 map segment.

23 Sept 1899

Jason C. Smith to Martha D. Haynes for \$500 a lot of land commencing on the north line of Palm Avenue and running east to north east corner of Wm S. Pond. Contains 5.93 acres. Deed Bk 73, pg 94.

8 June 1901

Jason C. Smith to Adolph Thommen for \$1300 all of Lots one and two (1 & 2) in Block one (1) of the Additional Townsite of Auburn, said additional Townsite comprising the N.W, 1/4 of section ten

(10) Tp. 12 N.R. 8 E. Excepting:

- 1) 10 acres to John Fulweiler, Deed Bk 61, pg 589.
- 2) 7 acres to W. S. Pond, Deed Bk 66, pg 40.
- 3) Margaret Mining and Milling Co., Deed Bk 62, pg 328.
- 4) 5.92 acres to Martha Haynes, Deed Bk 73, pg 94.
- 5) 5 acres + or -, reserved for J. C. Smith (later to Davis)
- 6) All that portion used as a public street and known as Palm Avenue.

Deed Bk 77, pg 269.

4 Mar 1902

Jason C. Smith to Charles H Francis for \$5 a fractional part of Lot 1 in Block 1 containing 5 acres and bounded on the east by lot of John Fulweiler, on the west by the lot of Martha Haynes, on the north by the land of Adolph

Thommen and on the south by Palm Avenue. Deed Bk 77,
pg 602.

16 July 1903

Charles H. Francis and Emma L. Francis to Ira H.
Davis for \$10 a fractional part of Lot 1 in Block 1
containing 5 acres and bounded on the east by lot of
John Fulweiler, on the west by the lot of Martha
Haynes, on the north by the land of Adolph Thommen
and on the south by Palm Avenue. Deed Bk 82, Pg
36.

AARON BRACY

One of several large land acquisitions closer to the town center was a Preemptive Land Claim filed by Aaron Bracy in 1854. From the records found in ancestry.com the indications are that Aaron was a freeborn man of color born in Delaware in about 1806. His wife was born in Pennsylvannia and they were married, perhaps in 1835, during a period when they were living in Philadelphia. However, the birthplaces of their children indicate a later primary place of residence in Camden, New Jersey. Further, several family trees indicate the births of 6 children, only 4 of whom were living at the time that Aaron journeyed to California. From the regular mail that began to arrive for him at the Auburn post office (23 Oct 1852) we can infer his approximate arrival time. He also had a brother, Henry, that came to California, sometime before 1859 and was thought to live in Marysville. The first local newspaper article to mention Aaron is the following:

“Aaron Bracy, a colored man, found a Chinaman in his house, near Auburn, on Wednesday last, in the act of robbing the premises. John made tracks as fast as possible, and Aaron demanded that he should ‘heave to’ and show his papers, and failing to comply, he shyed a gun-barrel, which struck John on the back of the head with such force as to effectually deprive him of breath. Justice Finley held Aaron to bail to appear at the next Court of Sessions to answer the charge of murder.” (*Placer Herald*, 8 Mar 1856)

“The constituency think Aaron did right, and hold him guiltless of crime.” (*Placer Herald*, 8 Mar 1856)

In July (1 Jul 1856), District Court. “A verdict of not guilty was rendered.”

In less than two years, the whole town would be much less forgiving.

“The town of Auburn,” says the *Placer Herald* of February 20, 1858, “was thrown into a state of excitement on Thursday afternoon and night caused by the murder of one our oldest citizens and subsequent breaking open of the jail and the hanging of the

culprit by a mob.” James Murphy had been struck down by his neighbor, Aaron Bracy, with a pick-axe blow to the back of his head. These events were described in great detail in the Placer Herald and many other newspapers. They generally concluded with some variation of the following:

Shortly after 3 o’clock in the morning a crowd of some 100 men assembled in front of the jail and with “a dozen sledge hammers had broken the fastenings of the outer door and locks, and the lock of the inner door of the jail, and the negro was taken to a place a mile off, and hung to the limb of a pine tree, about ten feet from the ground.” (Daily Alta California, 20 Feb 1858)

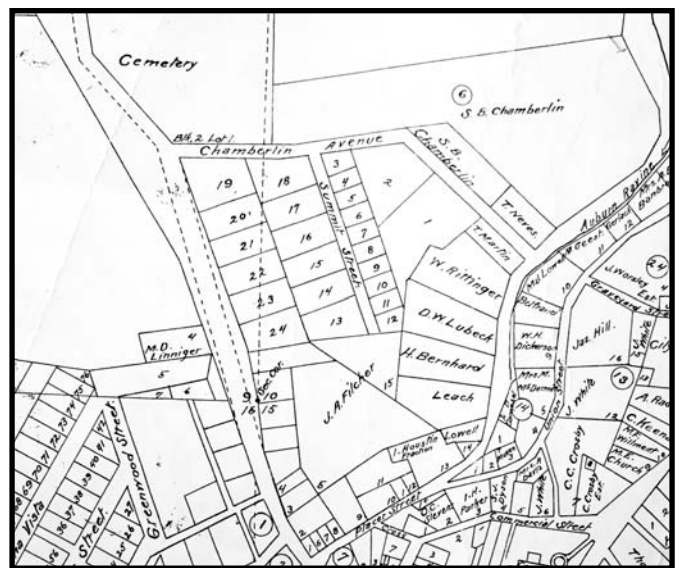
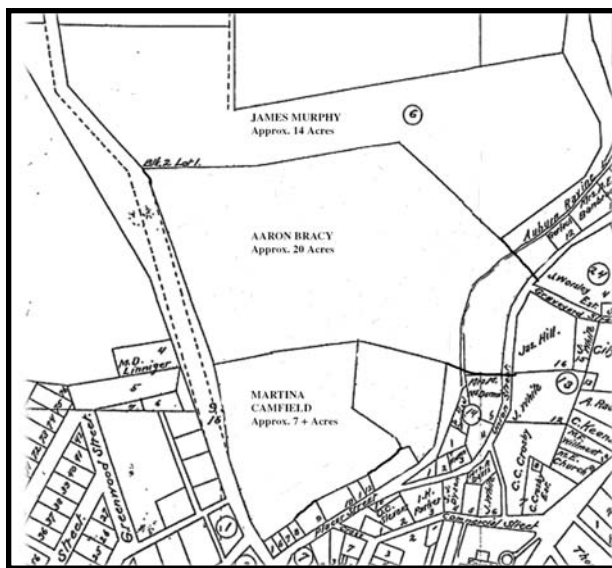
“BRACEY’S PROPERTY. - The house of Bracey, the negro who was lately hanged by the Auburn mob, was set fire to, a few nights since, and destroyed. His ranch has been jumped, and his brother, who is there looking after his property, can find none.” (Sacramento Bee, 16 Mar 1858)

The next mention of Bracy’s property (real estate) is when his 20 acres appears in the probate inventory of the Estate of James Murphy, the man that Bracy struck down. There was no deed for the transfer of this property.

13 Nov 1854

Aaron Bracy

About 20 acres extending from Nevada Road to Illinoistown Road. From map – just to the east side of Auburn Ravine. SE corner is C. Jackson’s corner. Another corner is Mott’s. Adjoins Dr. Reed’s lot. Land Claims Bk B, Pg 502.



Partial Redrawing of 1907 Map To Illustrate Location of Bracy’s 20 Acres.

CHESTERFIELD AND CAROLINE JACKSON

The pioneer Chesterfield Jackson, most likely born in Kentucky, arrived in Sacramento sometime prior to June of 1850 when he was selected as one of the first trustees of the Methodist Church of the Colored People of Sacramento City. (Sacramento Bee, 19 May 1994) Shortly after the 1852 census he removed to the mining area of Millertown, outside Auburn.

This might be him.

“A negro dug from his claim near Gwynn’s store (in Millertown) on Saturday last a piece weighing \$97, and for which he was offered one hundred - (Placer Herald, 15 Jan 1853)

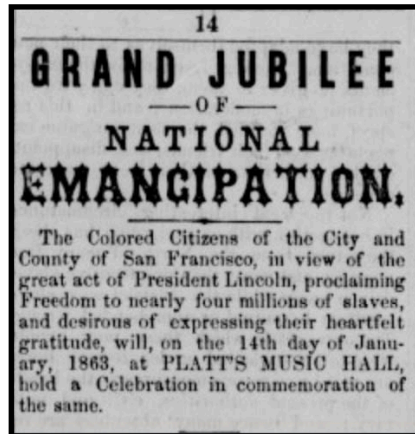
On April 21 1853 he married Caroline (Waddy) Roussin. Later assessor’s records indicate a successful business man with four or five properties, two houses, a commercial building, a barber shop and laundry business. In a highly unusual event on May 9 1856 the Board of Supervisors voted to award the amount of \$200 to Chesterfield as compensation for “services rendered this County in saving” the Court House from the devastating fire of 1855. In the late 1860s the family moved to Sacramento where he once again acquired several properties and took up teamstering. One of these properties was at Front and Second Streets. (Sacramento Daily Union, 12 Apr 1873) And a second was on Front street, between Q and R, which caught fire on the morning of February 20, 1872 and although it didn’t burn down suffered serious water damage.” (Sacramento Daily Union, 21 Feb 1872) He died in Sacramento on Dec 14, 1874.

His wife, Caroline Jackson, was not a typical Auburn pioneer. Because she was a plaintiff in a well publicized trial regarding her father’s estate much of her early family history became widely read public information.

Various newspaper accounts of her trial testimony tell us that Caroline was born a slave in about 1828 in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Her father was Anthony Waddy and her mother was a woman named Rachel and they were the property of a man named Watrous (or Ellis). When she was about five years old she and her mother were sold to John Scott, a well known attorney and congressman from Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. Her mother died shortly afterward, although this account varies. At some time before 1852 Scott sold Caroline to his daughter, Catherine, or his son-in-law, Siffroid E. Roussin. In the 1850 slave census the Roussins had five slaves and one woman was about the right age to be Caroline. Roussin came to California in 1849 and subsequently returned for his family, and brought them to Auburn in 1852. Caroline came with the family. Mr. Roussin had agreed to liberate her if she would work for him three years after they came to California, “but that Chesterfield Jackson a courtly gentleman of color, took a liking to her and did the fair thing by paying \$300 for a release from her master. She said he knew that under the laws of California slaves could not be held, but that her

husband was honorable and would not accept a wife without paying fairly for the time she had agreed to serve.” (*San Francisco Examiner*, 3 Apr 1889).

Caroline’s father, Anthony Waddy, was well known in San Francisco where he had lived for many years. One of the first appearances of his name was as a Vice President of the day in the following event:



Pacific Appeal, 10 Jan 1863

Two years later he appears as the President of the committee calling for a State Convention of Colored Citizens (Elevator, 28 July 1865). He remained very involved in politics and civil rights issues throughout the 1860s and 1870s in such groups as the “American Freedman’s Union Commission.” At the same time he and his wife were both active members of the A. M. E. Church in San Francisco. He was also a member of the first “colored jury ever impanelled on the Pacific Coast” (Pacific Appeal, 23 Sept 1871)

After Anthony’s separation from Rachel he assumed relations with another slave named Maryanza. They had a son who died young and a daughter named Elizabeth. He purchased his freedom and came to California in 1852. He remained here one year then returned to Missouri, purchased Maryanza and Elizabeth from Ellis and returned to San Francisco. It was at this time he adopted the name Waddy. (Daily Alta California, 24 Aug 1889) According to a different account he had purchased his liberty about 1854 and along with his second wife came to California in 1855, where, during his thirty some years’ residence, he accumulated the “snug sum of \$6500.” (Daily Alta California, 4 Apr 1889) Two years earlier the amount was valued at \$4000 (Daily Alta California, 18 Dec 1888) It consisted of a house and lot, 1328 Pacific street in San Francisco, and some personal property. His wife Maryanza (Menza, Mary) Waddy died in San Francisco on March 17, 1887 at the age of 60. (Daily Alta California, 21 Mar 1887) When Caroline’s father died in San Francisco, at the age of 92 in 1887, his estate became the subject of controversy. The crux of the matter was whether Caroline should be seen as his legitimate daughter and thus able to inherit or whether she would be considered illegitimate because the slave marriage of Anthony and Rachel was not “legal.” Her claim was contested by William Riley Watkins, who said he was the son of Lavina Philips, the deceased sister of Anthony Waddy.

Caroline's half sister, Elizabeth G. Waddy, married James H. Richardson of Sacramento, in Auburn on the 5th of October 1866. (Daily Alta California, 14 Oct 1866.) He died just three years later in San Francisco and this death notice appeared. Died, James H. Richardson, 27 Jan 1869, native of New Bedford, MA, age 28, son-in-law of Anthony Waddy. (Elevator, 5 Feb 1869. Born in Virginia, MA State Census 1865.) Elizabeth returned to the household of her father and she, herself, died ten years later leaving Caroline the only known descendant of Anthony Waddy. Died, Grace Elizabeth Waddy, 20 May 1878, age 31 years, 11 Months. Native of Cape Girardeau, MO. (Pacific Appeal, San Francisco.)

In the outcome of the trial, Judge Levy declared "I have endeavored to reason out a result which is imposed as a moral obligation by the natural law. The conclusion which must be reached from the foregoing reasoning is that Caroline Jackson is entitled to the inheritance. It is so ordered." The court case was precedent setting. "It is important as it defines the rights of a daughter of slaves to inherent." (Daily Alta California, 24 Aug 1889).

Caroline died in San Francisco in 1890. (Daily Alta California, 29 Dec 1890) She died December 27 and a later probate notice read "The will of Caroline Jackson Harris has been filled. She left an estate valued at \$1186.25 to Abram Harris, her husband, during his lifetime, and then to her son Francis Jackson, her adopted daughter Emma and her godchildren, Ella Bluit and Charley Parker." (San Francisco Chronicle, 31 Jan 1891).

Of those several people mentioned in this notice, Caroline married Abraham Harris on Dec 26 1889 in San Francisco (San Francisco Examiner, 28 Dec 1889). He is likely the man listed in a Voter Registration Record as being born in Virginia in 1829.

Her son, Francis Jackson, appears in the Sacramento Census of 1870 and his age was then 28, indicating a birth about 1842. In 1889 she said he was 40 years old. In other case, whether he was born in 1842 or 1849, he was born when she was still a slave. We know little more than this about him. The accounts of the adopted daughter Emma were very different.

She also appeared in the Sacramento Census of 1870 with a birthdate of about 1864. Starting in the year 1895 her name begins to appear in newspapers and jail records with regularity (Sacramento Daily Union, 12 November 1895). At first her offenses were relatively minor like vagrancy and fighting. By 1911 she had a lengthy record and was well known to law enforcement officials (alias Ward) up and down the valley and had graduated to more serious crime and was sentenced to a ten year term in San Quentin for manslaughter (Chico Record, 26 Feb 1911). Although this murder and the subsequent trial garnered quite a bit of attention, the following event was the first to gain her notoriety.

Left All Her Clothes Behind

Emma Jackson, colored, made a sensational escape from the city prison Tuesday night and her whereabouts is at present unknown. Emma was arrested on suspicion of having robbed a man of \$2 and was locked

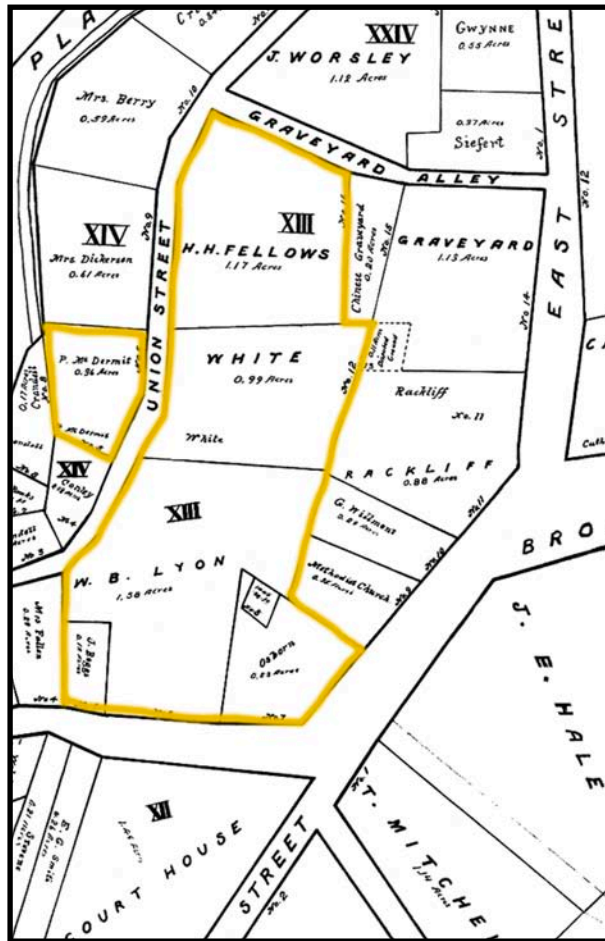
up in one of the yard cells. She succeeded in removing a few bricks from the wall leading to the next cell, but was unable to make the hole large enough to get through with her clothing on. Little things like that did not daunt Emma, however, so she removed all of her clothing, left it in the cell, managed to drag her body through the hole in the wall into the other cell, the door of which leading into the prison yard was open. She put the ladder against the wall, climbed up and dropped to the ground and disappeared. Her clothing is in the hands of the police and notice is given that if any one discovers a nude colored woman traveling through the surrounding country they may know that she is a jail escape(e). (*Press Democrat, Sacramento, 11 July 1902*)



Department of Corrections. San Quentin State Prison Records, 1850–1950. ID #R135, California State Archives, Office of the Secretary of State, Sacramento, California. Ancestry.com

Nothing more appears to be written about Emma after her discharge from prison in 1917.

Caroline's godchild, Ella Bluett, was the daughter of Jeremiah and Fannie Bluett of Sacramento. Her family lived next door to Caroline and Chesterfield in Sacramento in the 1870s. The Death Notice for Ella Cobb Bluett reads, died Sept 23 1946, mother of Mrs. Mabel Fisher. Birthdate from Social Security Applications: 7 April 1876.



Chesterfield's Auburn Properties - Detail from the 1870 Map of Auburn

1854, Nov 13

Jackson is mentioned in Aaron Bracy's land claim. About 20 acres extending from Nevada Road to Illinoistown Road. From map just to the east side of Auburn Ravine. SE corner is C. Jackson's corner. Another corner is Mott's. Adjoins Dr. Reed's lot. Land Claims Bk B, Pg 502. Jackson's "corner" is likely Lot 16, Block 13.

1857, Oct 2

Walkup & Wyman to Chesterfield Jackson for \$150 a parcel of land known as Walkup & Wyman's "granery lot" bounded as follows on the south by the Illinoistown Road and on the east by the property of Chesterfield Jackson and on the west by the lot of Mrs. Fallon. Deed Bk G, Page 314. Lot 5, Blk 13

1867, Sept 26

Chester field Jackson to W. H. Hubbard for \$400 a parcel of land on the north side of Commercial Street which commences at the eastern line of Mrs. Fallon's and running east 52 feet to a line on the lot of W. B. Lyon, then north

115 feet, then west 60 feet to the lot of Mrs. Fallon's, then 115 feet to place of beginning. Deed Bk O Page 381. (Lot 5, Block 13)

1857, Oct 12

S. E. Barrett to Caroline Jackson a lot for \$40. Commercial Street on south, east by Wm Osborn, North by C. Jackson, west by Michael Fallon, 1 acre more or less. Deed Bk C Page 436. Lot 6 Blk 13.

1867, Sept 26

Chesterfield Jackson to Walter B. Lyon for \$800 a parcel of ground east along Commercial Street 151 feet to western line of Wm. Osburn, then north 198 feet, easterly 50 feet to lot of Methodist Church, then northerly along western line of church and along western line of Geo. Wilment to Southern line of John White ... Lot 6 of Block 13. Deed Bk O Page 377.

1867, Oct 23

Homestead recorded to Walter Lyon. Homestead Record Bk A Page 446.

1870, May 12

Land Patent granted to Walter B. Lyon. Deed Bk R Page 710.

1875, Dec 23

W. B. Lyon and wife to John M. White for \$850 - lot, house and some personal property, but not their feather beds, pillows and bedding, Books, Pictures and Saddle. Deed Bk Z Page 15.

1931, Jan 14

Charles B. White (son of John M. White) and Belle White, his wife to James D. Stewart and Gussie A. Stewart, his wife. All of Lot 6 in Block 13 with three exceptions. Deed Bk 281 Page 289.

1946, May 3

James D. Stewart and Gussie A. Stewart, his wife to the County of Placer. Lot 6 in Block 13. Deed Bk 478 Page 445.

"Chesterfield Jackson has commenced a house on Commercial Street". (*Placer Herald*, 28 Sep 1861)

1860, Apr 15

Chesterfield Jackson to William Osborn for \$300 a piece of land fronting Commercial Street. Deed Bk G Page 84. (Lot 7 Blk 13.)

1861, Jan 5

Chesterfield Jackson to J. S. Barrett for \$500 a lot of land commencing at the SE corner of the lot owned by John Boggs on the old road, thence running southerly

with said old Auburn Road thence westerly to the Auburn Ravine and Crandall's line, thence up the Ravine to Boggs' lot. Thence along said lot to the place of beginning. Deed Bk F Page 586. (Lot 5, Blk 14)

1861, May 10

Chesterfield Jackson and wife to John M. White for \$600 a piece of land fronting on the road leading past John Boggs' house and lying opposite Boggs & McDermitt places and being 108 feet in front and running back 238 feet and 145 feet and bordered on the north by land sold by Jackson to McCague and on the south by Jackson's fence and the back end by Radcliff's land. (Lot 12 blk 13) Deed Bk H Page 134.

1861, Sept 17

Chesterfield Jackson to Robert McCague for \$125 a piece of real estate commencing at the north corner of White's lot running north to Radcliff's fence then north with Howard's line to the road. Deed Bk G page 676. (lot 16, Blk 13)

1864, June 10

Constable's Sale. In favor of Chesterfield Jackson and against Robert McCague will expose to public sale the following property: A certain lot of ground on Union Street, bounded as follows: Commencing at the north corner of White's lot, thence running with his line to Radcliff's line, from thence with his line to the Grave yard, thence to Howard's line, running north - west direction to the road, from then along said road on Union street to the place of beginning, being fifty feet front, and two hundred feet, more or less, in length, with said building now on said lot... (*Placer Herald*)

1864, Oct 15

"ANOTHER GREAT FIRE IN AUBURN. 35 HOUSES DESTROYED. The fourth time in the history of Auburn are we called upon to make the unwelcome announcement of a destructive conflagration, which has laid in ashes a considerable portion of the town, and inflicted serious loss upon its inhabitants." In the list of losses: C. Jackson, one building - \$100, east side of Sacramento Street. (*Placer Herald*)

1866, April 4

William Sexton, Sheriff, to Chesterfield Jackson by decree of District Court for \$400 property of James Howard commencing at the NW corner of Robert McCague's lot on Union Street running with fence between McCague's and Howard's to the Graveyard 160 feet, then west to Union Street, includes house of Howard then running with Union Street. Deed Bk M Page 199. (Lot 16, Blk 13)

Successful Business Owners

Other than these aforementioned property owners the census of 1860 and 1870 lists only three other black individuals who had attained even modest prosperity here and all were barbers. We shouldn't be surprised. The historian Douglas Bristol provides the following observations on the history of black barbers and his comments certainly seem to apply to individuals in Auburn. He writes:

“The literature on black property owners documents a range of small business owners who attained a modest prosperity. Among these proprietors, one group stands out for its consistently high level of success—black barbers. On the eve of the Civil War, for example, one out of eight African Americans in the upper South worth at least \$2,000, the standard for affluence at that time, owned a barbershop...In addition, black barbers prospered outside the South, achieving as much dominance within the trade in Boston and San Francisco as they did in Baltimore and Charleston.” *“From Outposts to Enclaves: A Social History of Black Barbers from 1750 to 1915”, Cambridge University Press, 2004.*

Of Auburn's three black barbers only two were here for any period of time, John Bradford and Richard G. Rapier. They both have interesting histories.

JOHN M. BRADFORD

In the year 1860 we find John Bradford boarding in the American Hotel, a rather convenient arrangement as his barber shop/bath house was next door. His establishment was pre eminent in town and a reflection of his years of experience at this endeavour.

SHAVING SALOON
AND
BATHING ESTABLISHMENT,
HOT, COLD, AND SHOWER BATHS.

THE undersigned is pleased to inform his customers that his new Bathing Establishment, in connection with his Hairdressing and Shaving Saloon is now completed and ready for the accommodation of the public.

Hot, Cold, and Shower Baths, furnished at all hours of the day or evening. The Bath Rooms are fitted up in superior style, and will be kept in a manner to give entire satisfaction.

Hairdressing and Shaving done in the best style of the Tonsorial Art.
Adjoining American Hotel, Auburn.
J. M. BRADFORD.
Auburn, May 26—2m

John was born in Virginia in 1819 and traveled to Kentucky where he met his future wife, Theresa, in 1832. She writes that they were married in the same year in the Cathedral at New Orleans. They had a son, John, born in 1836 and a daughter, Eliza, born in 1837. Their son died only months after his birth. From the year of 1849 til the time of his departure for California in 1853, John kept and owned a barber shop on Exchange Alley between Canal and Customhouse Streets in New Orleans. He returned for a visit from California in November 1855 and returned to California in January 1856. (This and much of the following information is from John's Probate Record No. 158, Placer County.)

John's wife and daughter supported themselves by keeping furnished rooms on Customhouse Street between Rampart and Burgundy Streets. In 1857 they moved to No. 43 Burgundy street and followed the same occupation of keeping furnished rooms. Husband and wife continued a correspondance until "the breaking out of the Rebellion" when their correspondance was interrupted by the events of the war. One of Bradford's lodgers over the entire period was Emile Brie. He was born in Hamburg, Germany and had come to this county in 1836 and when the Mexican War broke out, he volunteered. At the end of the war he was sent to New Orleans where he became friends with the Bradfords. Some of his correspondance written in behalf of the Bradfords appears in John's probate file.

Brie's letters provide the following information. That he was a resident of the city of New Orleans since the year 1847. That he enlisted in the Second Kentucky Volunteers for the Mexican War in 1846 and was wounded at the battle of Buena Vista. He was shot through the right thigh and in the head, being left for dead on the field, but was found the day after and taken to the hospital. Though still an invalid, he was afterward sent to New Orleans, where he was honorable discharged, but unable to care for himself. He knew John Bradford from 1847 and up to the time of his emigrating to California in 1853. Brie states that he was then engaged in the Post Office at New Orleans, the rear entrance of which building was on Exchange Alley immediately opposite the house occupied by the Bradfords as barber shop and residence. Brie states he patronized the establishment and frequently visited his family up stairs, which then consisted of his wife, a very bright and most intelligent colored woman, and his daughter, then a young woman of much beauty and many ladylike accomplishments. John Bradford consulted with Brie about his emigrating to California and made the arrangement that he would go first and if he succeeded in business, he would send for his family. Shortly after Bradford left for California, his wife, with the assistance of friends took a house on Customhouse Street and rented out furnished rooms to gentlemen. Brie lived at her house off and on until the breaking out of this war, moving with her when she removed from Customhouse Street to Burgundy Street. Brie read all letters received from her husband in California and answered some of them for her. While both Bradford and his daughter were literate, his wife was not. Brie remembers that Bradford remitted money from California several times, once for five hundred dollars to complete the education of his daughter. Brie was imprisoned during the course of the war until the city was captured by the U.S. fleet and he was released by General Butler on whose staff he subsequently served. During his imprisonment he was most kindly cared for by Mrs. Bradford and her friends and after his release roomed again at her house. After General Butler had possession of New Orleans (1862)

the Bradfords resumed their correspondance. (Correspondance in Bradford Probate, From his Obituary , Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 27 Jan 1912)

In the fall of 1862 Brie read a lettler from John Bradford upbraiding his wife and daughter for not joining him sooner in California and offering to send money to them for that purpose. He offered to send the money to Cincinnati or New York, as he could not remit to New Orleans. Brie answered the letter for them offering to go to New York and asked Bradford to remit the money there.

Letter from John in Auburn June 29 1862

My Dear Wife & Daughter ...

You say if I will send you money that you will come out to this Country. I am not a going to send you any money for you to use, for as long as I send you money you will remain in New Orleans ... you can't deceive me any more you promised that when I got a house for you that you would come. I have had a home for you for the last three years and you are no nearer California now than you were at that time. My property is worth five thousand dollars which is a good start for you if you will come ... your letter found me stretched on my sick bed. I am getting around. I had an attack of the Paralysis. I am still unable to work myself. ... Your letter was not properly directed. Direct your letter to me at Auburn Placer County nothing more I remain your affectionate Husband & Father

John M. Bradford

At about the same time Brie left New Orleans with Maj. Gen. Butler and he strongly advised Mrs. Bradford to sell their furniture and come to New York. Theresa offered to go to New York with their daughter and await a remittance from John to enable them to rejoin him in California. With this view she sold her furniture in New Orleans and left for New York in January of 1863.

The following letter was sent from Lowell, Massachusetts, dated Jan 20th 1863. Eliza writes ... Dear Father and Husband

You will be surprised to receive a letter from this place, but here we are and most anxious to hear from you and to join you in California. We wrote to you repeately to Auburn but received no reply and we were at a loss to account for it. Some two months since I received a letter from uncle in Chicago saying that you were sick in San Francisco and I now write to you there in the hope or receiving a speedy reply and that you will send for us to join you in California. An officer in Gen Butlers Staff (Emile Brie) who roomed in our house in New Orleans and whom mother attended during his sickness has taken us on to his home in this city to be away from New Orleans for now.

...

Good bye, dearest husband and father let us hear from you at once and believe us to be truly and affectionately.

Your wife and daughter
Theresa and Eliza

Address your letter to
Emile H. Brie
Care of Major General Butler
Lowell, Mass

While awaiting remittances from California she wrote again to John, but received no reply. Theresa asked Mr. Brie, her friend and agent, to write the Post Master at Auburn, asking for information about John. Finally back came this reply from the offices of attorneys Hale & Anderson on behalf of Chas T. Palmer, Public Administrator for Placer County.

Auburn, Cala Feb 20 1863

Mr. Emile H. Brie:

Sir: Your letter written Jany 19 ult: and directed to the P.M. of this place, came to hand and was transfered by that officer to the undersigned for answer. I have to say in answer to your enquiry that John M. Bradford, an honest industrious colored man formerly (as he said) from New Orleans, La. lived for a long time in this town, conducting a barbershop. By his industry, economy and business tact he acquired some property. During the fall of 1862 his health failed him and he went to the city of San Francisco expecting to derive benefit to his health, in the change of climate and from the advice of eminent physicians. Death however overtook him whilst upon this mission and he departed this life in that city on the 30th day of Nov 1862.

(The balance of the letter outlines how the Probate process works as Bradford left no will.)

Mrs. Bradford and her daughter were still in New York in July of 1864 awaiting the settlement of the estate of John Bradford to enable them to return to New Orleans. The final accounting in 1865 was \$217 (reduced by costs and fees from \$3937 - health care alone was 144 Days @ \$4 a day) from the Estate and \$500 from the sale of Real Estate.

John M. Bradford's Barbershops

The following appears to be the first instance when Bradford's barbershop appears in print, but he was likely to have been here prior to this.

21 May 1859

NEW BATHING SALOON. The pleasure to be experienced by frequent indulgence in warm and cold baths is too well understood by those who are not afraid of water, to be largely discarded upon, but from want of a well kept saloon of the the kind, in town, the public have been deprived of these desirable luxuries for some time. We are glad to know that Bradford, of the Tonsorial Saloon, adjoining the American has supplied this want by the fitting up of spacious and elegant bath rooms, where, during day and night, hot and cold, and shower baths can be taken. The rooms are the finest

we have seen-they have been made and furnished at a heavy expense, and must, in their arrangement be satisfactory to customers.

These rooms are now open to the public, and the proprietor is ready to render due attention to his customers. Remember the Placer County Bathing Saloon, adjoining the American Hotel. *Placer Herald*

Only months later, on October 9, a terrible fire visited Auburn and fifty-eight buildings were destroyed and Bradford's bath house was one of them. His loss was said to be \$3,000. (Placer Herald, 15 Oct 1859) Within days he purchased the lot where John Barney's burned dwelling had stood on East Street. It was not many months before he rebuilt his bath house at "his old stand adjoining the American." (Placer Herald, 26 May 1860) A year later he moved to the purchased property on East Street.

14 Oct 1859

From John Barney and Wm Hardy to John M. Bradford for \$425 a parcel of land on the north East side of the alley or street running up by McCready's dwelling house, adjoining the lot upon which J. M. Van Mater's tin and hardware Store is situated, on the northerly side said lot being thirty front on said ally and extending back from the alley to the lot of Miles Furnis a distance of about eighty five feet, the said lot hereby conveyed being a portion of the same lot which was occupied by the said Barney as a dwelling place before the fire. Deed Bk E Pg 497.

13 Apr 1861

REMOVAL-NEW STAND- Bradford finding the quarters rather limited for his Shaving Saloon and Bath House, adjoining the "American" has fitted up his own building, next to Vanmater's brick store, which is more capacious, and has anow a commodious and handsome establishment, where he can carry on the Tonsorial art more to his own satisfaction and the comfort of this customers. *Placer Herald.*

About a year after fitting out his new bath house on East Street he purchased the Gore & Gordon property to expand his lot size. (Immediately uphill from today's Carpe Vino)

1 March 1862

From Amos F Gore & Alex G Gordon to J. M. Bradford for \$400 a certain lot on the northerly side of East Street, being 25 feet front, and extending back north to the land of Miles Furniss, and bounded on the west by the land of said J. M. Bradford, and on the east by the land of Barrett. Deed Bk G pg 697.

29 July 1865

Theresa Bradford and Eliza M. Bradford to Mack Webber and John Harwood and H. H. Fellows for \$100 a certain building and lot lying on the north side of East Street in the town of Auburn, bounded and described as follows - Commencing at the South West

Corner of the lot of land belonging to the estate of Barrett, running thence West 12 feet, thence North fifty-nine feet, thence East four feet thence North 12 feet the east to lof of land owned by Barrett, thence along the line of Barretts' land to East Street, the place of beginning. Said premises now occupied by the said parties of the Second part. Deed Bk L pg 457.

26 Aug 1865

Theresa Bradford and Eliza M. Bradford to S. G. Gibbons for Fifty dollars for a parcel of ground situate on the North Side of East Street and fronting on said street fifteen feet more or less, bounded on the East by a lot owned by M. Webber, Harwood and Fellows on the West by a lot on which the barbers Shop and out buildings are situated now enclosed by a fence extending back North from said East Steet to a fench incloses the yard of Miles Furnace. Deed Bk L pg 517.

The bath house/barber shop property was sold to Richard Rapier in 1865. That record will appear later.

In an 1880 follow up, the following information appeared in the New York census:

2	Brie Emile H	W m 52	Husband	1	Lawyer
—	Eliza	W f 36	Wife	1	Keeping House
—	Arthur	W m 13	Son	1	Scholar
	Bradford Theresa	W f 63	Servant	1	Domestic

Here we find Emile Brie has married Eliza Bradford and further, that while both she and her son are listed as white, her mother is listed as black and a domestic servant. Findagrave reports that Emile (and perhaps Eliza) are both buried in Brooklyn. Records from ancestry.com tell us that Emile H. Brie was imprisoned at Sing Sing, 11 March 1887, for forgery. He was listed as a widower on this date. His prison records indicates he served jail time at Iowa State Penitentiary after 1872. He married Edith Elnor at St. Andrews Church, New York on Aug 16 1892. He was 64 and Edith was 35. In 1900, the son Arthur Brie, piano tuner, was living in New York. On that census and later forms the birthplaces of both his parents were never correct nor was there ever an acknowledgement of Arthur's black ancestry.

RICHARD GORDON RAPIER

“Richard G. Rapier, long and familiarly known to the people of this town and county as ‘Dick’ Rapier, the barber, died in his cottage in the rear of his barber shop Monday night about 11 o’clock. He was stricken with apoplexy on Saturday afternoon while standing in the Union Saloon” *next door to his barber shop.* (Republican, 9 Feb 1887) “He

lingered until Monday night when the spark of life went out, and one of Auburn's old time and esteemed citizens was no more. His funeral took place Wednesday afternoon and considering the bad weather was very largely attended." (Placer Herald, 12 Feb 1887).

Richard Rapier's obituaries took note of several of his better known and unique characteristics, namely that he "was as well posted perhaps on current literature as any man in Auburn. He subscribed and paid for more papers and periodicals than any individual in town." (Placer Herald, 12 Feb 1887) And that he was "a man of more than ordinary intelligence. He was a great reader, kept well posted on all the events of the day, he was an interesting talker on any current event, and he had a good memory for political history." (Republican, 9 Feb 1887) Listed in his probate were a total of 9 subscriptions to periodicals and newspapers. (e.g.: Charleston News, Inter Ocean (Chicago), Montgomery Advertiser, Harper's Weekly (New York), Police Gazette, New York Ledger, Union (Sacramento) and Placer Republican and one more.

These and other traits only begin to explain Richard's popularity and long time success as a barber in the heart of Auburn. He was an unusual man that came from a remarkable family.

His family was the basis for the biography "In Search of the Promised Land, A Slave Family in the Old South, John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, Oxford University Press, 2006." The primary sources for this book was the rather substantial collection of "The Rapier family papers, a gift from Dr. & Mrs. James R. White (to Howard University), which span two linear feet. The majority of the collection is correspondence between James Thomas Rapier, (1837-1883), (U.S. Representative from Alabama), John H. Rapier, Sr., John H. Rapier, Jr., (journalist, surgeon, and world traveler), Henry K. Thomas; James P. Thomas; Sarah Thomas. The correspondence dates from 1836 to 1883 and reflects the activities and travels of this family from Florence, Alabama to Western Canada, Jamaica, British West Indies, and many cities in the United States during this period. (Staff, MSRC, "RAPIER Family" (2015). Manuscript Division Finding Aids. 164. https://dh.howard.edu/naid_manu/164) For a short version of the family history see: "Brief Biography of John H. Rapier" (<https://www.facebook.com/flplarchive/posts/a-brief-biography-of-john-h-rapier-srin-honor-of-black-history-month-over-the-ne/10154477063348362/>)

Richard's father, John Rapier, Sr. was one of three boys born to a slave named Sally Thomas. She made the arrangements which led to his emancipation in 1829. In the following years he became a highly successful barber in Florence, Alabama as did his brothers with the same occupation in Nashville and in Canada. It's not surprising that Richard became a barber.

Richard was the eldest son and freeborn in Florence, Alabama on 10 Jan 1832. He was admonished by both his father and grandmother to "work diligently and industriously, to save his money and invest in real estate." At an early age he was sent to live with an uncle in New York where he received "a tolerably good education" in Buffalo.

Returning to the Nashville home of his grandmother and barely eighteen years old, young Richard, like many of his peers succumbed to the romance of the accounts of the gold rush and joined the company of Madison Berryman Moorman headed for the gold fields of California. "His job would be to manage the mules on the overland journey across the western plains." Their steamboat, loaded with supplies, left the dock at Nashville on April 27, 1850.

After an arduous four and a half months journey across the plains, Richard and company arrived in Placerville in the second week of September. We are told that within weeks the Nashville company broke up and the members drifted their separate ways. Panning for gold failed to live up to their expectations. "Sweet Freedom's Plains, Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, 2016"

Richard, we are informed, journeyed to the Feather River region where he purchased land and began farming. He remained in California and it is thought that at some time prior to 1865 moved to Placer County and took up farming. He was no more successful at this than he had been as a miner. He lost a crop to a fire and another to drought. Another account reports he worked at his trade (barbering) in Colusa and Sacramento and came to Auburn in 1858 where he took up barbering. These various accounts are hardly consistent. Witness this example, "Dick Rapier, who has lived in Auburn since 1851, says that two or three of the nights during the last week have been the hottest he has known during the thirty-four years he has been here." (Republican, 19 Aug 1885)

He married Mrs. Henrietta Stans, of San Francisco, at Auburn, 9 August 1868. (The Elevator, 21 Aug 1868) Henrietta was a widow with a daughter, Mary (born ca. 1859) The 1870 census also lists a son, John, (Born ca. 1862. (If so, who was his mother?) By the census of 1880, Richard was again single and boarding at the American Hotel. Census record indicates he was still married. However, there is no further mention of Henrietta or Mary and just one reference to John living in Oregon shortly after the death of Richard in 1887.

Richard had three brothers. Henry, the ne'er-do-well in the family "proved to be a disappointment to his father" and was arrested for murder in Auburn in 1856 and which ended in a hung jury (three times). His brother, John, much traveled and finally taking a medical degree in Iowa and became one of a very few black doctors in the Union Army. His youngest brother, James, became involved in the politics of both Tennessee and Alabama. He was a one term congressman from 1873 until 1875.

Richard Rapier's Barbershop

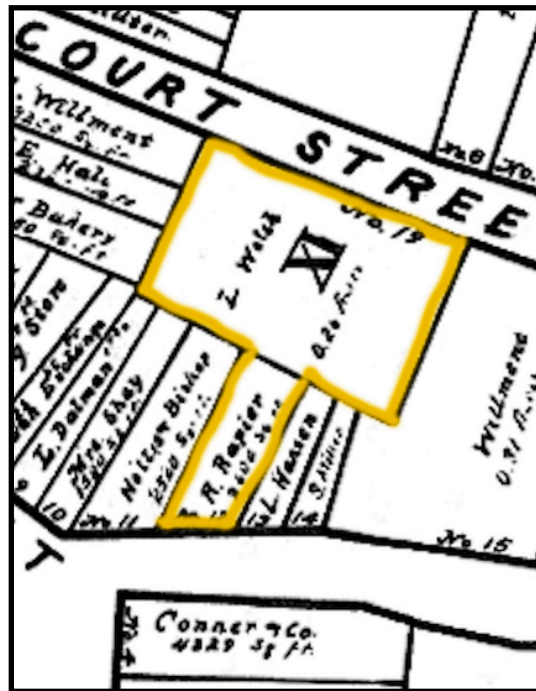
In February of 1863 Richard purchased nearly all the furnishings of John Bradford's barbershop for \$302. Two years later he purchased the bathhouse and barber shop itself. From the time of John Bradford's death in November of 1862 until Richard purchased the barbershop in 1865, it is probable that he was the person that had been renting the shop in the interim. Richard's economic well being fluctuated over time. He appears to have been doing quite well in 1870 with a successful business and a net worth of \$2500. At other times he was apparently strapped for cash. "I promise if I ever get hold of money enough I shall certainly come and see you," Dick Rapier wrote his uncle James in St. Louis in 1877, "but to tell you the truth I am poorer to day than I have ever been since I have been in the county." (Franklin and Schwenger pg 236) At the time of his death most of his wealth was in real estate. He had no large debts, but at the same time his cash on hand was only \$99. The balance of the estate was \$732 which was distributed to his half-brothers and sisters.

R. G. RAPIER,
BARBER.
 Shaving and Shampooing.
 Shop next door to Union Saloon.
 Bath House attached.
 Sept. 13, 1872. 1tf

Placer Argus

14 Sept 1865

Theresa Bradford and Eliza M. Bradford to Richard Rapier for \$350 a certain lot or parcel of ground and improvements thereon formerly occupied by J. M. Bradford for a barber Shop and out buildings. Said lot fronting forty feet, more or less on East Street on the south, bounded on the West by a brick Building formerly owned or occupied by Van Mater, on the East by a lot owned and now occupied by S. Gibbons, and extending back Northerly to a lot enclosed and occupied by Miles Furnice as a stable yard being one hundred feet more or less. Deed Bk L pg 653.



27 April 1870

Edward Walsh to Richard Rapier for \$150 a parcel of land lying and being situated in lot no 19 in Block Eleven on the Map of the town of Auburn. Described as follows - beginning at the North West Corner of lot owned by Richard Rapier and running south east sixty six feet 9 inches to land of George Willment and running along the division fence to Walsh and Willment to Court Street in a North Westerly direction sixty six feet 9 inches and from thence to place of beginning. Deed Bk R pg 171.

2 Nov 1887

Henry Stone acting Administrator of the estate of R. G. Rapier deceased to W. B. McGuire for the sum of \$1730, being the highest sum bid, does grant the following lots of land. Lot 19 in Block 11 and Lot 12 in Block 11 as laid down in the official map of the town site of Auburn. Deed Bk 52 pg 527.

NOTICE OF SALE!

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

that the undersigned administrator of the estate of R. G. RAPIER, deceased, will on the

8TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1887,

At the hour of 10 o'clock, A. M., on the premises of the deceased, sell at public auction to the highest bidder, for cash, the following described

Personal Property:

Two Barber's Chairs,
Three Mirrors,
Twelve Chairs,
Two Tables,
Two Sofas,
Two Stoves,
One Kettle,
Two Cuspadores,
One Bureau,
Nine Pictures,

Three Wash-bowles and
One Pitcher,
Six Lamps,
Eight Razors,
Two Pair Scissors,
One Hone,
One Feather Duster,
Two Bath Brushes,
Three Hair Clothes,
Thirteen Towels,

One axe,
One Table Cover,
One Wash-stand,
Three Mattresses,
Three Pillows,
Two Carpets,
One Bedstead, and
Fixtures.

And also at the same time and

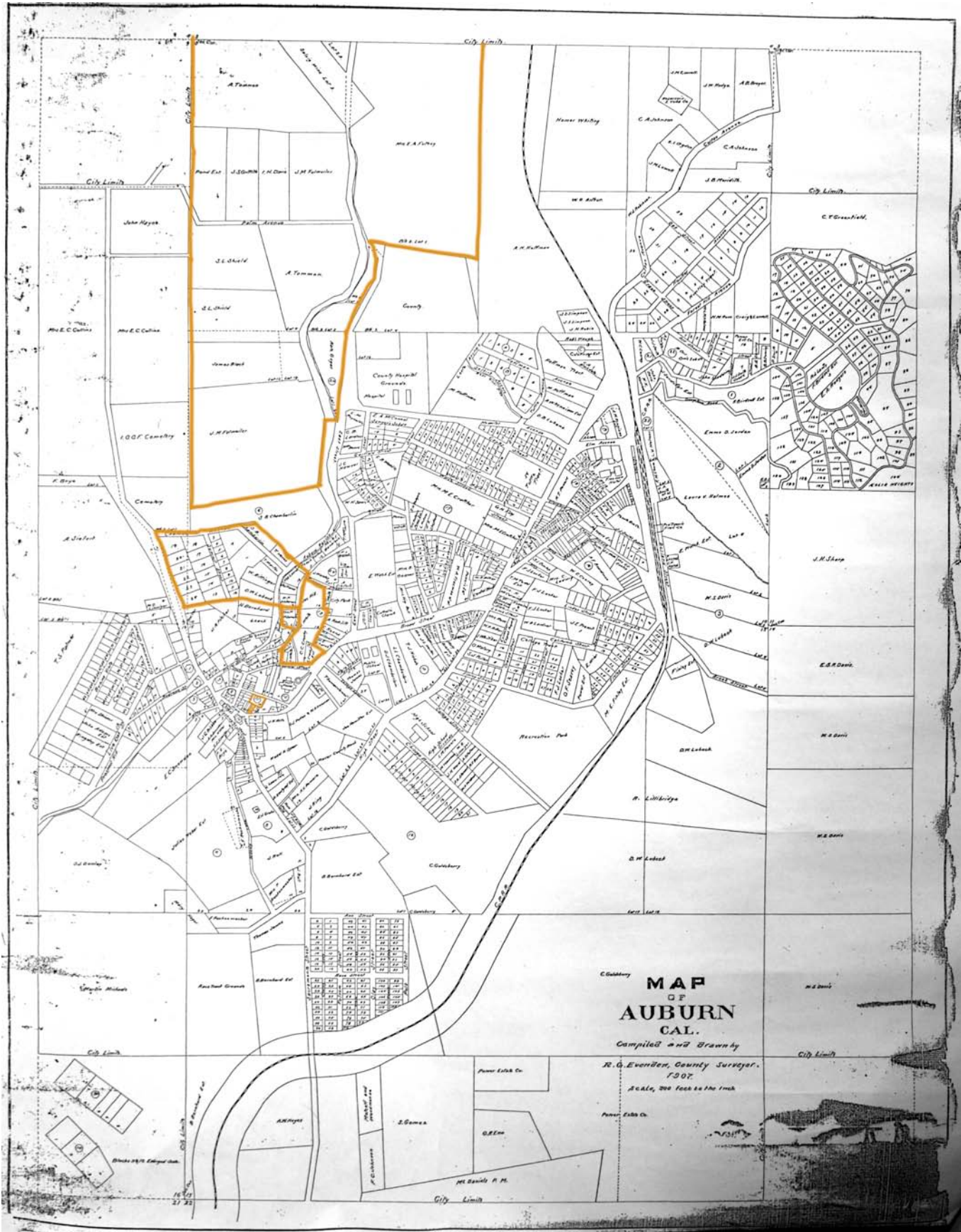
place the following described real estate:

FIRST—A portion of lot 19 in block 11 of the townsite of Auburn, and fully described in the Order of Sale.

SECOND—Lot 12 in block 11 as laid down on the map of the townsite of Auburn.

H. STONE, Administrator.

REPUBLICAN PRINT, AUBURN.



African-American Owned Properties in Early Auburn

The Saloon Keeper And The Madam

These last two individuals fit in neither of the two earlier categories as they owned little or no land in Auburn and owed little of their prosperity to their business interests here. One remained nearly anonymous, leaving barely a trace of his time here in Auburn. Henry Hall was his name and the 1860 census records he was a mulatto born in Kentucky in 1810 and his occupation was saloon keeper. He lived in Auburn's Chinatown and had real estate of the modest value of \$200. In 1862 he purchased an additional lot on Sacramento Street which he sold a year later for a \$225 profit. At the age of nearly 55, this sale may have been the beginning of his later success as both a land lord and real estate investor in the new town of Colfax.

The second individual was the opposite in many respects, she was notorious with a reputation for sometimes eccentric and scandalous behavior, but of "good heart." In her brief time here she became almost too well known. "She has been petted and tolerated till her impudence and tongue are unbearable." (Placer Argus, 29 May 1880) She was nearing retirement when she arrived here in the 1870s from San Francisco with a substantial personal estate. Her name was Emily Casement and according to the 1880 census was a 58 year old mulatto women, born in Virginia, whose occupation then was that of mistress of a house of ill fame. Of all the individuals discussed in this paper, she amassed the largest estate by far. In 1881 she retired and moved to Colfax where she bought a lot from ... Henry Hall.

Henry Hall's Real Estate

Henry Hall's first and only recorded transactions in Auburn were for a lot on Sacramento Street.

1862, 24 Dec

John Scott to Henry Hall for \$50 a parcel of land on the west side of Sacramento Street Bounded on the north by lot of Scott and Butler, on the south by lot of French and West and west by an alley. Front on street of 25 feet. Deed Bk H, Page 524.

1863, 26 Oct

Henry Hall to James Tuttle for \$275 a parcel of land on the west side of Sacramento Street Bounded on the north by lot of Scott and Butler, on the south by lot of French and West and west by an alley. Front on street of 25 feet. Deed Bk I, Page 691.

All the remaining transactions took place in Colfax. In 20 years there were over 20 transactions, not all were recorded in the deed books. Henry was among the first to buy a lot in the newly created town of Colfax.

1865, 3 Oct

Alden Radcliff to Hall and Dennis for \$600 the western 1/2 of Lot 13 in Blk 3 in town of Colfax. Deed Bk L, Page 642.

1867, 23 Dec

Henry Hall to Ah Gim for \$50 a lot 28 X 50 feet in Block 2 in the town of Colfax Deed Bk P, Page 712

1869, 17 April

Henry Cramer to Henry Hall for \$100 the east 1/2 of Lot 6 in Block 2 with a frontage of 12 1/2 feet in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk Q, Page 200.

Considering that Henry lived in Colfax for 20 years it is surprising that so little was written about him. In one of few accounts he and a lady friend came to blows in a public brawl. "Neither were seriously injured before they were separated, and taken before Justice Traphagan. After getting into court (he) began a tirade against whites ... It was amusing particularly to hear him publicly slander counsel and Court; yet strange to say he was never once called to order." He was to appear in Court again the following day for trial. (Placer Herald, 18 June 1870)

1873, 25 Sept

Catharine Mc Flinn to Henry Hall for \$150 Lot 1 in Blk 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk TT, Page 514.

1873, 28 October

Henry Hall to Winifred Mary Brown for \$150 Lot 1 in Block 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk TT, Page 516.

1874, 10 March

Jacob Keck to Henry Hall for \$140 Lot 2 in Block 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk TT, Page 523.

1877, 1 Oct

L. Voss to Henry Hall for \$550 Lots 4 and 7 in Block 7 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk JJ, Page 29.

1878, 12 April

John Eddy to Henry Hall for \$100 Lot 7 in Block 5 in the the town of Colfax. Deed Book RR, Page 318.

1878, 13 April

Thomas Savors to Henry Hall for \$200 Lot 4 in Block 8 in town of Colfax. Deed Bk RR, Page 319.

1878, 26 April

James Brown to Henry Hall for \$75 Lot 1 in Blk 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk TT, Page 518.

1878, 22 August

Henry Hall to Placer County for \$30 a portion of Lot 6 in Blk 5 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk DD, Page 518.

“On Tuesday morning last, a few minutes after two, the good people of Colfax were roused from their peaceful slumber by the cry of “Fire!” And the ringing of the church bell. The Chinese quarter, that great source of constant dread in California towns was on fire. The townspeople were on the scene in a very brief space of time. Within fifteen minutes from the time of the alarm all of Chinatown, which as usual in California towns is composed of the merest shanties, and covers little more than an acre, was all ablaze, and the entire town was more seriously threatened than at any time in its previous history.”...

Henry Hall, who owned most of the ground on which Chinatown stood had losses of “twenty-five Chinese houses and stores, \$2000, no insurance” ... “says he will not rebuild it.” (*Placer Argus*, 1 Nov 1879)

Henry does not appear to have ever fully recovered from this serious financial loss. At a time when he might have considered retiring, a large part of his livelihood had just gone up in cinders and smoke. He remained a saloon keeper.

1881, 28 Jan

Henry Hall to Sub Moey for \$300 the eastern part of Lot 6 in Block 7 in the town of Colfax.

Deed Bk HH, Page 655.

1881, 11 August

Henry Hall to Emily Casement for \$400 the Southerly half of Lot 4 in Block 7 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk JJ, Page 27.

1882, April 18

Henry Hall to Truman Stevens for \$250 Lots 1 and 2 in Block 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk KK, Page 151.

1882, 7 April

Ellen A. Brown to Henry Hall for \$40 an undivided one half interest in Lot 1 in Block 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk TT, Page 520.

1883, 3 Sept

Henry Hall to Joseph Manuel for \$250 Lot 2 in Block 5 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk QQ, Page 741.

1884, 18 June

Henry Hall to John Manuel for \$75 a 25 X 70 foot portion of Lot 1 in Block 9 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk PP, Page 554.

1885, 25 March

Henry Hall to Truman A. Stevens for \$450 Lots 4 & 7 in Block 7 and Lot 4 in block 8 in the town of Colfax. Deed Bk RR, Page 51

DIED - In Colfax, October 12, 1885, Henry Hall, a native of Kentucky, aged 79 years.
(31 Oct 1885, Placer Herald)

1887, 22 April

Jas. McCormick Admins. For estate of Henry Hall to Truman A. Stevens for \$250 Lot 1 in Blk 9 and Lots 3 and 4 in Block 7. Deed Bk SS, Page 521.

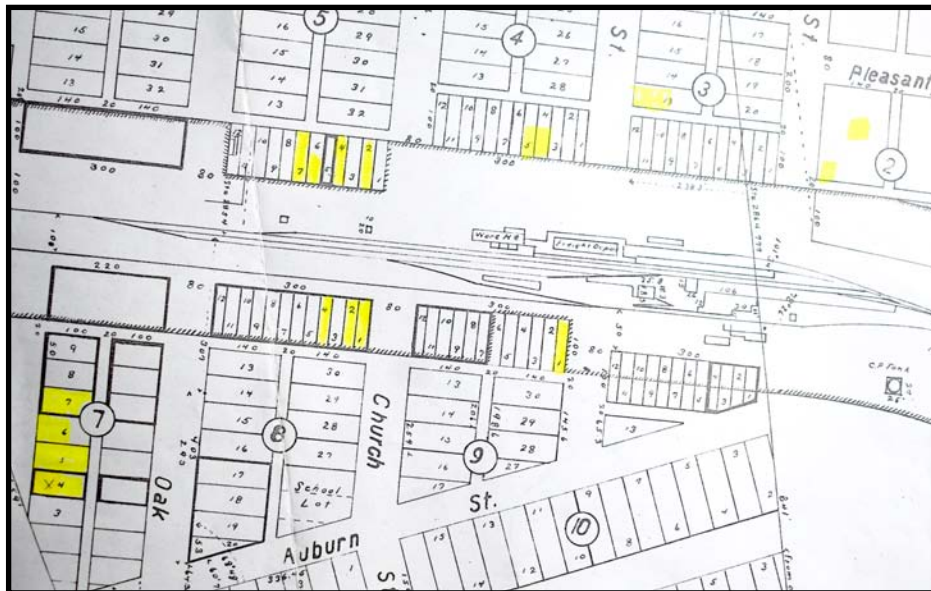
Jas. McCormick Admins. for estate of Henry Hall to T. Kingston \$20 at public auction in Colfax, 29 March 1886. (Probate No. 242)

Among the charges against the probate account for Henry Hall was for filing of 10 deeds. (Probate No. 242, 2 Mar 1886) All are accounted for above with the exception of:

Portions of Lots 4 and 5 in Block 4
Lot 20 in Block 2

In the final accounting, after all the bills were paid, the final amount in his estate was \$4.83.

Discovered later were two lots which belonged to Henry Hall and were unaccounted for in his probate No. 242. A new probate (No. 616) identified these properties as Lots 4 & 7 in Block 5 and occupied by Truman Stevens. In this unusual probate Letters of Administration were granted to Henry Disque and an appraisal of \$600 was made, but apparently no resolution of the account. (Probate No. 616, 11 June 1892)



Henry Hall Properties in Colfax

Emily Casement - Entrepreneur and Philanthropist

Mrs. Emily Casement, better known as the “Fire Queen” died at Colfax on July 16, 1885. Within days, the news of this remarkable woman’s passing had traveled around Northern California and Nevada and then eastward, to cities such as to Omaha, Kansas City, St. Louis, Austin and finally to cities on the east coast such as Richmond, Wilkes-Barre, Poughkeepsie and even tiny Morrisville in northern Vermont.

The story most often reprinted in these many newspapers first appeared in the 27 July 1885 edition of the San Francisco Daily Alta. It is reprinted here with endnotes.

THE FIRE QUEEN

A Strange Character of Early

California Days.

A BRAVE AND NOBLE WOMAN

“Good morning, Chief; anything in the news line to-day?”

The speaker was an ALTA representative, on his usual morning round, and the person addressed was Chief Scannell, of the Fire Department, who was comfortably ensconced in his big armchair in the commissioners’ office, with a thoughtful expression on his marked face.

“No;” was the response, with a sudden start. “I know of nothing new to-day.”

“You seem to be meditating when I came in, Chief. I suppose you were wrapt up in the memories of the past?”

“Yes; I was thinking of a person - a woman - who was a noted character in this city in the early ‘fifties. Her name was Emily Casement, but she was better known here as the ‘Fire Queen.’ Did you ever hear of her? No! That is singular. About three weeks ago, if you will remember, a despatch was received in this city announcing the death at Reno, Nev., of Mrs. Casement, a colored woman about about sixty-three years of age, who bequeathed sums of money, of more or less magnitude, to several companies of this department, as well as to a few of the old members of the volunteer companies of early days. Well, that old lady was the ‘Fire Queen.’ If you like, I will tell you the story of her life, and how she came by her romantic name.

THE STORY OF HER LIFE

“Emily Casement came here overland from New York in the early part of 1850, and opened a saloon and dance hall on the old Mission Road, in the Neighborhood now marked by Tenth and Mission streets.¹ She was a free-born quadroon girl, about twenty-eight years of age, and possessed a face and figure of striking beauty.² Her eccentric character and odd, reckless ways soon brought her into prominence among the men about town, but her generosity and happy-go-lucky disposition gained her many friends. Though she kept a place of doubtful repute, she, herself, remained true to the man with whom she was living. Her place was very attractive and was the favorite resort of all the boys in search of a ‘lark.’ In front of the house was a large oak tree, to which was chained a huge cinnamon bear, and to one of the branches was

suspended a sign bearing the inscription 'Milk Punch'-a specialty of her compounding. Emily had few bad traits and many good ones in her odd character. She was honest herself, and would permit no underhanded dealings among those in her establishment. As for charity, she was the personification of it. No one ever asked for assistance from her and met with a refusal. She made a great deal of money, but was always free with it, and many a poor devil has been checked on his downward career and given a new lease of life through her generosity and kindness of heart. Her charity, too, was as sincere and unaffected as it was free. I can also recall a number of cases where she has aided impoverished families, who are ignorant to this day, if they are living, of the name of their benefactor.

HOW SHE RECEIVED HER NAME

"But I suppose you are anxious to learn how she came by the name of 'Fire Queen.' Well, let me see, it was some time during the Summer of '55, if I remember correctly, that the old distillery of James Dows & Co. on Mission creek, was burned.³

It was a large rambling brick structure three stories in height, with several additions of lesser size adjoining. I don't recollect the exact date, but it was late in the afternoon one day in early part of the Summer that the boiler of the distillery exploded, the spirit tanks ignited, and in a very few minutes the whole building was in flames. The deep, heavy sand this side of the distillery hindered the progress of the fire-engines very materially, and by the time we arrived the fire was beyond control. All that could be done then was to save the small buildings adjoining and a portion of the movable property. A great crowd of spectators had gathered by this time, and among them was Emily Casement shouting words of encouragement to the weary firemen. The fire raged fiercely, and the flames crept steadily on and licked every beam and rafter in the old building, in spite of our almost superhuman efforts. The walls were wavering and the roof beginning to show signs of caving in, when a sudden cry rang out that several firemen were still in the building and so overcome by the heat and smoke that they were unable to find their way out.

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

To go to the rescue remained unanswered. A second call and still no response. At last, Emily Casement sprang forward, and throwing the skirts of her dress over her head rushed into the burning building. A few seconds elapsed, during which the spectators almost held their breaths in suspense, when they saw Emily returning dragging the form of a half-suffocated fireman. Again she disappeared into the burning building, returning almost immediately with another rescued fireman. Five or six times was this heroic deed repeated, but at last human endurance could accomplish no more and the noble woman fell fainting in the doorway by the side of the last unconscious fireman whom she had saved from a horrible death. Ready hands removed the heroic woman to a place of safety, where it was discovered that she had been horribly burned about the face and hands. Her head had been entirely burned, and the skin and scalp were scorched and blistered in a frightful manner. She soon regained consciousness, however, and, instead of giving way to her agony and suffering, she commenced giving orders for the proper care and treatment of the injured firemen. She tore her clothing into strips to make bandages for their relief, and then ordered them removed to her house, not far distant, where they were given every comfort and attention. It was not

until after the others were all cared for that she submitted to having her own injuries attended to. From that day she was known as the 'Fire Queen,' and became

THE IDOL OF THE FIREBOYS

And all who knew her. It was many weeks before she recovered from the effects of her injuries, and to her dying day she bore the honorable scars received on that memorable occasion. During the succeeding five years her life was one of uneventful monotony, but in the latter part of 1860, her increasing business induced her to remove her establishment to California street, just above Kearny.⁴ The change was an unfortunate one, however, and ill-success clung to her until she was finally compelled to give up her place and open a small place on Morton street. After a year passed in this street, she sold out and left for the east. Since then very little is known of her, and of late years nothing has been heard of her until the receipt of the despatch with the news of her death.⁵ There is one thing I had almost forgotten; she always took a very active part in saving young girls from a life of shame, and in cases where some had fallen she did all in her power to turn them from the sad fate that surely awaited them. Her old volunteer friends of early days are more than pleased to have been remembered by her, and though her life was not all that a woman's should be, all of us who have known her, will think kindly of the memory of the 'Fire Queen' for her many charitable deeds."⁶

Emily Casement Endnotes

1. *This date appears to be incorrect. Emily was still in New York at the end of 1850. 1850 US Census, New York, New York, Ward 15, 31 Aug 1850, Emily Edwards, ancestry.com. Several other references imply that Emily actually came to San Francisco in 1851, married Hugh Casement, and then opened a saloon, dance hall and brothel the following year. Hugh had arrived in New York in 1848. H. Casement (born in Ireland, 1826) arrived at New York from Liverpool on the ship Cambria, 18 March 1848,. ancestry .com. Two years later he set sail for San Francisco. Hugh Casement Jr. arrived at San Francisco from Panama on the ship S. S. Tennessee, 20 June 1850, Maritime Heritage Project. Then "prior to the year 1852, Hugh Casement, Jr., intermarried with Emily Edwards, ..." Supreme Court of California, April 1, 1866, 29 Cal. 612 The following article dates Emily's arrival in San Francisco no later than the middle of 1851. "... she recounted some facts which at once caused us to recognize her as the heroic woman whose fame went the rounds of the press after the great June fire in 1851" 17 May 1855, Daily Alta California. A heroic deed which Emily's husband, Hugh, may have taken advantage of "Mr. H. Casement, Jr., agent for the sale of" the "Philips' Patent Fire Annihilator." 10 Aug 1851, Daily Alta California. Later, "In the year 1852, one hundred vara lot number Two Hundred and Ninety, in San Francisco, was, for a valuable consideration, conveyed to said Hugh Casement Jr., who in the same year erected a house thereon, and with his said wife actually resided upon it...." Supreme Court of California, April 1, 1866, 29 Cal. 612. V*

2. *It is impossible to verify various parts of this statement, however, there are a number of instances where Emily's testiness regarding her race were on display. "While attending a Coroner's inquest on Monday, a Mrs. Emily Edwards came into the room and was pointed out as the lady who had been particularly assiduous and benevolent*

in her attentions to the unhappy man who was accident killed on Sunday afternoon.” She gave a “rather smart slap at a cotemporary (contemporary) for calling her a “*kind, colored woman,*” in remuneration for her services to the dying man” ... *Later in the interview, appearing to press home her point* “Mr. Reporter, would you believe that I have gone through all these tribulations - known as I am in this city - always on hand at fires, ready to divide my last dollar with the poor and needy, to be called a *colored woman!*” *17 May 1855 Daily Alta California* *On another occasion, having been called as a witness in a divorce case, the counsel for the defense objected to her testimony.* “You see, your Honor,” said Cook, “that she is certainly not white.” (*According to the law, passed in April 1851, “persons having one-half or more of negro blood, shall not be witnesses in an action or proceeding, to which a white person is a party.”*) She was thereupon examined as to her qualifications. “She said she was a Virginian, a descendant of Pocahontas, a native of Richmond, the daughter of a white woman ... She said she had not a particle of African blood in her veins, to the best of her knowledge. She pushed back her bonnet and showed abundant black and lustrous hair, free from all kinkiness. “I’ll tell ye what,” now chimed in the Fire Queen, indignantly, “I am as white as any of you, and you can’t make my hair curl with your mikerscope, or you what-you-call-it.” She was allowed to testify. *13 Sept 1862, Marysville Daily Appeal.* *This last example is from the probate deposition of Joseph S. Quire who wrote out Emily’s last will (she could neither read or write).* “I asked her why she didn’t leave something to the negroes; she says “The negroes are nothing but damned sons of bitches; Henry Hall was a negro and a damned son of a bitch.” I said “The little negroes are not to blame for what the big negroes have done.” I said, “They have no chance to acquire an education.” I said, “Don’t you think you would have been a different woman if you had had an education.” She says “Yes.” ... I said, “You can leave it to the Mayor of Richmond, Virginia, for the benefit of the colored public schools.” She says, “Put them down for a thousand dollars.”

In Emily’s Probate proceedings several deponents made comments on her appearance in her later years; “she was a short thickset woman and had black curls and wore a leghorn hat,” (Cornelia Dupree) “She always wore curls and looked different from the other ladies.” (Edith Fountain) “Deponent saw a colored woman not black, but rather of the color of Indians or Spaniards.” (Emma Durbrow)

3. *The explosion took place at about noon on the 2nd of November, 1855. Daily Alta California, 3 Nov 1855. Daily Alta California, 3 Nov 1855; Los Angeles Star, 10 Nov 1855; The Evansville Daily Journal, 4 Dec 1855.*

4. *From what we know about Emily it is rather doubtful that “the succeeding five (or 30) years her life was one of uneventful monotony ...” In 1855 she was left on her own when her husband left for Australia where he had family. (ancestry.com, Supreme Court of California, April 1, 1866, 29 Cal. 612) On the 16th of August, 1856 Emily departed San Francisco on the ship General Wool to join her husband in Melbourne, Australia. She arrived 27 November 1856. (ancestry.com) In just over a year’s time she left Victoria, Australia on the 5th of January 1858 to return to California. On the 4th of March her ship, the Glimpse, arrived at San Francisco. Daily Alta California, 5 Mar 1858 She had returned alone and was soon back at work as the proprietress at the Half-Way House*

on 10th and Folsom. *Sacramento Daily Union*, 12 Oct 1859. “In the latter part of 1860, her increasing business induced her to remove her establishment to California street, just above Kearny”. *San Francisco Daily Alta*, 27 July 1885. *Shortly thereafter, sometime between September of 1862 and September of 1864, she left for Nevada where “during the ‘60ties she resided in Carson, and was a well known character in Western Nevada. There are many who, remembering her many kind acts of charity to the poor and needy, will regret to learn of her death.” Reno Gazette-Journal, 20 July 1885. “Fire on the roof of a building on King Street occupied by a woman of the town known as the Fire Queen.” The Carson Daily Appeal, 12 Feb 1867 By 1871 she was back in San Francisco. San Francisco Chronicle, 9 May 1871. When next we read about her she was renting at 111 Morton Street, in San Francisco’s most notorious brothel district. San Francisco Examiner, 19 Jan 1874; Daily Alta California, 10 May 1874; https://www.foundsf.org/index.php?title=Maiden_Lane_and_the_Pot-holes_of_History. She is said to have moved to Auburn in 1875 and Colfax six years later where she bought a property west of the intersection of So. Auburn and Central Streets. Testimony in Placer Co. Probate File No. 226, Deed Bk JJ, Page 27, 11 August 1881.*

5. *Actually that is not quite accurate. She did appear in newspapers now and again. For being arrested on Morton Street in San Francisco in 1873. San Francisco Chronicle, 11 Jan 1873. For coming to the assistance of an old gentleman who was being assaulted by “three roughs” on the corner of Kearny and Bush street. San Francisco Examiner, 23 March 1874. For ascending the platform, following J. A. Filcher’s political campaign speech, and making a mocking harangue while discussing public affairs from her point of view. Placer Argus, 6 Sept 1879. Being arrested for fighting. Placer Herald, 29 May 1880.*

6. *A more complete picture of the extent of Emily’s “many charitable deeds” was revealed in probate depositions regarding her will. One of the best examples are the words of David Wolf, “I became acquainted with Emily Casement in the year 1865. Our acquaintance continued from the year 1865 until she died July 16th 1885 at Colfax. She very often had me attend to business for her. It was her custom during the 20 years of our acquaintance to make donations to the County Hospital at San Francisco, the Catholic Orphans Asylum at Mount St. Josephs, San Francisco, The Protestant Orphan Asylum situated near the S. W. Corner of Haight and Laguna Sts. San Francisco. She was accustomed to visit this asylum as often as 8 or 10 times a year when she lived in San Francisco, and during the last 10 years of her life while she lived in Placer County, she often came to San Francisco, and in these visits she went occasionally to this same asylum.” I suspect it came as a surprise to many to learn that Emily was a regular attendee at the 2nd African Methodist Episcopal Church, or Bethel Church, for nearly as long as she lived in San Francisco. “I saw her a great many times, can’t tell how many, can’t tell how many years she lived here. I saw her here in 1855, saw her more or less until she went to the country. I have seen her attending Bethel Church since it was founded - since 1852 or 1853. I have seen Emily Casement frequently at Bethel Church, can’t say how many times, but I have seen her there almost ever since she came to the country, until she left San Francisco. I have seen her make contributions towards the support of the church.” Charles Epps. “I met Emily Casement the first time at Bethel Church ... used to see her at Church in the afternoon*

for four or five years She was very liberally when we took up a collection or were getting up anything. ...” *Cornelia Dupree*. “I knew Mrs Casement about the time we moved into the new Church on Powell st. That was about 1865 used to see her frequently in the afternoon. She was very liberal with the Church.” *Edith Fountain*.