

Local Veteran Printer Tells Romance of California in Poem

The following poem of 27 verses was written by A. B. Williams, veteran printer of The Mail Tribune staff. It is a romance of the mining fields of California in 1852, and was written from facts told him when a boy by his parents. Mr. Williams is well acquainted with the story of the country in which the plot is laid. The poem has clarity and smoothness and is a well told tale. The author is the oldest employee of this paper, in point of service, and has served at editorial desks of papers in Utah.

It is one of Mr. Williams' hobbies to write poetry, and is widely known locally for it. He is a member of the Odd Fellows lodge, and his brothers have often been regaled in their sessions by his poems. They now threaten to fine Post Williams, unless he reads his latest work, before a regular session of the order.

The reader will also note the resemblance between the photo of Mr. Williams and Bill Nye, famous humorist, who was also a journalistic toiler in the Rocky Mountain country.



A. B. Williams.

Then was mighty hectic days, let me be telling you,
Out here in California in eighteen fifty-two.
The state was one mad scramble of men in search of gold.
With all the lurid tales you've heard, the half has not been told.
It was a heterogeneous mix of men from each land north the sun
Of brawling, tolling, cursing men, alert with shovel, pick or gun.
Each camp was like a hive of angry, warring bees—
Day and night, with nary soul that seemed to be at ease.

Cherokee was like the rest—a turbulent, wild camp.
Of swagging, reckless men and not a speck of the vamp.
A motley aggregation from home and foreign parts,
Youth and age, with only the gold fever in their hearts.

"Missouri Dan," "Sycamore Bill," "Humphus Pat," "Yankee Jim," "Poker Pete," "Lanky Lars," "Dutchy Gus," "Whiskey Tim," "Long Horn Ike," "Shanty Hobbs," "Lumpy Jack," "One-Eye Dick."

Ah see Yum, and others similar in that mining balliwick.

Now, it was but natural, with such an assorted clan,
That wide divergent views had a sponsor in each man.
Of arguments there was a medley, and quite often fist fights, too.
For when the men were not at work there was much else to do.

But all differences of opinion were mellowed at the bar.
Presided o'er by Bob O'Neill and baptized the Morning Star.
And many a stormy outbreak was soothed down into peace.
When Bob declared "one on the house" (and his prestige, too, increase).

One day, like a thunder clap, in Cherokee occurred
An event which the routine of that camp profoundly stirred—
The arrival of Tom Wade and his little sweet-faced wife,
A young and happy couple, full of energy and life.

This was the first occasion that the camp was thus invaded,
And for the time it had every other feature faded.
Dan soon got acquainted and presented to the men
His charming little damsel with a smile like oxygen.

In honor of the lady Dan proposed a rousing cheer,
And a loud and lusty huzzah rang out on the atmosphere.
Then the men all marched en masse, like troops enroute to war,
To dedicate the honor at O'Neill's responsive bar.

It must have been proposals to her health thus duly made
That lengthened out her span of years till at 80 low was laid.
And the homage of that rugged crowd from the day of dedication
To that pioneer arrival was an endless inspiration.

Tom and his little woman were contented as could be,
And he soon staked out a claim where the gold was showing free.
Then one day befell misfortune which wrapped their home in gloom—
Tom was buried by a cave-in which was o'er to be his tomb.

Two hundred feet or more in the bowels of the ground,
And weeks of dangerous work ere the body could be found.
Mary was heart-broken, but she bravely hid her grief—
In compassion of the miners she found solace and relief.

They all made up a purse of gold and placed it in her hand
And told her when she needed more it was hers but to command.
Then, as per their custom, when harmony would croon,
They sealed their compact with the seal at the Morning Star saloon.

Each interest for her comfort did those rugged men display
Mary was loath to leave them, and decided she would stay,
And did many little services for favors in return,
Like mending, sewing, washing, her modest way to earn.

And thus the summer months went by, until one autumn day,
Mary's face was missing, which occasioned some dismay.
When evening had arrived and the crowd had congregated,
At regular headquarters, the matter was debated.

After much discussion the lot was cast on Dan
To make inquiry at her home, as the best adapted man.
He started on his mission without

any more delay,
While the crowd awaited tidings their misgivings to allay.

Dan soon came rushing back and let out a booming whoop
Which a most startling effect had upon that waiting group.
"Good Lord!" he fairly shouted, "our Mary's awful sick,
And some one's got to get a doctor and get him good darned quick!
There's a new arrival comin' in a short time to these diggins,
And it's a case immediate for that venerable Doc Higgins.

An' he's got to be brought here, before tomorrow morn.
For it won't be many hours till this camp has a new-born."

Conservation in the hearts of every man took place—
A picture of complete dismay was mapped on every face.
"What the hell are we to do?" interrogated Pete.
"Old Doc's forty miles from here an' there ain't a pair of feet could bring him afore tomorrow night an' that would be too late.
But I'll do whatever's possible—I ain't one to hesitate."
"Looks like we're up against it," commented Yankee Jim.
"But I'm willin' to do my damndest, the the hope looks mighty slim."

And then, as tho it were an oracle, they gathered at the bar
And besought for inspiration of the gods of Bob's bazaar.
Suddenly O'Neill himself quelled the noisy talking din
After he had served a round of a glass of favorite gin.
"Say, boys," he said, "I'm thinkin' I've a scheme good for a draw.
How about someone a-gettin' old Plute Indian's squaw?
She ought to know about such things—so to me it would appear.
It's probable she could hold the fort till old Higgins can get here."

"A Daniel come to judgment!" ejaculated Bill.
"Solomon himself couldn't a shown a greater skill."

"I'll go and get that woman," then volunteered big Pat.
And straightway on his errand sped without a coat or hat.
"Whiskey Tim" was chosen to rush to Farmer Boone
To dispatch him for old Higgins "like a dog a-chasin' coon."
"And tell him," said O'Neill, "a hundred seeds for him in sight
If he gets old Higgins here before tomorrow night."

And having thus dispersed of this business of import,
They rounded at the bar for another evening "snort."
Scarcely half an hour had passed, when "Hoory!" erupted Jack.
"Here comes Pat upon the run with the squaw upon his back!"
Quickly Pat dispatched her at the stricken woman's door,
While the crowd cheered heartily, as they never did before.
And then they all adjourned to the usual rendezvous
To listen to Pat's story how he followed up the clue.

Tho there were momentous matters stirring men in all the states—
A campaign for president, with its thundering debates—
That nothing of men at Cherokee of nothing else gave heed
But the possibilities of Boone's and the needed Higgins' speed.

Just as dawn was breaking o'er the old ramparted hills,
The squaw beckoned to a watcher who had braved the night wind's chill.
In answer to the summons forthwith responded Dan,
While the others stood with bated breath as hastily he ran.

Old Doc disappeared within the cabin door,
And thru signs and jabberings as he'd never known before.
He interpreted a babe was born and that it was a girl.
That Mary was "heap sick—maybe die"—and with his head awhirl
He rushed to his companions, now keyed to great anxiety.
And 'twas the nearest that that group was ever drawn to real piety.

With voices hushed and sepulchral they passed a gloomy day,
While pantomimings from the squaw still gave their hopes a ray.

Long about four o'clock old Dan said "It seems to me
A sight of old Doc Higgins we ought mighty soon to see."
"Begorra," speaks up Pat, "I'll be goin' to help him thru."
And Lars got into action, with "You bet, Ay been goin' too."
Off they started down the trail, but ere a quarter hour had rolled,
Here came the doctor on a horse, like John Gilpin did of old.
Dan grabbed him from his saddle, with saddlebags and store,
And straightway hustled him up the path to Mary's door.

The group then reassembled at O'Neill's refreshment stand
To await the doctor's verdict of the case he had in hand.
They took a brace of "bracers" their long-taut nerves to ease,
Ready for any tidings their waiting to appease.

About two hours later the old doctor reappeared,
And his face was very grave as the crowd of men he neared.
"Boys," says he, "it's mighty serious, but I'm going to do my best,
And I'm going to stay right here till we know the final test."

"But the baby, I am sure, will get along all right;
And let me tell you now that if we win this fight,
We owe the preliminary to that faithful Indian squaw,
Who has done all that could be done, without a hitch or flaw."

And stay there old Doc Higgins did at his post both night and day,
Till nearly two long dreary weeks had slowly passed away.
And at his side with stolid calm that Indian squaw remained,
Nursing and caring for the babe and its tender life sustained.

Now parenthetically let it be here related
That during all that vigil the men's thumbs were barely sated.
Then one morning the old doctor ventured from the cabin door,
A drawn and haggard look his old grizzled features wore.
The men, at his appearance, sprang quickly forth to meet,
Their hearts almost suspended with the news he had to greet.

"Well, boys," says he, "at last I've got some hopeful news for you;
I now feel quite encouraged we're going to pull her thru."

And then spontaneously there came a lusty shout;
As tho the weary men must let their relaxed feelings out.
But the doctor quickly cautioned Mary must have rest and quiet,
Patient nursing and good care and good and wholesome diet.

"Well, doc, have one on the house," said Bob, with usual grace,
"And then turn in a welcome bunk and restore your tired face."
"And, boys," says Dan, "let's all have one, and I propose this toast:
Here's hoping Mary soon is well and again is at her post."

And with "Aye! aye!" and "Here! here!" the toast in form was drank,
And a round to doctor and the squaw the toasting glasses clank.

The time passed uneventful for about another week,
When the doctor told the boys they might have a little peek
At Mary and her babe; and like timid, furtive hares
They solemnly marched to Mary's house with odd assorted airs.
And one by one they greeted her with homely words and grace,
And then were privileged to gaze upon the baby's ruddy face.

"You fine old men," said Mary, "you've been so good and true,
I'm going to leave the naming of the baby up to you."
And then, the visit over, they adjourned to O'Neill's joint
To select a suited name and with libations due annoint.
After much deliberation they proved unequal to the task,
Even with the inspiration of good notions from the flask.
They reported back to Mary that

the jury couldn't agree.
And that she'd have to find a name for the babe of Cherokee.

"Well you dear old boys," said she, and the tears welled to her eyes,
"You've been so generous with your gold and your help's been such a prize,
And this Indian squaw, God bless her, having almost been its mamma,
In honor of you all, I'm going to call her Goldie Tahma."

The name unanimously was seconded then and there,
Then quickly the men bolted out into the open air
To give vent to their feelings in one big rousing cheer.
Then straightaway for their usual haunt each pair of footsteps steer.

"Now, comrades," said Missouri Dan, "we've still another chore—
A nest egg for that little one we've got to put in store.
And I propose that each man donate a whole month's pot
As a foundation for the future of Mary's little tot."

"Unanimous!" they all exclaimed, and to bind the bargain tight,
Each one pledged a round of drinks ere they parted for the night.
And they all stood by their compact and made up a tidy sum,
And 'mongst most cheerful of the givers was the heathen Chink See Yum.

It was not long till Mary was up about again,
Much to the joy and pleasure of those rough and hardened men.
And nothing more did each of those men so dearly prize
Than his turn to hold the baby and gaze into its deep blue eyes.
And place a kiss near holy on its dimpled cheeks or lips,
And add a nuzzle to its bank with well meaning words and quips.
Never did more tenderly love's tendrils twine and curl
Than around the hearts of those coarse men for Mary and her girl.

The years sped by, men came and went, and finally came the day
When Mary and her little one had of course to go away.
And a more glum occasion never was seen in Cherokee—
Tears ran down the roughened cheeks quite unabashed and free.

The camp soon went into decline, but before old-timers went,
To honor Mary, babe and squaw, erected a quartz monument.
And to the memory of Doc Higgins, a big white boulder, too,
Whose skill the idol of the camp had safely carried thru.

Many years have passed since then, and now Goldie's old and gray,
But in pleasant occupations she whiles the hours away.
She is a mother and grandma, too, and often to her side
Come her children and grandchildren household problems to confide
And invite to reminiscences of the

days of long ago,
When California was a romance with her tide of golden flow;
But they most enjoy the one I've just been telling you—
Of the days at Cherokee in eighteen fifty-two.

Coquille Man Hunt.
MARSHFIELD, Ore., Sept. 22.—(P)—J. I. Smith, president of the Coquille Chamber of Com-

merce, was in a hospital today with a broken ankle, following an accident late yesterday when a horse he was riding in the Chamber of Commerce novelty race at the Coos and Curry fair at Myrtle Point, tangled with another and somersaulted, pinning Smith underneath.

Hundreds of sportsmen hunt quail and pheasants in the valley.

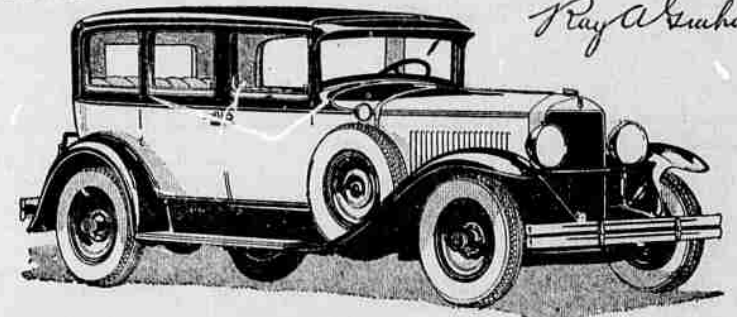
BABY BURNED TO DEATH IN VAT OF QUICKLIME
PORTLAND, Ore., Sept. 22.—(P)—Burned when she fell into a vat of lime Thursday, Evelyn Warner, aged 4, died today at a hospital. The little girl fell into the vat at the plant of the Certified Mortar company and was pulled out by a foreman who saw her arm protruding above the lime.

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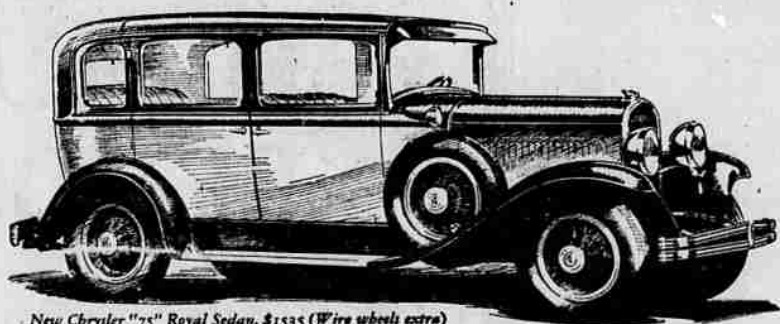
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New Chrysler "65" Prices—Business Coupe, \$1040; Roadster (with rumble seat), \$1065; 2-door Sedan, \$1065; Touring Car, \$1075; 4-door Sedan, \$1145; Coupe (with rumble seat), \$1145.

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