

Literature and History



Legends of the Gold Country

By Martin 'Red' Johnson

Henry Plumer's First Love

Chapter 14

Last Month: Henry's strongest base of support in the City itself was among the 65 sorting clubs (saloons), and a small percentage of the businessmen. Henry was not a heavy drinker, but a good social drinker.



'Red' Johnson

Henry could also calm the meanest of men in short order. Rarely did he have to resort to violence, but he was not one bit frightened to do so if needed.

The rougher element rarely challenged him. Henry's cold blue-grey eyes told them he was not one to mess with. He was not one they could bully around, although he was not a large man. They knew it isn't the size of the man in the fight; it is the size of the fight in the man that counts the most.

Henry Plumer could kill a man quickly, and they knew it without having to challenge the matter. He was soft spoken, but when he talked, men listened. They somehow knew Henry Plumer had no fear of losing his own life. No fear at all, and that was the most dangerous man to challenge. Therefore, they did not.

May 2, 1856 the votes were counted and it was still a dead tie right down to the closing of the polls. The final count was Dave Johnson 417 votes and Henry Plumeer 424! Henry had won against a well-liked, and extremely good opponent. Dave Johnson had campaigned very

hard, but did so more around the city, which was singing to the choir. Had he worked the mining camps, which had a stake in the outcome of the Marshall's election, he may have found 8 votes. A swing of 8 votes may have changed his life and Henry Plumer's forever.

The Nevada Journal was a campaigner for the American Party, and had nothing good to say about Henry Plumer's win:

"Good citizens desirous of order and not bigoted with so-called Democracy voted the American ticket...Of all the men within the city proper who pay to keep up a city organization, two-third's voted for the American candidate for Marshall. But outsiders from Rough and Ready, Red Dog, Alpha, Rush Creek, and in short, from almost every mining camp in the county, would have beaten by hard swearing the "oldest man in the world"...The infallible symptoms of democracy broken English, hiccupping, yelling-were too strong to put anyone at a loss to diagnose."

Henry's first thoughts were that

this would impress Miss B's merchant father, and from all accounts, it did. He was an important member of the city government. The Democratic Party had chosen him to be a member of the Executive Committee, who established the rules, procedures and endorsements of candidates for elections. Those twelve men were the elite of the Democratic Party of Nevada County. They consisted of attorneys, doctors, masons, and now the town's young Marshall. Although only twenty-three years old, Henry was now one of the most respected members of the community. This had to impress the young lady of his heart, and her father.

Henry was at his first City Officers meeting as the elected Marshall. The entire City Officers' membership of 1855 had been turned over in the elections. Not one was left from the list of officers. The voters had spoken and they wanted a change in the way the city was being managed.

The new officers for 1856 were: Charles Kent, Henry Tallman, Rolfe, C.T. Overton, Thomas Marsh, W.C. Jones. For the position of Treasurer was Joseph Lambert, County Assessor was Charlie Ford, and for City Marshall, Henry Plumer.

The city fathers gave Henry town ordinances and responsibilities for him to carry out during his tenure: Three main responsibilities were:

1. Keep an orderly town, that is, arrest persons breaching the peace, suppress riots, take into custody vagrants or "suspicious persons whose appearance and conduct may seem to justify their being called to account for their manner of living", and arrest any persons making threats of violence. To do so, he is authorized to enter "any house in which may exist a riot or disturbance or other proceedings calculated to disturb the peace of the neighborhood."

To Be Continued

The Western Folklife Center -- the 26th National Cowboy Poetry Gathering

Few would argue that the cowboy is the iconic image of the American West. Yet, Florida cattle ranching is a far older tradition, beginning in the 16th century when Ponce de Leon first introduced Spanish cattle to the area. And Florida continues to be one of the top three cattle-producing states east of the Mississippi.

Most Florida cowboys are known as "Crackers," a moniker that both refers to the pioneer descendants of the state as well as to the sound of the cow whip he (or she) traditionally uses to help move cattle through the Florida terrain. Cowboys from the Seminole Tribe also figure prominently in Florida's cattle history and culture. In Louisiana the swamp or marsh cowboys like to brag that "anyone can herd cows on dry land."

These southeastern cowboys will join their western counterparts at the nation's largest annual celebration of cowboy culture—the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering—in Elko, Nevada, January 23-30, 2010. For eight days the small community of Elko will overflow with thousands of cowboys and cowgirls, poets and musicians, artisans and scholars, rural and city people, all of whom share a love of the American West.

Poetry and music are the mainstays of the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and this year, close to 90 poets and musicians from the U.S., Canada and Australia will perform on eight stages at five different venues. Purchase tickets at: www.westernfolklife.org or by calling 888-880-5885. The National Cowboy Poetry Gathering—known simply as "Elko" to many—presents and preserves the traditional and contemporary arts created by cowboys, ranch people and all those who live close to the land in the American West, through poetry, music, stories, hand-crafted gear, film, photography, food, discussions and more.

Highlights include 2009 National Heritage Fellowship recipient Joel Nelson, of Alpine, Texas, as well as previous National Heritage Fellows Glenn Ohrlin and Wallace McRae. The National Heritage Fellowship is awarded by the National Endowment for the Arts and is the nation's highest honor for excellence in the traditional arts.

In addition, Elko will welcome eight new artists to its stages—including seven-year-old Cora Wood—and will welcome back perennial favorites like Baxter Black, Ian Tyson, Riders in the Sky, Wylie & The Wild West, Paul Zarzyski, Don Edwards, Corb Lund and the Hurtin' Albertans and many more.

For more info about the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, visit our website at www.westernfolklife.org. If you have questions or need more information, please contact dminter@westernfolklife.org Attn: Darcy, or 775-340-4240.

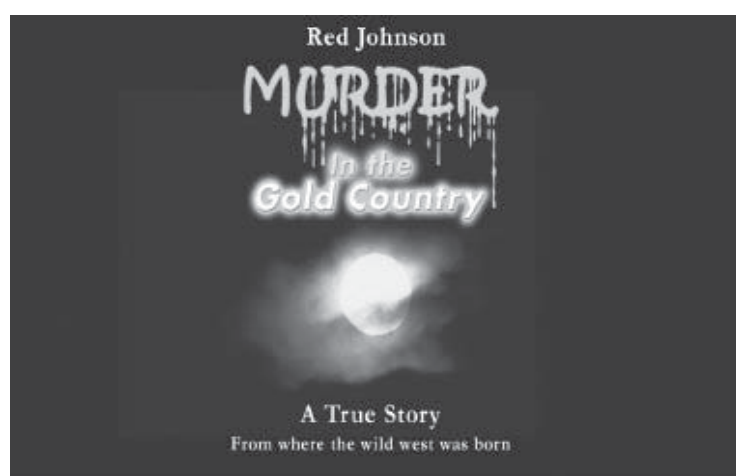
The Elko Gathering experience is made richer by the hands-on workshops that are offered every year. Western Folklife Center • 501 Railroad Street, 775.738.7508. Visit us at www.westernfolklife.org

From the Vine

Continued from page 9

...in a Dutch oven; reduce heat, and simmer 15 minutes. Pour mixture through a wire-mesh strainer into a pitcher, discarding mulling spices. Serve wine hot. *Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Until next year, Gary and Sue.* Send us your comments, favorite recipes and favorite stories to fromthevine@pacbell.net or write to us c/o Gold Country Times, PO Box 897, Sutter Creek, CA 95685.

"I drink champagne when I'm happy and when I'm sad. Sometimes I drink it when I'm alone. When I have company, I consider it obligatory. I trifle with it if I'm not hungry and drink it when I am. Otherwise I never touch it - unless I'm thirsty." - by *Madame Bollinger* (one of the grandes dames of Champagne).



MURDER IN THE GOLD COUNTRY CAN BE PURCHASED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

IN AMADOR COUNTY

The Bubble Gum Book Store, 59 Main St., Sutter Creek
Convergence Winery, Plymouth Hwy., #124, Plymouth
Red's Antiques, 12 W. Main St., Ione
Historical Ione Hotel, Main St., Ione
Marlene & Glen's Cafe, 18726 Hwy. 49, Plymouth
The Ranch Emporium, Hwy. 49, Plymouth
U.S. Post Office, Drytown

IN CALAVERAS COUNTY

Books & More, 328 N. Main Street, Angel's Camp
Calaveras County Historical Society Book Store, 30 N. Main St., San Andreas
Frank's Cafe, 8085 Hwy 26, Mokelumne Hill

IN EL DORADO COUNTY

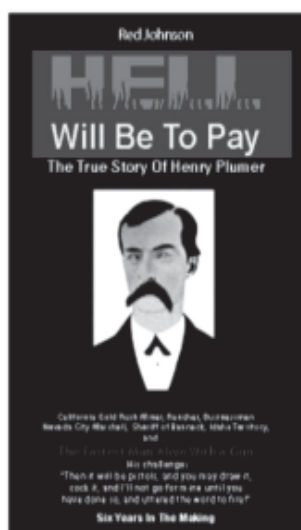
Books 'n' Bears, 6211 Pleasant Valley Rd.
Diamond Springs Hotel & Restaurant, 545 Main Street, Diamond Springs
Gold Hill Hotel, Restaurant & Book Store, Gold Hill, Nevada
The Folsom Museum, Sutter Street, Folsom
Placerville News, 409 Main St., Placerville

IN TUOLUMNE COUNTY

Mountain Bookstore, 13791 Mono Way, Sonoma

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT 'RED' JOHNSON: RED@GOLDCOUNTRYTIMES.COM OR WRITE TO HIM, C/O THE GOLD COUNTRY TIMES, P.O. BOX 897, SUTTER CREEK, CA 95685

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