



JOAQUIN MILLER NEWSLETTER

Volume II Number 11 ISSN 1536-2140 © 2005 Margaret Guilford-Kardell

April 2005

Note: MGK's new e-mail address is joaquinmiller@comcast.net and MGK's physical address and phone number are: 8242 Salish Lane, Blaine, WA 98230-9545. (This a gated community so call ahead please, 360-371-2474.)

(Readers fill in some ? marks herein from your own files please - mine are mostly still unpacked. Thank you. MGK)

Publications

Caution when reading JM's "The San Joaquin Valley" in John Muir's reprinted *West of the Rocky Mountains*, Philadelphia Pennsylvania: Running Press 1976; note JM writes p. 316-318, "...More than thirty years ago, while crossing the lower end of this valley with Bayard Taylor, we saw wild horses but not a single house. Seventeen years ago while on my way to Yosemite with Grace Greenwood, I saw and chronicled the fact that men and mules camped on the circuit of their sixty-mile furrow."

Now Bayard Taylor came to California in the summer of 1849 while JM didn't arrive until 1853 at the earliest and in 1857/58 could have been reading Bayard Taylor but hardly traveling with him while JM was alternately in Columbia College or living with the Indians on a McCloud River tributary.

Grace Greenwood was the pen name of Sarah Jane Lippincott who in 1871 was in Yosemite at the same time as John Muir and Emerson and published *New Life in New Lands: Notes of Travel* in 1873. But JM did return from London in 1872 and was in Yosemite June 11, according to Bancroft. JM also wrote "In Yosemite Valley" published in the *Overland Monthly* (Aug./72) which included his "The Water Falls" poem written in Yosemite, June 1872.

A must see and read for every JM fan should be Heyday's presentation with Bancroft Library of

Bear in Mind: The California Grizzly, edited with an introduction and commentary by Susan Snyder: Released: October, 2003 ISBN: 1890771708, hard-cover replete with adaptations and excerpts from JM's *True Bear Stories*, Chicago and New York: Rand McNally, 1900); (p. 7-9 Adapted from Creation story but where?); p. 102-103 from "A Grizzly's Sly Little Joke;" p. 111-113 from "My First Grizzly;" and Epilogue p. 239 from Joaquin Miller's Preface to his *True Bear Stories*. Read this and remember that Wagner reported selling the original to Rand McNally for only \$400.

Getting it right! Someday some graduate student may catalogue for us all of JM's revisions of his own work. A beginning point might be that outlined in William L. Stidger's *Giant Hours With Poet Preachers* 1918 now even available on the internet and on CD's wherein Stidger tells of hearing Abbie Leland recite JM's

"In men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still.
In men whom men pronounce Divine
I find so much of sin and blot,
I hesitate to draw the line
Between the two, where God has not!"

originally written as Byron? in 18?? but which appeared in JM's revised collection in 118 19?? [You fill in the ??/ I am not yet unpacked. MGK.] As ——— wherein "I hesitate" had been changed to "I do not dare" which Stidger attributed to JM's mature years and an implied growth in religious maturity since Stidger's whole book was on poets as preachers. To me it is perfectly possible to assume that JM simply found that "dare to" sounded better.

Our first addition to the JM bibliography for 2005 comes from David Milholland: his *Literary Oregon: One Hundred Books, 1800-2000*. (27 Jan. 2005) Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission . 9 pp. p.1 refers to Joaquin Miller as "emblematic of his

times” and p.7 quotes :

“Who tells the tale when the Indian falls, or who tells his side of the story?

A hundred Indians are killed in cold blood by the settlers, and the affair is never heard of outside of the county where it occurs.

If we wish for justice, let us, at least, try to be just. If we do wrong it seems to me to take half the sin away to be brave enough to admit it. At all events, it shows that if we have a great sin we also have one virtue - Valour!

Killed by the Indians? Yes, many good men have been killed by the Indians with cause and without cause. Many good men have died of fever. I think a man is about as likely to die a natural death in New York, New Orleans, or any other city, if he remains there as he is likely to be killed by the Indians, should he travel or remain amongst them.”

Dennis Freeman sends us Xerox copies of *California: The Empire Beautiful 1899* and *Performing the American Frontier, 1870-1906*, both cited in our forthcoming bibliography. In *The Empire* in Miller’s tribute to the author of “The Liberty’s Bell” Miller mainly quotes from Madge Morris Wagner’s own work while Kate Blythe Cothran writes more of a biographical sketch of Joaquin Miller in his later years saying inter alia, “He sits not in judgment on his fellow-man. No word of censure escapes him, and his chief admonition to men and women is to purchase a bit of ground and plant trees. These will return to [//] the care and love expended on them a thousand fold.”

Roger A. Hall’s section on McKee Rankin, Joaquin Miller, and “The Danites” in his *Performing The American Frontier* (2001) p. 92-103 clears up a lot of the chronology of the interaction between Rankin, Miller, and Bret Harte. However, Hall’s statement... “ In 1875, Miller published “First Fam’lies in the Sierras,” a story in a mining camp in the early West that imitates the successes of Bret Harte and Mark Twain,” was evidently made in ignorance of the fact that, as JM wrote in 1910 *Joaquin Miller’s Poems*. [In six volumes] Bear Edition. Vol. Six. Poetic Plays. San Francisco: The Whitaker & Ray Co. (Vol. 6 p. v), “An alert actor helped me put together

“The First Woman in the Forks” and “The Last Man of Mexican Camp” as a play called “The First Fam’lies in the Sierras.” Then I put it into book form and published it in London and Chicago.” Now “First Woman in the Forks” was first published in *The Independent* 24.1235 (1 August 1872), *Daily Alta California* 24.8178 (17 August 1872), and in *American Publisher* (September 1872) and “Last Man of Mexican Camp” was first published in the *Sacramento Daily Union* 62.7373 (30 December 1871). Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and JM were all acquaintances and all reading each other’s work during that period. Who copied “what” from “whom” is still a matter open to debate. As to JM’s reference to “An alert actor” he could have been referring to Arthur McKee Rankin, Louis Aldrich, or even the young playwright Bartley Campbell as JM was in San Francisco in the winter of 1875-6 sitting for a portrait when Bartley Campbell in 1875 “ took his company to San Francisco where he produced “The Big Bonanza,” an adaptation of the German drama “Ultimo.” It ran for four weeks at the Grand Opera House in San Francisco and netted a profit of \$16,000. “My Partner,” brought out in New York in 1879 at the Union Square Theatre, remained on the stage for years, and was played in London and Berlin. His [Campbell’s] last play “Paquita” was produced at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, which he had leased in 1885 (http://www.niulib.niu.edu/badndp/campbell_bartley.html).

JM always seems to leave us with unanswered questions.

Research

Similar questions arise when reading Barnes and Noble’s 1992 *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with a preface by Christopher Morley. The opening piece is Doyle’s 1887 “A Study in Scarlet” which some claim was possibly engendered by the fact that JM’s “The Danites” had been presented on the London and rural stages as “The Danites,” or “The Heart of the Sierras.” It opened at the Sadler Wells Theater on 26 April 1880 and ran for eight weeks. The manager, Mrs Bateman, was the first to bring to England an entire American company with an American play. A further three-week run followed at the Standard Theater and a two-week tour to the provinces. MGK

recently chanced upon a copy and finds the first clue is that Doyle spelled canyon as cañon just as JM did in his stories. Furthermore JM's "First Fam'lies in the Sierras" published in London by George Routledge & Sons in 1875 was admittedly the basis for JM's "The Danites in the Sierras" as we have just previously herein cited. JM's story is about a young woman disguised as a man who hides out from religious assassins at a mining camp called the Forks. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "A Study in Scarlet" also deals with religious assassins. JM's adaptation of his First Families book became his very successful Broadway play called "The Danites in the Sierras" before it went on to London. Thus it is perfectly possible that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle could have read or seen this JM basic story.

London Connection

In the beginning there was Ina Coolbrith and Joaquin Miller and later Ina introduced young Jack London to Miller's children's stories in *Saint Nicholas*. Still later Jack and Joaquin were both in and wrote about the Klondike, the Orient, and Mexico, and both fraternized with the painter Xavier "Marty" Martinez and other Bay Area Bohemians and writers. And they are still together in many ways.

In 2003 Ina Coolbrith (1841-1928), Joaquin Miller (1840-1913), and Jack London (1876- 1916) were on the list of 20 California Authors Selected for the California Writers Club Joint Legislative Resolution 2003 along with William Saroyan, John Steinbeck and others of present time.

In the 1970s at the beginning of my research on the life of my Uncle Finn Haakon Frolich and his years with Jack London, I found Russ and Winnie Kingman at the bookstore in Glen Ellen. Russ had a gold mine of information on Jack's connections to my Uncle Finn and their mutual friend George Sterling. Also in Russ's files was a wealth of information on Joaquin Miller who was

becoming a part of my life through my study of the Wintu Indians. Russ and I exchanged research over the years. He gave me my first copy of the picture of Joaquin dressed in fancy cowboy regalia for his Orpheum circuit days. Russ and Winnie took me to a Glen Ellen chicken dinner and we began a lifetime of conversations about London, Miller, Sterling, Coolbrith and others in their time period.

Unfortunately the bookstore will no longer be there, but we will continue our London connections here in the Newsletter. Pieces by London scholars are welcome.

Charcoal Sketches Series

A few copies of *Port Orford* (Vol. 1) and *Yreka* (Vol. 2) @ \$4.95 each (+\$1.50 s&h) and *Alaska and the Klondike* (Vol. 3) @ \$9.95 (+\$1.50 s&h) are still available.