

Murrieta Valley Historical Society Newsletter

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March 2019

It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Murrieta Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.

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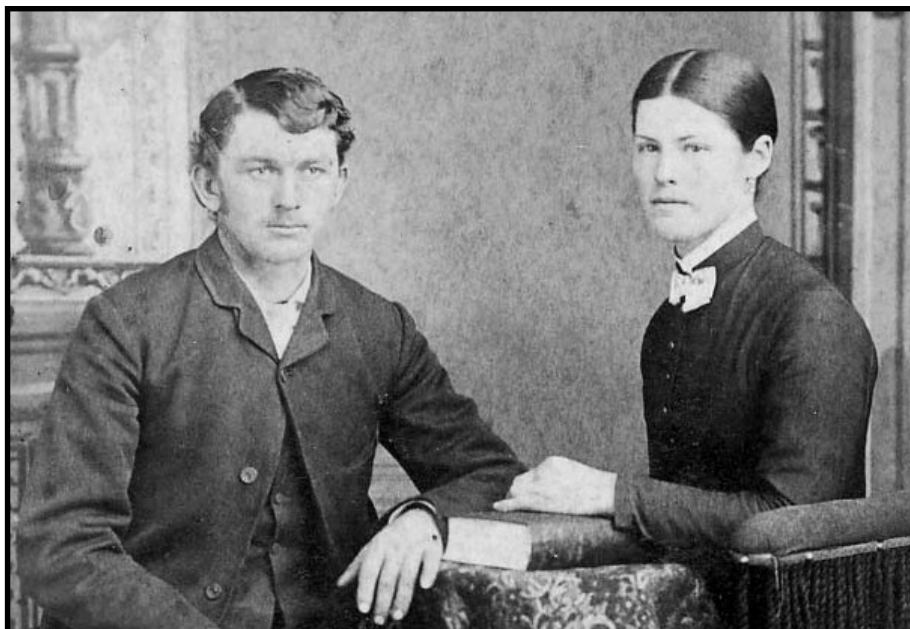
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Joseph Charles and Mary Alice (Parker) Rail
(Source: The Homer Rail Collection)

Our Family, Part One

By Floyd Rail

I will begin with information about my grandfather, Adam Riegle, whose name was changed to Rail. He was born January 21, 1815 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He moved with his parents to New York State and was later employed at Dansville, in Livingston County, as a driver and later a captain on one of the canal boats.

In 1850, Grandpa married Rebecca McCarl Baker. She was the cook on the boat he worked on. Later in the year, they moved to

Iowa where he had homesteaded some land earlier. They lived the rest of their lives near Birmingham, Iowa. They had eight children. There were five sons and three daughters. All three girls died in infancy.

The five sons were Levi (1850), Samuel (1856), John Henry (1857), Steward (1859), and Joseph Charles (1865), your grandfather.

Grandpa Rail lived on the farm in Birmingham the rest of his life, raising stock and various grain



crops. He died February 6, 1890. Grandma Rail lived until March 28, 1908. Both grandparents were buried in the Maple Hill Cemetery in Birmingham, Iowa.

From this point, I will refer to my father as Grandpa. He said that he first saw my mother when she was sixteen and about two years later they met each other. She lived in the little town of White Elm. Two years after they met, they were married. Grandpa's father gave them eighty acres as a wedding gift. (I wish I had been able to do that for you.) At the time, they sold the eighty acres, and they received \$1,000 for it.

Grandma Rail and Verna were sick much of the time. The doctor recommended a dry climate for them. Well, Grandpa had an itchy foot and he quickly took advantage of the situation and insisted they should move to

California. After much persuasion, he finally convinced Grandma to move. In 1902, they took advantage of a special offer of the railroad for adults, 25 – 30 dollars and children under 12, 50 cents each. They had a sale and headed west arriving in Reward, a small mining town between Independence and Lone Pine in Inyo County. Grandpa had two cousins living there. Their names were Charley and Joe Skinner.

They lived in Reward through the summer. Grandpa worked in the fruit orchards, taking dried fruit as partial payment for his labor. By the middle of October 1902, they decided to move to Hollywood. They had visited with some people that told them about Hollywood. They were not satisfied with Reward, so they decided to move on. At this time, Ross was 12, Freda 7, Verna 5 and Ira 2. Just the right ages to make a trek

across the desert sands with a team and wagon. (My poor mom)

They camped the first night at Lone Pine. A traveler eyed the horses and wagon and told Grandpa he would never make it with that outfit. He convinced him he should get another horse and equipment to match. The next day, they went to the first watering place by noon. It was six miles south of Lone Pine. They stopped for lunch and then headed on south. They did not get out of site of the water stop, and had to return for water that night.

The next day they tried again, but could not pull the load. Ross and Grandpa unhitched the horses and went on to the next station about ten miles and watered their team, and hired a man to pull them out of the sand. They arrived about nine o'clock (in the evening). What a lonely, hot wait for Grandma and the three small children.

It took over three weeks to struggle through the desert and the mountains. They finally reached Hollywood on November 9, 1902.

An 80-acre subdivision was opened up and Grandpa bought one lot. The prices were \$250 for corner lots and \$200 for others. He put up a 14 x 16 room, the first cabin on the tract. They lived in this house and a tent. The location of this tract was between Santa Monica Ave, Melrose, Ave, Vine and Gower. This was later the area where the

film industry began. The area was called Colegrove.

The following summer Grandma was so homesick she finally persuaded Grandpa to let the family return to Iowa. Grandma Parker, my mother's mother, was caring for her son's daughter, Myrtle. She was troubled with symptoms of T.B. and the doctor advised Grandma Parker she should find a dry, warm climate for Myrtle. By this time, Grandpa had returned to Iowa, and he used this bit of information to persuade Grandma Parker to move to California. So eventually they sold all their property and returned to California.

They arrived in Colegrove in the spring of 1904. Grandpa bought a lot on the corner of Gower and Barton streets

and Grandma Parker bought an adjoining lot. They later bought two more lots. It was seven miles from their location to Westlake and there were seven houses in that distance.

By 1906, Grandpa was getting restless again and wanted to get away from the growing city. He had heard of a place in Murrieta and took a trip to see it.

The owner of the home on ten acres in Murrieta traded for the Colegrove property. Grandpa and Ross took a two horse load and a one horse load and made the first move to Murrieta. Ross said it took about three days to make the trip by way of Los Angeles, Pomona, Corona, and Elsinore. They arrived in Murrieta on June 17, 1906. After unloading, they returned for the rest of the belong-

ings and the family, including Cecil, who had arrived November 14, 1904.

All of Grandpa's life he worked his own farm and spent the rest of the time working for his neighbors. Each of us boys had plenty of experience helping on the farm. We learned to milk cows and harness horses and all the experiences that go along with farm life.

Ross was farming before I was born, so I really didn't get too well acquainted with him as he lived on a separate farm. I do remember when Ross and Hazel got married in 1916. Ira was his best man.

I will list the birthdates and marriage dates of my brothers and sisters.





The Rail home in Murrieta. It is located on the corner of Washington Avenue and Ivy Street. (Source: The Homer Rail Collection)

One of her brother's girls was Myrtle. She married Nat Hochhalter and they lived in Los Angeles. He was a painter. They had three girls, Hazel, Helen, and Irma. Myrtle died while the girls were young and Grandma Parker took Helen and Irma to care for in Murrieta in one of the houses on our home place. Hazel stayed in Los Angeles with their dad. The girls were probably 10 and 12 years old. This was Grandma Parker's third family. What a wonderful woman she was. Murrieta people all called her Grandma Parker, and they referred to my dear mother as Aunt Mary.

Ross born May 22,
1890 , marriage October 25,
1916

Freda born February 24,
1895, marriage April 22, 1914

Verna born July 27,
1897, marriage October 10,
1922

Ira born November 10,
1900, marriage April 10, 1926

Cecil born November 14,
1904, marriage February 19,
1930

Floyd born October 20,
1909, marriage November 30,
1932

your Grandma Parker, (Sarah Jane Simpson). She had three children, my mother, Mary Alice, Uncle Eddie and Uncle Dallee (Dallas). I believe their father died from injuries received in the Civil War.

Along with the responsibility of raising her own three children, Grandma Parker took her brother's three children into her home to care for. She kept Myrtle, the youngest child, and brought her to Los Angeles with her.

It will always remain a mystery how Grandma Parker was able to make a living on the farm while raising her children. She was a very strong person.

Grandma Parker lived to be 86 years old. She made quilts for all the members of the family and I can still see her sitting by the west window of our kitchen piecing quilt blocks.

Grandma outlived my mother by four days and died in on February 18, 1933.

To be continued

I want you to know about



Museum Update

By Annette Jennings, Museum Director

The museum is almost ready for the Grand Opening on Sunday, April 28th at 10:30 am. We have decided to have the opening ceremony on the same day as the Murrieta Fireman's Annual BBQ. We will enjoy seeing all the pioneer families who reunite on this day with family, friends and to meet new people in our community. We have display cases with a variety of historical items and the history of some of the families that had a big part in the development of Murrieta.

I want to thank the Murrieta Valley Historical Society for all of their hard work and to all of the volunteers that came out to lend a hand and to our wonderful sponsors that made things happen on our special projects.

Hope to see you all at the Grand Opening!

Annette Jennings

Murrieta Valley Historical
Society Museum Director

<https://www.gofundme.com/murrietamuseum>



**GRAND
OPENING**

MURRIETA MUSEUM
A CENTER FOR CULTURE & HISTORY

Sunday, April 28th
Ribbon Cutting at 10:30 AM

41810 Juniper St, Murrieta, CA 92562
For questions call (951) 387-4862




Little House of Treasures
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951-304-1981/cell 951-970-3329
FB: LittleHouseofTreasuresMurrieta

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Monthly Board Meetings

Held on the first Monday at 5:30 p.m.

At the Murrieta Museum

41810 Juniper Street

(At Hunt Memorial Park)

All members welcome to attend

THE MURRIETA HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS,
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MURRIETA PUBLIC LIBRARY:

TEACHING AT MURRIETA ELEMENTARY

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2019 | 6 PM

8 TOWN SQUARE
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Presented by Karen Robertson, retired 3rd and 4th grade teacher from Murrieta Elementary School and comedian.

Hear how the Murrieta School District grew, and how Karen's career blossomed from teaching to coordinating technology, child care, personnel, and staff development to training over 500 teachers before her retirement in 2002.

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