



The GILMAN RANCH FLYER

Issue No. 5

Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum

Fall 1999



JAMES MARSHALL GILMAN

By Richard Sisk

PART I

In 1863, with the Civil War in its third year, the United States Congress debated whether or not to conscript young northerners into the Union Army to maintain sufficient troop levels. This no doubt worried James and Susan Mead Gilman of Meredith, New Hampshire, parents of eight children, one of whom, James Marshall Gilman, was, at the age of 20, eminently conscriptable. The Gilmans, Baptists by faith and Democratic in their politics, likely sympathized with a group known as the Peace Democrats, who denounced war by the central government on its own states. Thus, alarmed at the possibility of losing a son in a war they felt was unjustified, the Gilmans decided to send son James Marshall to live with his older brother, Granville Burns Gilman, in California.

James Marshall was summoned home from school in January 1863, and in February, with the help of 50 dollars his father had sent him for the journey home, he returned to Meredith. Still, young Gilman wasn't sure he wanted to go to California—but Granville, who lived in San Francisco, was already preparing for his brother's arrival and was urging him to come. So, despite any misgivings he may have had about leaving school, his family, his friends, and New England, James Marshall left for California in April 1863. And while he may have considered his trip to California a temporary, though indefinite, banishment, it would be twenty years before he would again see his parents or New England.

Gilman traveled to California via New York and the Isthmus of Panama. Shortly after arriving in San Francisco, he departed for The Dalles, Oregon, where he established with a

partner the mercantile firm of "French and Gilman." Whether Gilman's business was an outpost of brother Granville's San Francisco business remains unclear, though likely it was through Granville's financial resources and influence that Gilman got started in Oregon. He had no money of his own, no business experience, no known intention of going to Oregon, and no financial help from his father.

Gilman returned to San Francisco six years later, and in March 1869 he left San Francisco, traveling south at Granville's behest in search of a cattle ranch to buy. Exactly why the brothers sought a cattle ranch is uncertain. They may have seen it as a good investment, anticipating the increase in population, markets, and land values that the transcontinental railroad would bring as it stretched into California. Additionally, the cattle industry, which experienced tough times in the mid-1860s, had begun to rebound. Gilman scouted locations in San Jose, Gilroy, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles, all with unsatisfactory results. He arrived by stagecoach to San Bernardino on April 20, 1869, and in conversations with a stagecoach operator named Newton Noble, learned that Noble had a 160-acre ranch for sale in the San Geronio Pass. When Gilman first visited the ranch days later, he was favorably impressed by its potential, struck by the abundant stock range and the availability of water provided by a natural spring. But, at the none-too-experienced age of 26, and never having been a rancher, Gilman hesitated about purchasing the ranch, recording in a diary entry dated April 23, 1869, "wish I knew what to do."

TO BE CONTINUED

Note—Richard Sisk is the great-great-grandson of James Marshall Gilman. Richard's brief account was summarized from the research of John R. Brumgardt presented in his article "Pioneer by Circumstance; James Marshall Gilman and the Beginnings of Banning," Southern California Quarterly, Summer 1980.

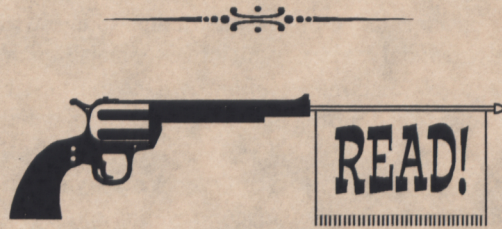


ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL EXHIBIT

An upcoming project for the museum is to put together a permanent exhibit featuring the St. Boniface Indian Industrial School. The school was opened in 1889 and continued instruction until the late 1950s. A Catholic institution, it was administered by priests and nuns and offered instruction in academics as well as

training in carpentry, farming, and printing. Girls were given additional instruction in cooking, laundry work, lace making, and "domestic arts." The school was as self-supporting as was possible. It was open to all races for a nominal monthly fee which included shoes, clothing, and board for all students except the Caucasian enrollees whose parents were expected to provide these basics for their own children. The property included 40 acres of irrigated land, 7 acres in alfalfa, and 210 acres of grazing and hillside land. Declining enrollment forced the school's eventual closure, and all the buildings were razed and the land sold.

Anyone who would like to donate artifacts, mementos, or photos relating to the school can call Bob Schley, a former student at St. Boniface, at 658-0567. Your generosity would be greatly appreciated. ★



We have a new book at the Gilman Ranch Store. *Death in his Saddlebags* chronicles the life and times of Charley Genung from the occasion of his arrival in the Arizona Territory in 1863 until his death in 1916. Charley was acquainted with many of the men and women who tracked through the wild Arizona frontier looking for gold or a place to settle and finding adventure and excitement in either case. You can meet these people too—many good, some heroic, and a few just plain bad—in this fast-paced book written by Charley's grandson, Dan Genung.

What makes this intriguing reading for those of you interested in the history of the San Gorgonio Pass is that Charley Genung married Ida Smith, the daughter of Emily and Isaac William Smith, the first Anglos to settle in the pass. There are a number of references to the Smiths and their Whitewater ranch in the book. If you are up on your history, you will recognize Ida as the sister of Martha "Mattie" Smith, who married James Marshall Gilman. ★

PLEASE JOIN US!

The Gilman ranch hands are always looking for new members. If you are not a member and would like to be, or if you know of someone who should be and isn't, now is the time to join. The dues and donations are used to fund the various Ranch Hands' projects such as the conservation and preservation of the wagons and carriages, the French Gilman Native Plant Garden, and the reconstruction of the Gilman family home.

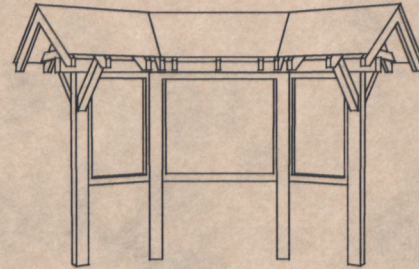
As a Gilman Ranch Hand, you will receive invitations to summer potluck dinners held under the olive trees at the ranch on the last Sunday of each month from June through September, the annual barbeque dinner served at the Banning Community Center on the last Friday in January, and dinner meetings held at the Banning Sizzler on the last Sunday of the remaining months. You will

also receive the Ranch Hands' newsletter. Dues are \$5 per individual or \$10 per family. All donations are tax deductible. To apply send your check, name, address, and phone number to:

GILMAN RANCH HANDS

P.O. Box 741
Banning, CA 92220

Be sure to let us know if you are willing to volunteer for any of the many and varied tasks required to keep the ranch going and growing. ★



THE NEW GARDEN KIOSK

Planned as a center piece for the French Gilman Native Plant Garden, the new kiosk is now in place. When the informational displays are complete, there will be an area map of the garden identifying the plants and trees. There will also be a list of the donors who have given so generously toward new plantings either directly or in remembrance of a loved one.

Funds for the construction of the kiosk were donated by the children of Ranch Hands William and Lois Deans. We thank them for the thoughtful gift commemorating their parents. ★

CAHUILLA BIRD SONGS

Alvino Siva was five or six years old when he first remembers hearing the Bird Songs. His family would come to the Gilman Ranch to work in the fruit. All the Indians who came to the ranch to work would set up a village. Every Friday the singers from different clans would begin singing Bird Songs in the early evening and continue into the night. When Alvino was about seven years old, he made a rattle from a milk can and began dancing and singing with the older singers. From then until he went into the service he learned many Bird Songs.



before Mukat and Témayawet there was nothing
everything was black
after they appeared they began to make people out of the mud
Mukat made his people slowly and perfectly
Témayawet made his people in a hurry and carelessly
the two Gods made the stars and the sun from their hearts
so they would have light to see what they had made
when Témayawet saw the people Mukat had made
Témayawet was ashamed of his creations

then he took his creatures and went underground
causing great earthquakes

the Moon Maiden Ménill was taking care
of the people of Mukat while he was creating other things
she trained them all to do many things
she showed them how to play games
she painted them and colored them
she put designs on them and made them dance
and she taught them to sing

one day Mukat passed by Ménill and overshadowed her
the Moon Maiden felt that something bad had happened
that night without saying a word to anyone
Ménill left and went up into the sky
the next morning the people looked for her
they couldn't find her and they cried
finally they saw her reflection in a pool of water
and they all jumped in to be with her but she disappeared
looking up they saw her and called her down
so they would be happy and
everything would be beautiful and wonderful again
she just smiled at them

Mukat had become a menace to his people
he put death into the world and
gave poison to the rattlesnake and
invented the bow and arrow and
tricked people into shooting one another and
the souls of the dead wandered lost in four directions

the people become very angry with Mukat
they all gathered together and
decided he must die before he created more bad things

as Mukat was dying he sang of all his creations
he recited the names of all the plants he had created
he recited the names of all the animals he had created
he taught the people the sacred traditions they were to live by
as he sang all his creatures sang with him
Mukat died singing the song
the people burned the abandoned body of Mukat
from his ashes all the food plants grow
in his death Mukat has given his people their way of life
their laws
their customs and ceremonies
and their food

The story is continues in different ways according to
different Bird Singers. Generally it goes on to tell of all of Mukat's
creations dispersing to the four winds after his death, except the
Cahuillas who gathered together and expressed their remorse in
the part they played in Mukat's death. Sad and confused, they
began a migration away from where they had lived. Different clans
took differnt routes to such places as Arizona and Mexico. As they
traveled, they sang of the land and the skies and the animals and
the birds. Their songs were sad or joyous and compared the
movement of the people to the migration of the birds. After long
journeys they came to the realization that their wanderings had
originated from the best places of all. In songs describing their
expectant trips home they "fly" over the mountains that were in
their paths.



Alvino: "I stayed in the service (20 years), because I would
think everything was going to be the same when I came back, I
would just fit back in. No way. When I came back, everybody was
dead—gone—that knew any thing (about the Bird Songs)". So
Alvino began again to sing the Bird Songs as he knew them.

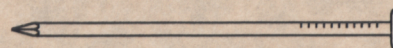
—This story was composed and edited from THE HEART IS FIRE;
The world of the Cahuilla Indians of southern California by
Deborah Dozier, published by Heyday Books, Berkeley, California,
copywrite © 1998. This book is available at the Malki Museum in
Banning.

CAHUILLA RATTLES



Just as the Bird Songs date from prehistoric
times, so do the rattles that are used to
accompany their singing. The
swishing and percussive sounds
of the gourd rattles were so
endemic to the California Indian
culture, as instruments of
rhythm and tempo, that they were
never replaced by the drums used by many
other Indian Cultures.

Each Bird Singer creates his
own rattles from carefully selected and
prepared gourds, dried seeds from fan palm
dates, and hand-carved handles of cottonwood
or cedar. While such non-traditional materials
as Elmer's Glue and acrylic paint are used to
assemble and decorate the rattles, the Cahuillas say
their ancestors would have used them had they been
available. There were no painted designs on rattles before
the modern Bird Singers, but they point out that anything
they paint on the the rattles is Cahuilla because they are
Cahuilla!



FOR WANT OF A NAIL...

Life must be understood backwards; but . . . it must
be lived forwards.

—Sören Kierkegaard

THE GILMAN RANCH FLYER

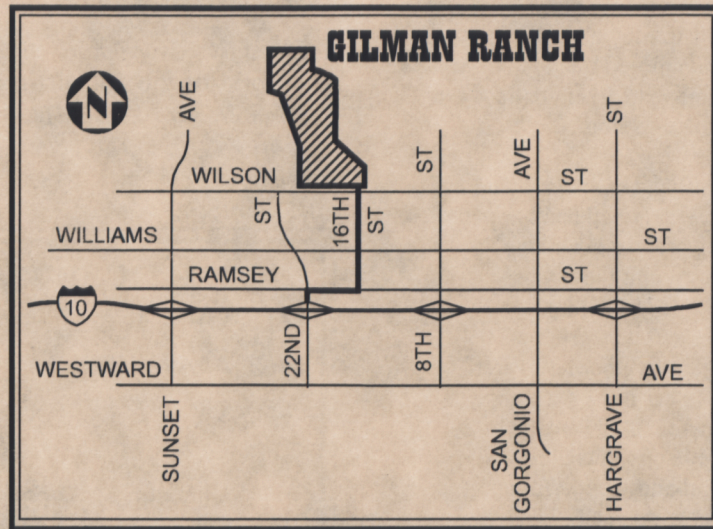


Established 1998

Shelley Kibby, Site Interpreter
Melinda Baxter, Collections Assistant
Gordon Sisk & Son, Volunteer Editors

Published by
Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum
16th & Wilson Streets
P.O. Box 733 ★ Banning, CA 92220
909-922-9200 ★ FAX 909-922-1841

Graphics:
1996-97 © RT computer graphics, Inc., NM
1999 © www.arttoday.com



The **Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum** is located at 16th and Wilson Streets in Banning, CA.



GILMAN HISTORIC RANCH AND WAGON MUSEUM

16th and Wilson Streets
P.O. Box 733 ★ Banning, CA 92220

RIVERSIDE COUNTY REGIONAL PARK  **AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT**

"To acquire, protect, develop, manage, and interpret for the inspiration, use and enjoyment of all people, a well-balanced system of areas of outstanding scenic, recreation, and historic importance."