

Nelson C. Hawks Remembrance

Part Four

In California

In California.

Wife staid at Delafield until I could establish in San Francisco. In May I sent for her and Berthelet, now nearly two years old (His birth I failed to mention in the Delafield record, which was Dec. 15, 1872.)

I selected No. 532 Clay Street for the type foundry agency. Mr. Marder staid with me two weeks, and then returned to Chicago.

In July my goods began to arrive, and I was very busy getting organized. I shall pass over the first few months, mentioning only that I leased a small house on Vallejo St. near Hyde.

Birth of the Twin Boys.

On October 13th 1874, John and Birdsall were born. Wife was more fortunate here than when Bert was born, as she was able to nurse both these little fellows, and they gave her much less trouble than Bert did. They have always been strong and well.

The Type Foundry

Was a success from the start. In 1880 I was obliged to remove to larger quarters, and rented the Parrott Building of four stories and basement, 526-528 Sacramento St, which I overhauled completely to suit my business. Top floor was manufacturing, third floor Printing department and storage, second floor office and warehouse. Ground floor I let to C. B. Leaditt & Co. for a paper store, and the basement I used for bulky wood furniture, presses and packing. I put in a 10-horse power Engine and an elevator.

another Change.

Early in 1882 I sold my interest in the foundry back to Marder Luse & Co. for \$12,000, and in May I again leased the old place 532 Clay St. and engaged in a type agency and the publishing of Home Plan auxiliary newspapers. I secured agencies from the Cincinnati Type Foundry for their presses and type, from John K. Rogers' Boston type foundry, Phelps, Dalton & Co. Boston, Pugs' Wood Type, Dimons' Cases and Furniture, Gray's Ferry and the German Type, and Barnhart Bros. Great Western Type Foundry, Chicago. In addition I retained the trade privileges of my old house. I put in a 6-horse power engine and a cylinder, and printed "one side" newspapers for the country press.

The Next Movement

Was in August of that same year, 1882, when I sold the entire plant and business to Palmer & Rey, who paid me 10% advance on the inventory cost, in Cash, and offered me a salary of \$2000 a year to take the superintendence of their business, which I accepted. It was a quick deal; the cash being paid at once, and on the second day after I had deposited, I was en route Eastward, in the interests of P. & R.

The American type foundries would not sell their goods to P. & Rey, on account of the latter having imported Scotch type and cut prices of the American list. The Scotch foundry of Miller & Richard, having suffered a loss of \$65,000 through Palmer's bad management, had stopped consignments, and P. & Rey were forced to buy for cash in order to obtain even the foreign type. This they were doing when I sold my plant to them. I refused to enter their service if they continued the importation of foreign type, and they agreed to gradually abandon it if I would secure agencies in the East for them.

This I succeeded in doing; first the Great Western of Chicago, then the Cincinnati, and last James Corner's Sons New York.

All these foundries agreed to cast our stock on my "Point" system, which I originated in 1877 while in the Pacific. I make the plain truthful statement right here, that this system is my own original invention, and that our Chicago foundry was the first to make the new moulds. Mr. Marder opposed it very bitterly, but Mr. Luse and Mr. Muller, who were practical men, endorsed it, and finally induced Marder to agree to it. I notice now, at this writing, in the 25th anniversary edition of the "American Printer," that John Marder is claiming to share the honor of this great improvement with me! Not a word is said of poor old Luse, who is dead, and cannot speak for himself, nor of Mr. Muller. If there is any "honor" in this, it belongs to me alone. Marder's firm took it up purely on a commercial basis, to make money out of it.

I hope my children will see to it that history gives me full credit. I refused to allow M. L. Geo. to patent it, as my wish was to present this new system to the world.

The Home on Polk St.

In 1876 I bought a lot on Polk St. between Lombard & Greenwich for \$750, and built a house. Here we lived till Dec. 1895, nearly 20 years - about 1885 I built a second building on the East end or rear of my lot, consisting of a billiard room below and two sleeping rooms above. One of these upper rooms was a double, or alcoved room for Birdsall and John - the north room for Bert.

The view from my home was magnificent, as we had full sweep of the Bay, from Alcatraz Island to the Golden Gate. But we had to lose it finally, on account of the hills in front of the house, being graded down 54 feet deep, to open Polk Street that one block from Greenwich to Lombard. During the progress of this work I bought a home in Alameda, on N.W. corner of Haight Avenue and Sixth St., a 10-room house and stable on lot 33 x 122.

On the 4th of July 1896 both my Polk St. houses were burned, and I shall always believe they were set afire. I recovered \$1085 insurance only. They cost me over \$4000. I sold the lot afterwards to J. G. Cantrell for \$1000.

A Visit to the Sandwich Islands

In Jan. 1895 I went to Honolulu, and spent 3 months in the islands, visiting Maui, Molokai and Hawaii. Saw the Volcano, and rode down on the West Side at night to Punaluu, where I took the steamer back to Honolulu. Enjoyed this foreign travel very much.

Going Back to 1886.

I remained with Palmer & Bay as superintendent until March 1885, when I resigned, and bought a printing office and business at 410 Kearny St. which I conducted till Jan. 1st, 1886, when I again engaged in Printers' Supplies at 320 Battery St. taking my office material over there to sell.

This business, which again included Home Plan Newspapers, was very successful, and grew so fast that in Jan. 1889 I moved to 409 Washington St. and took W. F. Shattuck as partner, who bought a half interest. Term 5 years. On Jan. 1, 1894 I sold my half interest to A. E. Shattuck, brother of W. F. and at last found myself a man of leisure.

The Death of Dear Little Mother

Occurred Jan. 25th, 1892, at Sierra Madre, where her home was with Sister Fannie. I had her body embalmed and taken East for burial in our old churchyard at Weyfield. Fannie took the sad journey.

A New Line of Business.

On my return from the islands in 1895, I became interested in photography, and joined the Camera Club. Spent over a year in landscape work, and finally in August 1896 I went East, and bought a stock of cameras, etc. and opened a Supply House at 124 Geary St., afterward removing to larger and better quarters at 36 Geary.

Again I was successful, and continued till 1901, when I removed the stock to Alameda, & put it in my barn. The reason for this was, that nearly every drug store and small stationery store went into my line, and there was at the time I gave up the city field over 70 firms in it.

The Boys Went to the Philippines
in 1898, all of them in Capt. John A. Miller's Co. F. of the First California Volunteers.

They were at the capture of Manila, battle of Santa Ana, and many smaller fights. Once they were shipwrecked in a typhoon.

At the taking of Manila, a battalion of four companies of the First Cal., including Co. F, with the Colorado regiment, were the first to scale the walls and enter the city.

Their regiment returned at the end of two years, and were given a glorious reception in S. Francisco.

The afternoon of life.

At the present writing I am living quietly at my home in Alameda. For amusement I am playing with photography in my studio, which I built on the north side of the barn, and which forms a part of a 6-room cottage, as I have converted the barn into a home for John and "Tony." The lady was a Miss Shafer of Oakland, and they were married in 1908.

I opened a dry goods and notion store on Webster St. and turned the management of it over to them on July 1, 1909. They are doing fairly well.

I served two years as President of the Alameda Improvement Club, and one year as Pres. of its executive board. Served five years as Trustee of our Public Library.

occurred at about 5 a.m. of April 18th, and in S. Francisco was followed by fire, which entirely destroyed the city. The type foundry in which I held 159 shares of stock, lost all their matrices, some 40,000, the result of 20 years work. The city began rebuilding at once, and today the magnificent results of four years are the wonder of the world. Our foundry resumed business in a weakened condition financially, but was finally absorbed by the Keystone foundry. My interest is practically lost.

1910

The whole month of December I was quite sick, in bed. Had Dr. Adam and Dr. Miller, and Tony's sister Tina, trained nurse. Was able to sit up on Jan 1st, 1911

1911

On May 1st, Bird and John took care of me, on a trip to my ranch in Cobb Valley, which I bought from Frances. It was "roughing it" but I stood it very well. In fact it was good medicine for me. John went home first.

Bird and I got a horse and buggy, and went up to Siegler's, Adams, Lakeport, Blue Lake and Saratoga. Bird injured his hand at Siegler's, and went home.

1912

I spent the Summer at the ranch. Frances came to visit me and helped me tidy up the old house. Rev. & Mrs. Gasman also came up, staying at Glenbrook. Mr. E. W. Maslin made a short visit.

George Farley, with a helper, took out the stones from the old well, and dug it 6 ft deeper; then stoning it up again. We built a frame for a pagoda over it.

1913

Spent Summer at ranch. Employed a Frenchman to help, but he proved worthless, & I let him go.

Excavated under the porch, and built 2 rooms and hall. Mr. Fields was the carpenter, and a good one. He also built a well pagoda and an engine house close by. Also a frame for a 1000 gal. tank. Snider Bros. of Carson, Nev. have bought Holden Reed's ranch. Nice boys.

This was a busy year for me. I worked hard all the time. I forgot to mention Sister Frances. Last year she came up to visit me, and staid nearly 3 months. We visited Lakeport for a couple of days.

1914, 1915, 1916

The summers of these years were spent at my mountain home. Although I worked hard, improving the place, my health was much better. I used to go up there April 1st, and stay till November, making a visit home at the end of each month for 3 or 4 days.

Jack and Tony came up and staid a month I think it was ~~the~~ April 1914, when I began building a 4 room Cottage near the well. Just after they closed the Store on Webster St.

The Lake Co. place cost me a lot of money, but it is now in fine shape. I took down the old front fence and put up a new steel wire one, and also a cross fence between the two houses. Built a Garage. Installed a Gasoline engine and piped water from well to Tank, 350 feet. Put a new shingle roof on front half of old house. Built cement steps to Porch, and a vault in the side hill, for meat, butter & milk. Also a cement wall along walk to front gate, about 90 ft.

Water is piped to both houses.

The new house has 4 rooms and Bath.

1917

On Jan 1st I exchanged my Keystone Stock for a Printing outfit, and rented the old store on Webster St. Back to my old first love, Printing.

Did not go to Lake Co. till October, when Mr. W. J. Taylor and I went up & staid a week.

I rented the old house to Mrs. Blann, who is still there.

1917

On the evening of Nov. 7th our neighbors, to the number of about fifty, gave us a reception at the Randolph Mission, to celebrate our fiftieth anniversary of married life, or Golden Wedding.

It was a complete surprise to us, and was a very happy event. The room was packed. A grand supper was spread, and wife and I were placed with much ceremony at the head of the long table that extended the whole length of the room.

In front of us was an immense cake, frosted and bearing dates of 1867 and 1917, as well as fifty wax candles.

Of course we were overwhelmed with congratulations, and there were many speeches. It was a decidedly complimentary and pleasant affair.

1920

After about three years work in my printing office, "The Island City Press," I sold the outfit to Mr. Joseph Wilson.

In February I was taken to the Hamada Sanitarium of Miss Breedon, where I remained two months and five days, during which Dr. Wm. A. Clark removed my prostate gland, from which I had suffered for ten years, through pressure against the bladder.

I record here that I suffered no pain from the operation. I had the best care from the nurses, and Miss Breedon, and my former trouble was completely removed. I gained 17 1/2 lbs. in weight.

I had many visitors, who brought me many little delicacies.

1925.

At present writing, I am in my 85th year, and no doubt near the end of my journalizing. I leave this book to the boys, who may find some satisfaction from it.

At this date, April 1st, I will state that my Lake county place is still unsold. The larger house has a tenant.

I am still a director in the West End Building Association, in which I hold 542 shares of stock.

Genealogy

I am sorry I cannot give a more complete record of the family tree. Through correspondence I secured the early colonial record, but I am not positive as to the later ones. The only clue that seems to furnish the connecting link is the fact that my grandfather Hawks was named William. As my father was born in 1803, it is fairly evident that his father would enter his field during the days of the Revolution. The only one of this name that I can find is in the generation of James.

Of course, it is possible I am off the true line, and we may have descended from one of the branch lines. But this William dates about right for a strong suspicion that he was my grandfather.

Lynn, Mass. is the radial center of the Hawks tribe. Perhaps some of my descendants may be able to obtain many of the missing names.

At any rate, I am satisfied that ours is the Puritan and not the Southern branch. Our ancestor Adam came in May 1630, to Plymouth. John in Aug 1630 to Jamestown, Va.