



Life In Our Time

THE CULLUMBERS

of

San Juan Valley

by

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Joe, Jr. abt. Age 5 on the Flint Ranch

Introduction Family History

My interest in genealogy and family history began when I entered my first year of school in 1926. I was eight years old. We lived on the Flint Ranch a mile from Olympia school, where mother had gone for schooling in a horse-and-buggy with her brothers and sisters; the school was built on land furnished by the Flints. In that generation, mostly all mother's classmates were of Anglo-Saxon decent: Gleason, Duncan etc.

The old school, where grandfather Flint had been trustee, had burned and a new one had been built in the mid 1920's. Due to the overflow of students, the first grades were housed in an old single-walled board-and-batten shack at the rear of the school property with a kerosene stove for heat.

My preschool years were spent on the sprawling ranch with my younger brother and the dog, so seeing all of these young people gathered in this one room was a new experience. I was an oddball. I wasn't Portuguese or Japanese, as were most of the students. Their parents came from another land and spoke a second language. What was I? Where did we come from? Why didn't we speak another language? Why didn't we go to the old Mission to church on Sunday where all the Portuguese went? Answers to my questions were vague. Mother's reply was that her father said he was a blue-blooded Yankee and a Republican. Father said his people were Scotch-Irish and English and came to California on the California Trail, Oregon Trail, and the Santa Fe Trail in covered wagons. How did we all get together in San Benito County? (Monterey County until 1874) My search began.

I found that all our ancestors had come to America beginning nearly 400 years ago in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Those who came to California came in the last century by ship via Panama and overland on the California Trail, Oregon Trail and the Santa Fe Trail.

1. Breen (1847) to California
2. Flint (1849) to California
3. Chambers (1853) to California, 1869 to this county
4. Cullumber (Hannah, 1856) to this county



Henry S. Chambers
“The Old Bar Hunter”
Bitterwater/Hernandez, California

Letter from William McHaley to his sister and brother-in-law, Jane and Harvey Akers:

March the 25, 1870

“Dear brother and sister. After waiting suntime for a muncer I take this opportunity of dropping you a few lines to let you no about our bar fite. A grisely cild a cow for one ouf our nabers and me and Henry (Chambers) and three others tucke hit tracke and falered him about too mles found him in the brech. We got above when come a hole and we cud see him thru the bruch. Henery shot him down and he ran of in the brush. We falered him thru the bresh about a hundred yards, right thru the thicke bresh and we got rite one him before we node hit. He mad one Gumpe and lite rite on tope of Henry, then he gumpe on me and another man. The bresh was so thick that we cud not use our gunes. He hurte Henry very bad - bite him rite there in the lungs. He can't move onley as he is lifted. We have had doctor Greenlefe to see him twist. I think that he by good treatment. The olde feler herte me prite bad. He bit me thru the ankle and thru the thy but nothing very dangres. I think I be all rit in two or three weekes....”¹

¹ And Then There Were Three Thousand by Donna Hull, pgs 140-141 Original letter owned by Donna M. Hull