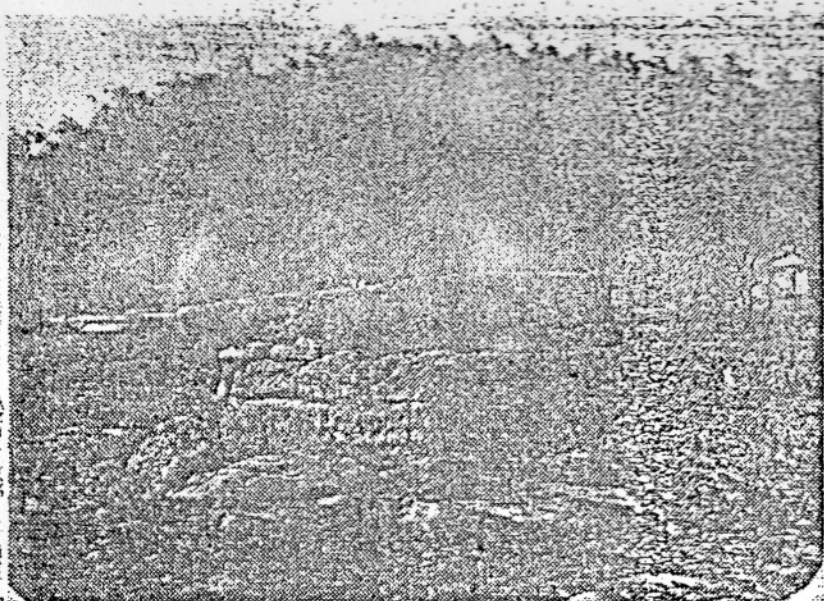


I Remember . . . The Death and Burial Of Robert Stockton

By—MRS. IOLENE HAWKINS



Robert Stockton's Grave

About the year 1780, two men, Beachem Rhodes and Robert Stockton, mounted and followed by two good dogs, set out for a few days hunt on Fox Creek where game of all kinds was abundant. They established their camp on a tributary of Fox, a short distance east of what is now known as Bell Grove Springs. One night after an unusually successful day's hunt while both men were asleep, two Indians stole up on the camp and shot them. Stockton was killed and his companion dangerously wounded. Rhodes crawled beyond the light of the fires while the dogs fiercely assailed the Indians. Then instead of killing the wounded man and scalping them as was their custom, the Indians mounted the horses and fled followed by one of the dogs. Being wounded in the hip and unable to walk, Beachem, who possessed wonderful pluck, crawled into the creek where he remained concealed in a pile of drift wood during the remainder of the night and the next day and then he started homeward.

After several days he reached Fleming Creek (known as Weaver's Ford and the exact place under the railroad bridge of the C F & S. railroad where the wreck of May 10, 1908 occurred) having crawled the entire distance of fourteen miles. Here he met another hunter from the station who conveyed him to his home.

Very soon the friends of Stockton were on their way to Fox Creek to care for his body which they found guarded by his faithful dog. The smell of blood had attracted beasts of prey to the spot but the brave dogs had kept them at bay and none had touched the body. The remains were buried where they lay. A large slab marks the spot and this may yet be seen near the little creek one mile from Bell Grove Springs and two miles southeast of

Plummers Landing. The creek bears the name of him who died upon its banks . . . Stockton.

"His faithful dog in life his firmest friend,

The first to welcome, foremost to defend,

Whose honest heart was still his master's own

Who labored, fought, lived and breathed for him alone" Was no weak from starvation that he could not walk and was carried back to the fort where, in a few weeks, he was joined by the other that had followed the Indians and the horses.

Some time ago, Mr. G. C. Sherwood of Orange, California, sent me some pictures of old bridges and other things and among them was one of the grave of Stockton and the following poem. I thought his Fleming county friends would like to read it. Beside writing, Clarence has also turned to landscape painting. I suppose the sunshine of California has brought out these talents.

A Grave In The Mountains

Far up the hills
Where laughing rills
Run by a nook secluded
Where history
Its tragedy
Of life and death intruded.

These streams still meet
In chorus sweet
Out to the Blue Grass windings
The winds still sigh
The same blue sky
Above the spot are bending.
Yet with what dreams
By those bright streams
A hunter brave is sleeping
Where sunshine soft
As dawning, oft
O'er his grave comes creeping
Night's shadows deep
Around him sweep
As when the Indians slayed him:
A great gray stone
Lies there alone
To mark where comrades laid him: