

A Howling Wilderness: Stagecoach Days in the Mountains

By Stephen Payne

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The roads over the Santa Cruz Mountains served not only the settlers and loggers living and working on the summit, but also provided the means by which people could travel to and from Santa Cruz or San Jose via the stagecoach. The early organized road companies quickly saw the benefit of stage travel and encouraged use by the various stage companies of the day.

The first stagecoach line in California was established by John Whistman in the autumn of 1849. This line operated between San Francisco and San Jose, with the latter city serving as its headquarters. The fare for the nine hour trip was two ounces of gold or \$32.00. The line ran an old French omnibus with mules and mustangs pulling the coach. With the first winter rain the operation came to a halt due to the poor road conditions. During the winter the line ran from San Jose to Alviso, where passengers caught the ferry to San Francisco. With spring weather the line went back to full service between San Francisco and San Jose. (36:255-256; 45:236-237; 55:Vol. VII,151)

As the years progressed other entrepreneurs established lines throughout California. The first service connecting Santa Cruz and San Jose was established in 1854. The line ran from Santa Cruz to San Juan Bautista, then on to San Jose. Passengers going on to San Francisco stayed overnight before continuing on to the steamboat landing at Alviso. This line soon had an opposition line running from Santa Cruz to Soquel, then to Watsonville and over the Pajaro Turnpike mountain road into Gilroy and on to San Jose. (49:27; 62:477)

In 1855 the California Stage Company was awarded the United States mail contract between San Jose and Santa Cruz, which paid \$1,000 annually. The California Stage Company's fare was \$5.00 from Santa Cruz to San Francisco. (5:231; 66:94) The California Stage Company went out

of business on March 1, 1855, but local employees in Santa Cruz formed the Pacific Express Company, operating the same route from Santa Cruz to San Francisco. (66:125)

Another stage route to San Jose was established in 1857. This route started in downtown Santa Cruz, crossed the San Lorenzo River at the Water Street Bridge and went up Graham Grade, past where the Pasatiempo Golf Course is now located, to Abraham Hendricks' stage stop in Scotts Valley. At Hendricks' two horses were added to the four-horse team for the journey up the mountain grade to Station Ranch, owned by Charles Christopher Martin, and then on up the mountain to Mountain Charley's stage stop, owned by Charles McKiernan. (62:477) From Mountain Charley's the route went down the mountain to Patchen, Alma, Lexington (where the two additional horses were left off), Los Gatos, and on to San Jose.

In 1858 Frederic A. Hihn joined together with other Santa Cruz businessmen to form a joint stock stage company. The new stage route went from Santa Cruz to Soquel, then up the San Jose-Soquel Road to "Bonny Blink" Hotel at Terrace Grove Road. From there the stage had another stop less than a mile up the road at the old Hotel de Redwood. (62:477) From this point the line went over the Morrell Cut-off to Summit Road and on to Patchen. From there it followed the stage route to San Jose. One stage line ran daily, while the other ran tri-weekly carrying the mail. (5:250 fn.24, 266)

A description of the early stage drivers' duties was written by Lucy Foster Sexton:

"The stages stopped at the towns with post offices, leaving the mail in boxes between. Driving up to farmers' boxes on tall polls, the bundles were thrown in, much as it is done on the rail road. The school children furnished the delivery."

These early stages were "gaudily painted" and pulled by four horses which were changed every fifteen miles at a saloon or hotel, and handled by lively drivers. (37:161)

In 1850 Warren Hall and Jared B. Crandall bought out Whistman's stage line. The new owners purchased Mud-wagons and horses from William Beeks who had brought them across the plains. (Mudwagons were light weight coaches designed for the winter roads, not for comfort.) (36:256) The following year Hall traveled to Concord, New Hampshire, and purchased several Concord coaches from the Abbott-Downing Company. These new coaches were added to Hall's and Crandall's stage line because the earlier coaches were not much more than buckboard wagons of various sizes and descriptions. Although the Concord coaches were the latest innovation in travel, the coaches were too heavy for winter roads, which were hardly more than one mud hole after another. During the winter months the mud wagons were used even though many of the mountain roads were totally impassable. The Concord coaches (For a detailed description of these coaches see 35:392-393.) were used in the spring after the roads dried out, and in the summer until the first autumn rains came. (36:258,260 fn. 17)

The Concord coaches seated nine passengers on the inside and eight on top. In good weather the favored position was next to the colorful driver. Those so honored were expected to treat

the driver with drinks and cigars on the road. At the stations the drivers drank for free, although the drivers were seldom drunk on the road. They were considered to be sober and dependable men. (35:392-393; 36:257,259 fn. 13)

N. C. Adams, one of the most accommodating drivers on the Santa Cruz Mountain route, while making up for lost time one day was stopped by a lady, who, after calling to him went back into her house. Thinking that the woman was going to fetch a package, Adams waited. After five minutes, Adams climbed off the stage and knocked at the door, calling out,

"Madame, ain't you pretty near ready?"

Hurrying to the door the embarrassed woman replied,

"Oh, Mr. Driver, I ain't going on the stage, but I want to send a roll of butter to San Jose and it's nearly come. Won't you wait till I finish it?"

With that, Adams swallowed a quid of tobacco to distract his own attention, and waited.

Another driver, Sid Conover, had the self-appointed duty of supplying stamps to the ladies on his route, who "didn't have a stamp in the house. " (44:81)

One of the most famous drivers on the mountain route was Charley Parkhurst, who drove over the mountain roads about 1868. The story of this driver is well known. Like all stage drivers, Parkhurst wore a heavy muffler, gloves, a buffalo skin coat and cap, and blue jeans-turned up to reveal cuffs of an expensive pair of trousers worn under the jeans. Also, like other drivers, Parkhurst had a sharp throaty whistle, used like a horn to warn others that the stage was just around a sharp corner. For these reasons she was able to hide her identity until her death. (38:6/24/1934)

The drive over the Santa Cruz Mountains was more than merely a means of conveyance from one point to another. The ride was also a form of entertainment, similar to rafting down a river or other dangerous sports today. The ride was described in the May 1873 issue of Scribner's Monthly by Susan Coolidge:

"From San Jose, a day's staging over the summit of the Coast Range brings you to Santa Cruz, the favorite watering-place of California. I would advise any one with a few spare day's at command, to take this excursion, if only for the sake of the ride over the mountain, which is wonderfully fine. Flower-lovers should not fail to do so, for such roses, geraniums, jeasamines, and passion-flowers grow nowhere else as run riot in every little garden in Santa Cruz." (19)

Another description of the mountain route appeared in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* on May 16, 1874, titled "The Mountain Ride:"

"The ride across the Santa Cruz Mountains is one of the most attractive stage trips in California. The roads from Santa Clara to Santa Cruz command some very picturesque views. . . . Ward & Colegrove's Concord coaches meet the morning train from San Francisco at Santa Clara. Passengers reach Santa Cruz in time for dinner the same day. From Santa Clara depot to the base of the Mountains at Santa Cruz Gap, the route lays across one of the most fascinating portions of the Santa Clara Valley. . . . The passage through Santa Cruz Gap introduces a change in the scene. . . . The Gap looks like a weird canyon both walls of which are rocky and rugged. It is a slight grade for the coach and the six horses have an easy thing of it climbing up the timber skirted slopes. . . . On the summit fourteen miles from Santa Clara and just before reaching the well-known abode of Mountain Charley, the landscape expands and stretches out to such proportions that the eye is lost in the vastness of the scene. Far below, over the tops of the redwood trees an enchanting view of the Bay of Monterey is obtained. It is the distant silver lining to a cloud of forest-crowned hills. The ride now becomes exciting. Ward, a veteran among California stage coach veterans, handles the reins over six splendid and sure-footed animals. Under his skillful guidance these horses seem to fly as they whirl the coach down steep hills, and around the shortest of curves. His partner Colegrove, drives the stage on the alternate days, and his fame as a driver is not second to Ward's. Both are artists in their time and with either on the box there is no danger on the mountainous path."(27)

The coaches, horses, and drivers that traveled the Santa Cruz Mountain stage routes from the 1850's to the 1880's were part of a wild and exciting era. Two of the drivers mentioned in the last account left memoirs, Henry C. Ward and George Lewis Colegrove. Ward's account deals with other phases of early California staging, but Colegrove's account as both a stage driver and later as a conductor on the South Pacific Coast Railroad offers a look back to the stagecoach days in the Santa Cruz Mountains. A look at his life offers a generalized glimpse of what all other stage drivers' lives were like during the stagecoach era in California.

George Lewis Colegrove was born in the Dundee area of McHenry County, Illinois, on March 29, 1843. When he was seven, George's father, John Smith Colegrove, left his family and went to the gold fields in California. John Colegrove eventually settled near Dutch Flat, California. At twelve, young Colegrove went to live with an uncle, Louis Holdridge, with whom he lived until he was eighteen. Leaving his uncle's home, George traveled to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he worked in a livery stable. With the onset of the Civil War, Colegrove joined the Union Army, but he broke his leg and was left behind when his company went off to war. In March 1863, Colegrove drove the lead wagon in an emigrant wagon train traveling to California.

Upon reaching California, Colegrove worked as a teamster in San Francisco (1:ii-iii) until July 1869, when he hired on as a driver for the Santa Cruz and San Jose Stage Line. In the company of the line's owner, Billy Reynolds, Colegrove first drove a stage over the Santa Cruz Mountains on July 15, 1869. The stage left Santa Clara with four horses, stopping at Lexington where the company had a bar, to add two more horses for the ascent of the mountain. At the Scotts

Valley Station the additional horses were left and the stage continued on to Santa Cruz. (1:43-45)

A few months later Reynolds sold his stage company to McFarlane and his son, William "Bill" McFarlane, who ran the line for his father. The station agent, Henry Whinery (or Winnery), at Santa Clara was too set in his ways to make changes suggested by the McFarlanes. After an argument Whinery left. Traveling to Santa Cruz, where he had many friends, Whinery formed a new joint stock company. The largest shareholder was Charles McKiernan, the owner of the toll road at the summit. One of the drivers, Cambridge, who had crossed the plains with Colegrove, quit the McFarlanes and went to work for Whinery's new company. (1:45-47)

With the new competition, McFarlane was forced to lower his fares from \$2.50 down to \$1.00, and a price war ensued. Although both companies were carrying full loads of passengers, they were both losing money. Still the fight went on. (1:47-48)

As Charles McKiernan was the largest shareholder in the opposition line he had had to pay most of the losses during the past year. He was anxious to end the war as the only revenue he had was what money he could make off his toll road. At first, this did not matter because the McFarlanes were paying most of that money, since they had to use the road for their stage operations, paying \$2.00 a day. But one day McFarlane Senior had talked with McKiernan in town and told him that it was not fair for the McFarlanes to be subsidizing the opposition. McFarlane met with the settlers along the old San Jose-Soquel Road and together they fixed up the road and bridges, thus abandoning McKiernan's toll road.

After a year of the price war there existed bitter feelings on both sides. During this time Colegrove was living with the McFarlanes. One morning as the men were having breakfast Charles McKiernan came down from his ranch to talk over the situation:

"Now, Mr. McFarlane, it has been an awful long hard fight. I think it is time we quit it. I have a proposition that I would like to have you interested in. I would like to consolidate these lines and make it a joint stock company. We would take one side off and put the fare up and make it pay. We have lost money enough."

After McKiernan left the breakfast meeting, Colegrove told McFarlane Senior that he did not feel that they should consolidate: "If you stay with it and do not consolidate with them they will quit the business in the next month or six weeks." Colegrove then offered to work for nothing, but, in the end, the lines were consolidated.

Shortly after the lines were consolidated the McFarlanes were forced out of the business altogether, leaving Colegrove without a job. (1:48-5 1) After a short camping trip in the Boulder Creek area of the Santa Cruz Mountains, Colegrove went into San Jose and talked to William "Uncle Billy" Hall, the second operator of a stage line in California and the first to use Concord coaches. Colegrove discussed the feasibility of starting, another opposition line to that of Whinery and McKiernan.

Hall, who had disapproved of Whinery and McKiernan's practice of forcing the McFarlanes out of business, told Colegrove that he still had several horses and a Concord coach. Hall agreed to let Colegrove use the stock and equipment for free as long as Hall's name was not mentioned. With this, Colegrove started up an opposition line with Thomas Mann as an alternate driver.

Although Colegrove lowered the fare to \$1.00 for travel on the new Pioneer Stage Line, from San Jose to Santa Cruz, the Mountain Charley Stage Line did not follow suit. Whinery and McKiernan felt that, since they were already established and known, they had no worry from competition. Within a month Colegrove had to add an additional coach, and shortly after that Colegrove bought another Concord from a man in Watsonville for \$225. (1:58-78)

In the spring of 1872, having lost too much money, McKiernan talked to Santa Cruz Sheriff Charles Lincoln about running the stage line. Lincoln told McKiernan that he would think about the offer, then he went to see Colegrove. Posing as the new owner, Lincoln told Colegrove that he had bought the line for \$3,000 and would like to cooperate with Colegrove. The two men agreed to each run one stage apiece. The arrangement went well until November 1872, when business began to slacken. Lincoln decided that he did not want to run the line and gave it back to McKiernan. This event put McKiernan in a tight spot for Colegrove now learned that he had been deceived and was ready for another fight. In the end McKiernan decided to quit the stage business. (1:78-83)

That winter, 1872-1873, was so wet that by the end of December Colegrove was forced to curtail operations over the mountain route, as it had turned into a series of mud holes. In January 1873, Colegrove, along with a new partner, Henry C. Ward---an old stage hand in California---started an opposition line to the Watsonville Stage Line between Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Within a few months the older Watsonville Stage Line bought Colegrove and Ward out, rather than compete against their \$.50 fare.(1:90-93)

After selling out to the Watsonville line, Colegrove and Ward met with Charles McKiernan to discuss the reopening of the Santa Cruz to San Jose stage line. Colegrove and Ward agreed to buy out McKiernan's stage line for \$3,000; both men put up \$1,000 cash and a \$500 note. In May 1873, the Pioneer Stage Line again served customers over the Santa Cruz Mountains. (1:93-94)

On the spring morning of April 1, 1874, while backing out an eleven passenger mud-wagon from the Pioneer Stage Line's barn in San Jose, Henry Ward ran a wheel over his foot crushing his big toe. Unable to make the passenger and mail run from San Jose to Santa Cruz, Ward enlisted the help of John Pursey Smith, an experienced stage driver who knew the dangers of the Santa Cruz Mountain road. (1:65)

That afternoon, at a quarter to three, as the four horse team was walking up a hill about a half mile from the stage stop (and United States Post Office) at Patchen, a man, his face covered by a blue flannel mask, stepped out in front of the stage. Pointing a double-barreled shotgun at Smith, the highwayman ordered the stage to stop and told Smith to

"Throw out that Express box."

Looking down the barrels of the shotgun the frightened driver had the unpleasant duty of explaining to the bandit:

"We don't carry any express box. It goes around by Watsonville."

Not believing the driver's story, the bandit again demanded the express box. As the driver tried to repeat his explanation, a passenger, Mrs. J. M. Smith, also told the bandit that the express box was not aboard.

"Well, give me that mail sack," the road agent demanded.

Smith quickly threw down the two mail sacks, one destined for Patchen and the other for Santa Cruz. The bandit kicked the two bags aside saying that he guessed that there would be nothing of interest in them and, as he had come for money, the passengers would have to do instead.

Some of the passengers had managed to hide most of their valuables when they realized what was happening. One woman, a Mrs. Canny of San Jose, simply refused to part with her valuables. All the bandit received was \$45 from the unfortunate stage riders. After securing the money and valuables the bandit tossed the mail sacks back to the driver and allowed the stage to proceed on to Patchen and Santa Cruz.

After arriving in Santa Cruz, Smith immediately telegraphed the stage office in San Jose. George Colegrove received the message and, while showing the message to Ward, asked him,

"Do you think that is right, or someone giving us an April Fool?"

"No, I think it is on the level," replied Ward.

After discussing the matter the two stage men decided not to press the issue, "because," as Colegrove explained, "if it gets out it will hurt our travel."

But word of the robbery did get out and on his next regular run to Santa Cruz, Colegrove was asked by a townsman,

"You have stage robbers on your route, have you?"

To which Colegrove replied, "It seems like it. It didn't amount to much." (1:65-67; 33:4/4/1884)

The rest of April went by without any further incident until the end of the month when Colegrove's mother and brother came to San Jose from Dutch Flat, California, to visit him.

Colegrove decided to take a few days off work to show his family around Big Basin, near Boulder Creek. Contacting an old employer of his, Colegrove asked William (Bill) McFarlane if he would drive the stage.

Everything started out well. Colegrove gave his mother and brother seats on top of the stage, where they could enjoy the mountain scenery. Upon arriving in Santa Cruz Colegrove turned the operation over to McFarlane. On the next day McFarlane took the stage over the mountains to San Jose on an uneventful trip.

On April 28, McFarlane was driving the stage back over the mountains to Santa Cruz. At twenty minutes to two in the afternoon the stage was five miles above Lexington on an uphill grade that forced the horses to walk. As the stage was passing a long pile of cord wood beside the road, out stepped two armed highwaymen. One of the road agents blocked the rear of the stage and the other stood in front of the horses. Both men were carrying double-barreled shotguns and both had Bowie knives dangling from their wrists on leather thongs. The robbers had masks of knitted cloth over their heads with slits cut out for eyes and mouths.

The highwayman in front of the stage called to the driver,

"Didn't I tell you to stop. Now stop or I'll--"

"Oh, did you, if its 'stop' here goes---Whoa!" replied McFarlane as he reined up the leading horses.

As the bandit in front kept his shotgun trained on McFarlane and the passenger riding on top, the other bandit appeared at the window,

"Now hand out your wallets dam'd (sic) quick," he demanded, taping the window ledge with his shotgun for emphasis.

Thrusting his hand with the dangling knife attached into the coach, the robber took the valuables and money from the frightened passengers.

The passengers were reluctant to part with their wallets, giving instead their pocket change. Seeing this, the road agent snapped at them,

"That won't do. Pass out your wallets."

Collecting the wallets, the bandit again made a demand, "Now let's have your watches."

While this was going on inside the coach, the passenger sitting on top managed to hide \$60 under the cushioned seat. To divert attention McFarlane remarked,

"Boys, this is pretty rough on us, stopping our stage twice in one month."

Receiving no response from the highwaymen, McFarlane continued,

"This is the first time I've been stopped."

"Well then, it's a stand-off between us," replied the masked man at the front, "This is the first time we've ever stopped anyone."

After finishing with the inside passengers, the other bandit turned his attention to the man sitting with the driver.

"Pass down your coin, sir," he demanded.

But getting only seventy-five cents did not satisfy him.

"Oh, you've got more money than this. Get down from there, so that I can go through you."

As the passenger stood up the robber caught sight of a valuable gold English watch (worth over \$100). After taking the watch the bandit again demanded that the passenger step down, but at this point McFarlane had had enough and told the highwaymen,

"Boys, it's getting late and I'm behind time."

As the horses started to move, one of the road agents said, "Well, I guess you'd better go on."

By the time the passengers disembarked from the stage in Santa Cruz, Sheriff Robert Orton had arrived at the stage stop. Discussing the situation with Colegrove, who had been waiting for the stage with his family, Orton asked Colegrove,

"I guess we will have to get out and get them or they will drive the travel all off the road. What do you think we had better do about it?"

"I think we ought to start out tonight to look for them and cover all these roads by Soquel and by the stage road, by Mt. Charley's and the Saratoga road. If we don't they will work their way into some town and, after they get into some town, it is all off. You can't get them. If you get them before they get to town they will have some of the things on them."

The Sheriff quickly formed a posse and by that evening three groups set out from Santa Cruz to look for the highwaymen. Deputy Sheriff Jackson Sylva and Frank Curtis went to Felton and then up the Zayante Creek toward the Summit. Remington Getchel and John Acorn (or Aiken) traveled to Soquel and then up the old San Jose-Soquel Road to the Summit. Sheriff Orton and Colegrove took the main stage route through Scotts Valley and up to Mountain Charley's.

Before leaving Santa Cruz, Sheriff Orton telegraphed San Jose and advised Sheriff John H. Adams of the situation, arranging to meet with Adams' posse at Patchen.

Colegrove and Orton arrived at Mountain Charley's toll gate at eleven o'clock that night and, as Colegrove got off the buggy to open the gate, he asked the Sheriff,

"Do you think we had better wake them up?"

"I don't know," the Sheriff replied, "I don't think I would disturb them."

As Orton and Colegrove had the shortest distance to travel, they reached Patchen first and proceeded to search the cabins on the road to Lexington. At a cabin owned by James Bryant the Sheriff arrested two men, but later released them.

When Getchel and Acorn traveling from Soquel arrived, they reported to Sheriff Orton that they had seen nothing of the bandits. One of the local Patchen residents said that a friend living on the Los Gatos Creek had seen two men with shotguns in the area. Within a few minutes Sheriff Adams and the Santa Clara posse arrived and reported that someone else had reported two men by the creek area.

Feeling sure that these men might be the robbers, the posse set out for the Los Gatos Canyon, about three miles northeast of Patchen. Stopping at a wood-cutters camp near Forest Grove at three or four in the morning, Colegrove asked if they had seen the bandits.

"Why there were two men by here just about sundown. Both of them had shotguns. Maybe they are the ones-" replied the wood-cutter.

Before setting out the posse rested and had some breakfast. After eating, the posse went as far up the creek as they could with the buggy and then continued up the canyon on foot. Coming onto a cabin, Sheriff Orton had his men surround the place. Just then a man came out of the cabin. Seeing Colegrove and Sheriff Adams the startled man turned toward the cabin; but with the rest of the posse in position all around his place the outnumbered man gave up.

Under questioning, the man shook like a leaf, but denied any part in the robbery or to having seen anyone during the day. Although Colegrove thought that the man was telling the truth, especially since the only weapon found in the cabin was an old rusty six-shooter, to be certain, the posse took him with them back to Patchen, where he could be identified by local residents.

During this time Deputy Sheriff Sylva and Frank Curtis had traveled to Felton where George Newell joined them. The posse was joined by a Californio named Martin further up the Zayante Canyon. Martin acted as their guide for the rest of the trip. Traveling farther up the mountain, the posse questioned several people before arriving at Mountain Charley's at three-thirty in the morning. Waking up McKiernan, the men learned that he had seen two men shooting at a

squirrel on his ranch earlier that day. When McKiernan had called out to them, he received no reply as the men rode on.

Upon hearing this account, Sylva's posse, along with McKiernan, went after the squirrel-shooters. Tracking the men through the mountains to Jones' Creek, four miles from Saratoga, the posse sent Martin down to the toll gate on the Saratoga-Boulder Creek Road to see if their prey had escaped into the valley. Learning that the men at the toll gate had seen no one, the posse continued in its search and soon arrived at an old cabin. The dilapidated cabin had last been used as a cattle barn.

Suspecting that the robbers might be in the cabin, the posse surrounded the place. As they were getting into position, one of the highwaymen saw what was happening and shot at the posse with a pistol. The posse returned the fire but did no damage. Charles McKiernan, who had brought his old Henry hunting rifle with him, circled around to a part of the cabin that was missing some boards and called in at the bandits,

"Hello, fellows, what are you doing there? Come out here."

"We are not coming out," was the reply.

"Come out, or I will shoot," McKiernan warned.

At this point, the men jumped up and one of them went for his gun. McKiernan again ordered them to stop, but the road agents were intent on a shootout and McKiernan shot. The ball grazed the cheek of one of the highwaymen and lodged itself in the other one's shoulder. With that the fight was over and the men gave up.

The posse marched the highwaymen back to McKiernan's ranch. After arriving at the ranch and while they were waiting for Sheriff Adams to arrive from Patchen, one of the bandits boasted,

"Yes, a hell of a lot of heroes you are. I would like to be turned loose and I would make short work of you. That cockeyed fellow with the rifle was the only one I was afraid of."

The bandit was still defiant a few days later when a reporter from the San Jose Weekly Mercury interviewed him in the Santa Clara County Jail:

"We wouldn't have surrendered had it not been for that blasted Henry rifle which that one-eyed chap "Mountain Charley" carried. I was raising my gun to fire, when he let fly with his rifle. . . Had it not been for that we would have made a break, and they never would have taken us. I didn't care a continental for the pistols as long as we had our shot guns, and we would have made it warm for them. As it was we acted sensibly, and 'chucked over our chips."

The bandit who did most of the talking was Albert P. Hamilton, known in San Francisco as a burglar who had served time in San Quentin. Hamilton made the remark that he would get McKiernan for capturing him. After a trial, Hamilton, along with Peter Carr, the other bandit, was sentenced to ten years in San Quentin, but, after only six or seven months, Hamilton escaped prison with two murderers.

When Charles McKiernan learned of Hamilton's unexpected freedom he was understandably uneasy, especially since it was known that Hamilton had a girlfriend in nearby Saratoga. Six months later the San Francisco police captured Hamilton in San Francisco after he returned on a ship from Seattle, Washington, and McKiernan's worries were over.

The other bandit, Peter Carr, was instrumental in fighting a fire at San Quentin and due to this action and his general good behavior Carr received a reprieve by Governor William Irwin. (1:67-74; 33:5/2/1874; 32;29)

These two men were the only road agents active in the Santa Cruz Mountains. But, although the highwaymen were captured, the regular troubles of the stage line were not over. On the day after the capture of the bandits, while the team hitched to the stagecoach was being watered by the driver at the Lexington stage stop, one of the horses bit another horse and the whole team ran away towing the stage. The passengers sitting inside managed to jump to safety, but a woman sitting on top kept her seat too long and when she finally jumped off the stage she suffered a broken leg. The team kept going until the coach was overturned and all came to a dusty, grinding, crushing stop. (33:5 / 2 /1874)

During the winter of 1874, Ward and Colegrove decided to phase out the large Concord coaches and purchase new Yosemite wagons made in San Francisco. The new coaches seated thirteen passengers, all facing forward, and had a "sunshine top," a canvas that could be rolled back. The passengers enjoyed the new coaches, as they could see the scenery better. (1: 102-104)

In 1874 Ward left the stage business to join a Wild West show, but two months later he returned to San Jose. Shortly after Ward returned the Pioneer Stage Line was broken up, as Colegrove was peeved at Ward for leaving. Ward stored one of the Concord coaches at William Hall's barn. Fifty years later it was discovered and given to the Wells-Fargo Museum at San Francisco. On that occasion George Colegrove drove the stage into the museum. (1: 104-105)

During the spring of 1878, as the new narrow-gauge railroad from Alameda to Santa Cruz was nearing completion as far as Los Gatos, Colegrove met with Alfred E. "Hog" Davis, the president of the South Pacific Coast Railroad. Davis asked Colegrove to run a "jumper service" from Wright's tunnel over the mountains to Felton. This arrangement was to last until the tunneling was completed through the mountains.(1: 106-107)

Colegrove agreed to work for Davis and ran the "jumper service" for a year before Davis again met with him in April 1879. At this meeting Davis asked Colegrove to work as a conductor on

the railroad. On August 22, 1879, Colegrove started to work for the railroad, although he still owned the stage line, which was run by John Dowd and Chris Coffin.

On May 1, 1880, the South Pacific Coast Railroad began direct service from Alameda to Santa Cruz. Although the first run ended in disaster as the train ran off the track near Rincon, it signaled the end of the stagecoach era in the Santa Cruz Mountains. (1: 110, 110 fn. 10)

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