

**A Glance at the Background  
and Origins of  
Trinity Episcopal Church**

James J. Rawls

**Restless Hearts**

Trinity Episcopal Church  
Sonoma, California  
2003

**Preface**

From Roman North Africa more than fifteen centuries ago, Saint Augustine once prayed: "Thou hast created us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." These ancient words might well serve as the credo for Trinity Episcopal Church. From its beginnings, Trinity has been a home for people with restless hearts, people seeking to strengthen their faith and to find some greater meaning and purpose in their lives. The paths taken by these seekers have been exceedingly diverse; the obstacles encountered along the way often have been daunting. Yet these restless hearts persevered and remained expectant, seeking always to fulfill their deepest longings.

Trinity traces its origins to the opening of an Episcopal school for girls, founded on the Sonoma plaza by the Rev. John Leonard Ver Mehr on September 1, 1853. It is this foundational event that inspired the writing of a brief historical narrative as part of Trinity's sesquicentennial celebration. The account offered here is episodic and decidedly idiosyncratic. Its focus is on "background and origins," not more recent developments. Some readers will be puzzled by what has been included and others will be disappointed by what has been left out. For these disappointments, and for all other offenses and errors, I beg forgiveness.

Grateful acknowledgment is hereby extended to several individuals who have provided valuable assistance: the Rev. Canon John Bogart of Benicia, historian for the Diocese of Northern California; Mrs. Vyga Dikinis of the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation; the Rev. Canon Stephen N. Brannon, current rector at Trinity; and Mrs. Jean Holt French, longtime Trinity parishioner.

*James J. Rawls*

## Deep Background

For untold millennia, the land now occupied by Trinity was part of a great borderland between several groups of native people. The rich resources of the Sonoma Valley were prized by such neighboring cultures as the Patwin, Wappo, Pomo, and Coast Miwok. The land abounded in favored gathering and hunting grounds. Each part of the landscape was imbued with human meaning; every mountain and river had a name.<sup>1</sup>

The most extraordinary diversity prevailed among the religious beliefs and practices of these first people. Widely differing versions of creation flourished even within individual communities. The native people wisely recognized the unlikelihood of agreement on matters of such importance: “This is how we tell it; they tell it differently.” Yet the people shared a common belief that all of creation was interconnected and suffused with a sacred power. Human beings were to respect that power by following carefully prescribed guidelines in even the most routine of daily activities. Killing an animal, drinking from a spring, or entering a valley was to be accompanied by a ritual act, however simple, as a sign of respect and acknowledgment.<sup>2</sup> Try to envision the native men and women who once passed through what are now the grounds of Trinity. What do you suppose was in their prayers?

The first Christian prayers in the area probably were offered by an Anglican priest, one Francis Fletcher, the chaplain aboard English privateer Francis Drake’s ship the *Golden Hind*. According to tradition, the Rev. Mr. Fletcher first conducted a service using the Book of Common Prayer on Sunday, June 24, 1579, most likely along the shores of Drake’s Bay on the Point Reyes Peninsula. (The event is commemorated on a wooded knoll in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park by a grey stone monolith known as Prayer Book Cross.)<sup>3</sup> While careening his overburdened vessel, filled with thirty tons of captured Spanish treasure, Drake named this land Nova Albion and claimed it for Queen Elizabeth of England. The Coast Miwok greeted the English interlopers by crying pitifully and tearing their cheeks with their fingernails until the blood ran. The English mistakenly supposed this to be a kind of sacrifice to them as gods. It was, in fact, a mourning custom of the Coast Miwok. Apparently the native people regarded these fair-haired Englishmen as relatives who had returned from the dead. Cross cultural misunderstandings in California surely are nothing new.<sup>4</sup>

Closer to home, the first acts of Christian worship in the Sonoma Valley were part of the great Spanish missionary enterprise that had begun in 1769 with the arrival in California of Fr. Junípero Serra. A man of intense religious zeal and dedication, Serra set the tone for all those who followed. He willingly left a comfortable position as a college professor in Spain to

embrace the arduous life of a foreign missionary.<sup>5</sup> Enduring countless hardships on his trek to California, Serra remained true to his calling: “Even though I should die on the way, *I shall not turn back.*”<sup>6</sup> He longed for a rich “harvest of souls” among the native people of California. “May God give them his grace,” Serra fervently prayed, “so that in a short time all will become Christians.”<sup>7</sup> Driven by such unwavering determination, the missions were the crux of the Spanish conquest. Mission practices everywhere were directed toward the same goal: the abolition of any pre-Christian practices, religious or secular, that were considered impediments to conversion or integration within the Spanish empire. Attempting to achieve this goal, the missions had a devastating impact on the native people. European diseases, for which the natives lacked immunity, decimated the coastal population.<sup>8</sup>

The founding of a mission in the Sonoma Valley on July 4, 1823, was prompted by the problems of disease and depopulation at the older missions around San Francisco Bay. A headstrong and enterprising Spanish-born priest, Fr. José Altimira, proposed closing the declining and fog-bound missions in San Francisco and San Rafael and evacuating the survivors to a new mission in the sunny Sonoma Valley. Showing a remarkable independence of spirit, Altimira presented his plan to the governor of the province *rather* than to the proper ecclesiastical authorities. Mexico had recently won its independence from Spain and the newly

appointed Mexican governor and provincial legislature readily approved Altimira’s proposal. Church leaders strenuously objected but eventually agreed to a compromise. The new Sonoma mission, christened San Francisco Solano, would go forward while the two older missions also would remain in operation.<sup>9</sup>

Life for the native people in the Sonoma mission was marked by dissension and dispute. Fr. Altimira gained a reputation for mistreating the natives in his charge, personally flogging and imprisoning them.<sup>10</sup> Fr. Vicente Francisco de Sarría, the prefect in charge of the California missions, denounced Altimira’s harshness, charging that his methods were causing the native people to flee.<sup>11</sup> In 1826 angry locals attacked and burned the mission; Altimira retreated to San Rafael and soon left California. Subsequent priests-in-charge at Sonoma experienced continued fugitivism. Fr. José María Guitérrez complained that the native people no longer attended mass and that the only way he could control them was with a whip.<sup>12</sup> To commemorate all those who died at San Francisco Solano, a monument with the names of more than 900 native men, women, and children was dedicated outside the western wall of the mission in 1999.<sup>13</sup>

Mission San Francisco Solano, standing just two blocks from Trinity, is now part of Sonoma State Historic Park. It bears witness to the diversity that has always been a part of this special place. Its native

residents included people from a variety of cultures, and it served as the fractious point of contact between indigenous people and colonists who came from afar. In decline, the mission was swept by another clash of cultures, one that would determine the future of California.

The mission era came to an end in Sonoma, as it did throughout California, with the secularization of the missions by the Mexican government in the 1830s. Secularization meant replacing the missionaries with parish clergy and granting most of the former mission lands to interested civilians. Placed in charge of the secularization of San Francisco Solano was that preeminent Sonoma patriarch, Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. Born in Monterey in 1808, Vallejo became one of the wealthiest and most powerful members of the rising elite of land-owning *californios*. His vast holdings, including many former mission lands, grew to more than 150,000 acres. In 1835 he founded the pueblo of Sonoma in the heart of his vast holdings. On the town plaza he built his official residence, *La Casa Grande*, from which he ruled his estates in the manner of a feudal baron. With a small army of native laborers, he raised cattle and planted vineyards.<sup>14</sup>

Adding to his other responsibilities, the Mexican government placed Vallejo in charge of defending the province's northern frontier. It was in this capacity that he experienced his greatest failure. On Sunday morning,

June 14, 1846, a party of more than 30 armed Anglo-American settlers descended upon Sonoma. They seized Vallejo as a prisoner of war and declared their intention to "liberate" California from Mexican rule. Thus Vallejo became the first victim of the so-called Bear Flag Revolt. His imprisonment for two months deeply embittered the *californios*. Rosalía Vallejo later said that "those hated men" who had seized her brother inspired within her "a large dose of hatred." During the subsequent Mexican-American War, the armed forces of the United States eventually defeated those of Mexico. The war concluded in 1848 with the signing of a treaty in which Mexico ceded to the United States about half its territory, including all of California.<sup>15</sup> For many years afterwards, memories of the conflict stirred contrary feelings on both sides of the international boundary. How deep are the roots of our current misgivings?

## **The Episcopal Approach**

Meanwhile, half way around the world, a restless heart was stirring a young man in Brussels to set out for America. Eventually he would make his way to Sonoma at the express invitation of Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo. The meeting of this peripatetic Belgian immigrant and his Mexican host is a pivotal event in the story of the background and origins of Trinity Episcopal Church.

John Leonard Ver Mehr was a visionary confounded by the ways of the world. His autobiography bears the apt title *Checkered Life: In the Old and New World* (1877). The official history of the diocese of California characterizes him as a scholarly man, tender and lovable, impulsive and enthusiastic, yet impractical and unskilled in worldly matters. His remote ancestry was Austrian and Spanish, including notable figures from the days of Hapsburg rule in the Low Countries. He was fluent in French, German, and English and taught classes in Greek and Latin. Ver Mehr also was a deeply religious man, intensely earnest in his Christian faith. For several generations his family had been Protestants, members of the Huguenot-related Walloon Church of Belgium.<sup>16</sup>

John Ver Mehr left Brussels for the United States in 1843 with his wife Adelaide and their young son Malan. He soon found himself distressed by the rancor and divisiveness among the competing churches of his adopted homeland. New sects continually emerged, only to split again to form rival factions. Ver Mehr sought some larger unity to hold this diversity together, some central form to embody essential Christian doctrines and to offer authentic modes of Christian worship. He longed for a *spiritual home*. And it was this longing which brought him to the Episcopal church, a model of inclusiveness for the larger church universal, the Body of Christ. He approached the Episcopal bishop in Burlington, New Jersey, seeking to join this “lawful

kingdom of his Lord.” The bishop responded by baptizing and confirming Ver Mehr. He also offered him a position as an instructor of languages at a local school called St. Mary’s Hall. In September, 1847, Ver Mehr was ordained to the priesthood.<sup>17</sup>

The following year a petition arrived at the headquarters of the Episcopal Board of Missions in New York, signed by a group of “influential Churchmen of San Francisco,” asking that a missionary be sent at once to their fledgling city. The board approved the request and in November, 1848, appointed John Leonard Ver Mehr to the post. Naval Commodore Robert F. Stockton, recently returned from active duty in California during the Mexican-American War, offered Ver Mehr and his family free passage to San Francisco. The missionary’s departure was delayed, however, due to a severe case of smallpox contracted while attending a dying woman. Indeed, Ver Mehr’s journey to California would be marked by difficulties and disappointments as daunting as those faced by Junípero Serra eighty years before.<sup>18</sup>

In January, 1849, Ver Mehr felt well enough to approach an agent of Commodore Stockton to arrange passage to San Francisco. For reasons unknown, the agent responded that Stockton declined to have “anything more to do” with Ver Mehr’s affairs. Stunned by what he regarded as a breach of promise, Ver Mehr was forced to make his own arrangements. On February 8, 1849, he and Adelaide and their four children boarded the *George*

*Washington* for the long and arduous voyage around Cape Horn. Enduring daily rounds of “harrowing annoyance,” they sailed for five months to reach Valparaíso, Chile. There they boarded the *Hebe* for two more months of travel before sailing into San Francisco Bay in mid-September, 1849.<sup>19</sup>

The Ver Mehr family arrived in the early days of that frenzied search for riches we call the gold rush. The population of California was booming as immigrants arrived from throughout the United States—and from Europe, South America, Asia, and Australia. It was a chaotic time when ethnic conflict was rife and economic rivalries were intense. Established institutions struggled to provide order and stability. Philosopher Josiah Royce, born in California a few years after the Ver Mehrs arrived, recognized the power of the forces unleashed by the gold rush: “All our brutal passions were here to have full sweep, and all our moral strength, all our courage, our patience, our docility, and our social skills were to contend with these our passions.”<sup>20</sup>

Once on his assigned mission field in this tumultuous time, John Ver Mehr confronted new and unexpected challenges. Most unsettling was his discovery that another Episcopal minister had preceded him to San Francisco and already had organized a parish church. Apparently a group of San Franciscans, perhaps unaware of Ver Mehr’s appointment, had petitioned church authorities to send them a rector. The Rev. Flavel

Mines had responded to the call and sailed to California by way of Panama—a route considerably shorter than around the Horn—and thus had arrived two or more months ahead of Ver Mehr. It was as rector of San Francisco’s Trinity Church that Mines greeted Ver Mehr. The potential for hard feelings was certainly real, but the two clergymen soon developed a warm friendship. Ver Mehr served for a time as an assistant at Trinity and then established his own missionary congregation at nearby Grace Church. The first services were held there on July 20, 1850. Its building, on the corner of Jackson and Powell streets, was a shingle-roofed, clapboard-sided chapel, measuring only 20 by 60 feet. Such were the humble origins of stately Grace Cathedral, standing now in neo-Gothic splendor atop Nob Hill.<sup>21</sup>

About a year after Ver Mehr’s arrival in San Francisco, he received news that the Board of Missions had resolved that “California was no more considered missionary ground.”<sup>22</sup> Perhaps the board’s decision had been prompted by the rapid growth of California—its population had boomed from less than 15,000 in 1848 to 150,000 by 1850—or by the admission of California to statehood on September 9, 1850.<sup>23</sup> In practical terms, this meant that Ver Mehr’s financial support from the board was terminated. Cut adrift and feeling discarded, Ver Mehr was forced to seek other means to supplement his meager income from the Sunday morning offerings at Grace. Noting that the offerings were “fashionable” rather than substantial, Ver Mehr asked the vestry for a

monthly salary of \$400.<sup>24</sup> To his utter astonishment, the vestry denied his request. For a while he received a small stipend as chaplain of the San Francisco Presidio, but the pressing need for additional income remained. Friends, knowing of his teaching experience back east, encouraged him to open a school.<sup>25</sup>

Somewhere around this time, Ver Mehr was called to Sonoma to administer the sacrament of baptism to three children. One of these young Californians, most likely, was Amelia Henrietta Adler, whose 1851 baptismal certificate in Ver Mehr's handwriting resides in the Trinity archives.<sup>26</sup> Amelia's father, Lewis Adler, was an adventurous young German immigrant who had arrived in Sonoma in 1849; her mother Nancy was a survivor of the Donner party. The building that housed the Adler family general store still stands on East Spain Street, near the drive to Blue Wing Court.<sup>27</sup>

John Ver Mehr traveled to Sonoma with an expectant but unfocused disposition, sensing somehow providence was at work. He was relieved simply to be leaving behind his responsibilities in San Francisco for a few days. He also had grown tired of the city's crowded and congested streets and its "bracing yet foggy and windy atmosphere." By contrast, he found that the "Sonoma Valley was...a sort of paradise."<sup>28</sup> Sonoma's bucolic charms in 1851 were yet undefiled; the population of the entire county was only 561.<sup>29</sup> While in Sonoma, he accepted an invitation to call upon Mariano

Vallejo in his spacious *Casa Grande* overlooking the plaza. As Ver Mehr later recalled the scene, he first met Vallejo "in a large room, surrounded by his numerous family, sitting as a youthful patriarch, before a cheerful fire." Ver Mehr discovered in Vallejo the fulfillment of his earlier unfocused expectations. The patriarch of Sonoma, father of numerous daughters, invited Ver Mehr to move to the valley and open a local school for girls. Furthermore, Vallejo offered to house the school in his own residence.<sup>30</sup>

Upon returning to San Francisco, John Ver Mehr happily shared the good news with Adelaide. She failed to share his enthusiasm, reminding him that not every change was necessarily an improvement. She did agree, however, to visit Sonoma and to see what he insisted on calling his "valley of paradise." Suitably impressed by what she saw, she consented to the move. Ver Mehr then presented a plan to the vestry of Grace Church. He proposed relocating to Sonoma and commuting to San Francisco to conduct services fortnightly. The vestry approved the plan, agreeing that if the school in Sonoma did not prove successful within its first year, he could return to Grace to resume his full-time rectorship. Toward the end of August, 1853, Ver Mehr and his family moved themselves and all their belongings to Sonoma.<sup>31</sup>

Once again, Ver Mehr encountered unexpected obstacles. When he arrived in Sonoma, he learned that

Vallejo had withdrawn the offer to house the school in his *Casa Grande*. Apparently Vallejo had overextended himself in an attempt to lure the state capitol from San José to the new town that bore his name, thus he called off whatever obligations he could.<sup>32</sup> “As [with] the withdrawal of Commodore Stockton’s offer,” Ver Mehr later mused, “so this was a sort of premonition.” But, showing the same grit that marked his entire career, Ver Mehr decided to stay on in Sonoma and found his new school in alternate quarters. Serra once had proclaimed “*I shall not turn back,*” and Ver Mehr now resolved he had “gone too far to retreat.” He arranged to rent “at very great cost” a two-storey building owned by Vallejo’s sister-in-law, Josefa Carrillo de Fitch.<sup>33</sup> This venerable old structure, still standing on the southwest corner of the plaza, was built in the early 1840s for Jacob Leese, first alcalde of Sonoma. Known as the Leese-Fitch Adobe, it served in 1849 as the headquarters of Gen. Persifor Smith, military governor of California shortly after the Mexican-American War.<sup>34</sup>

On September 1, 1853, John Leonard Ver Mehr opened St. Mary’s Hall. The new school bore the name of the institution in New Jersey where he earlier had served as an instructor. Its founding is the event that Trinity Episcopal Church has chosen to commemorate with a sesquicentennial celebration. The celebration is appropriate, for St. Mary’s Hall truly marks the beginning of Episcopal worship in the Sonoma Valley. Ver Mehr, an ordained Episcopal priest, regarded the

school as an expression of his ministry. “Our institute was to be a church-school,” he later explained, “and no day, no holiday, no Sunday, passed without its appropriate services.”<sup>35</sup>

Ver Mehr’s ministry at St. Mary’s is especially noteworthy because of its inclusiveness at a time when wounds were still tender from the previous decade’s bloody conflict between the United States and Mexico, and when ethnic conflict in the gold fields was rife. Attending Ver Mehr’s school, side by side, were Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students. Among these were three of Vallejo’s daughters—Adela, Natalia, and Jovita—as well as the daughters of such Anglo-American pioneers as George C. Yount of the Napa Valley.<sup>36</sup> Ver Mehr recognized the difficulty of communicating among “the various nationalities of our pupils,” and he took great pride in the success of their accomplishments.<sup>37</sup> In later years, Ver Mehr continued his interest in cross-cultural communication by preaching at African-American churches in San Francisco and conducting services in Spanish for the inmates of San Quentin Prison.<sup>38</sup> Ver Mehr initially had been drawn to the Episcopal church because it offered a vision of unity to a fractured world. Knowing that God had created all peoples in the same divine image, Ver Mehr sought to enrich his understanding of God through those who differed from him the most. Just how inclusive is the Body of Christ?

John Ver Mehr also deserves recognition as one of the first Sonomans to commute to San Francisco. Every fortnight he made a roundtrip to the city to conduct services at Grace Church. And it was there, at the church he had founded, that he experienced yet another painful rebuff. During the Sundays he was in Sonoma, the parishioners at Grace were treated to sermons by the Rt. Rev. William Ingraham Kip, the first Episcopal bishop in California. Naturally enough, the congregation wanted to hear the bishop more often. So it was that the vestry of Grace sent a letter to Ver Mehr, stating “that it is in the interest of the church that I should either return to San Francisco, or, resigning the rectorship to the bishop, remain in relation with the parish as assistant rector.” Only four months had passed since the vestry had promised Ver Mehr a year’s trial of serving in both Sonoma and San Francisco. The revocation of that promise caused him much painful reflection. He met with the senior warden at Grace and expressed his perplexity at being given an ultimatum from a church that “has been nursed by me with tender, unceasing care.” Carefully weighing his options, Ver Mehr reluctantly resigned his post at Grace so that he might continue his ministry in Sonoma.<sup>39</sup>

For the next several months, Ver Mehr remained as assistant rector at Grace, officiating only occasionally. His last sermon was on Charity, preached on December 17, 1854, and recalled vividly in his autobiography. Echoing the melancholic lament of preachers

everywhere, he exclaimed, “Little did I know that my sermon would have so little effect on some!” The following week he received a curt letter from the vestry, informing him that “since my relation to Grace church was a hindrance to its prosperity, it had been found necessary to rescind my appointment as assistant rector.” Once again, Ver Mehr was both hurt and perplexed. He took solace in the knowledge that the action had been taken at a vestry meeting when three of his strongest supporters were absent. When he asked why he was obnoxious to the church, a warden responded that the people could not understand him because of his “foreign accent.”<sup>40</sup> Ver Mehr’s faith in the inclusive unity of the Episcopal church was shaken.

Meanwhile, back in Sonoma, his prospects were brightening. When Vallejo completed construction of his new family home, *Lacryma Montis*, the patriarch finally made good on his offer to allow St. Mary’s Hall to occupy the *Casa Grande*.<sup>41</sup> In these more spacious quarters, Ver Mehr continued teaching his classes and holding “stated services on Sunday.” By 1855 the students of St. Mary’s nearly filled the rooms of the old adobe. Ver Mehr expanded and improved the classroom space, all at heavy expense; his monthly rent of \$145 often was three months in arrear.<sup>42</sup> But he was gratified by the continued progress of his students and the praises he received. Instruction at St. Mary’s was enriched in October, 1856, when Ver Mehr added to his staff a talented young music instructor, Dorothea Duhring.<sup>43</sup>

She and her husband Frederick, both natives of Germany, eventually were numbered among Sonoma's leading families. The cupola-topped Duhring building, on the southeast corner of the plaza, has remained a familiar Sonoma landmark from its construction in 1891 through its rebirth after being destroyed by fire in 1990.<sup>44</sup>

No previous success or failure, nothing in his earlier life, prepared John Ver Mehr for the tragedy that befell his family in November, 1856. A diphtheria epidemic was ravaging the country. Mariano Vallejo's first grandson and namesake already had succumbed to the disease; Ver Mehr had officiated at the funeral in the absence of a Catholic priest. Then, during one dark week in November, the Ver Mehrs lost four of their young daughters, aged three to eleven—Ida, Bella, Amy, and Fanny. Ver Mehr forever after referred to them as his “four little angels.”<sup>45</sup>

Following this heart-rending loss, the Ver Mehr family departed Sonoma permanently. Yet John Ver Mehr did not abandon his faith or his ministry. Five churches in San Francisco—Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Unitarian—financed the relocation of St. Mary's Hall from Sonoma to the city. This remarkable demonstration of ecumenical support renewed Ver Mehr's faith in the Body of Christ. The school took up quarters first in a large house on the corner of Geary and Powell streets and then in an even more imposing structure at Bush and Taylor. Numbered

among its students were some who had followed from Sonoma. One such was fourteen-year-old Jovita Vallejo. In a letter to her father, dated 1858, she offered an amusing vignette of the St. Mary's girls promenading through the streets of San Francisco: “We have just come home from a long walk in which we must appear like a flock (sic) of geese. I suppose some people must laugh to see a long string of young ladies going about town, but we try to go where we would not be seen so much.”<sup>46</sup> Under Ver Mehr's direction, the school continued to prosper. But its success was to be short-lived. The school was destroyed by a devastating fire one night in October, 1859. Adelaide Ver Mehr rushed to the dormitory to rescue the youngest students; by morning all that was left were charred ruins. St. Mary's Hall was no more.<sup>47</sup>

The following month, John Ver Mehr visited his old friend George Yount in the Napa Valley. Soon thereafter Ver Mehr bought a 15-acre parcel from Yount and moved Adelaide and their four remaining children to a small farm and vineyard he called *La Lomita*. There he continued his ministry, officiating occasionally at the local Episcopal church in Napa. His streak of impracticality remained; Adelaide had to monitor how much money he carried in his pockets because he always gave it away before returning home. He also kept alive his interest in the broader church, remaining close friends with Catholic priests in San Francisco and with the famed Unitarian minister, Thomas Starr King. He

reached out to children of African descent in San Francisco and preached his Spanish sermons at San Quentin. Before passing into the nearer presence of God in 1886, he served as editor of the diocesan newsletter, *The Pacific Churchman*, and authored his autobiography.<sup>48</sup>

John Leonard Ver Mehr is all but forgotten today. Yet the record of his restless heart is worth remembering. He came to the Episcopal church with a clear vision of what the church could and should be. He held fast to that vision throughout his life, serving others and reaching beyond conventional boundaries. The disappointments and difficulties he faced throughout his life might have crushed a weaker man, but Ver Mehr never turned back from his life-long quest. We who have read these few pages now know something of this remarkable man. What piece of his story is lodged in your memory? “Memory! Thou art a mysterious faculty,” John Ver Mehr once observed. “When the body is gone, shall *all* be memory?”<sup>49</sup>

## Germination

The seeds of faith planted in Sonoma by the Rev. John Ver Mehr slowly took root and eventually bore rich fruit. During the first few decades after his departure, Episcopal services in Sonoma were conducted irregularly by various clergy from surrounding parishes and

communities. From St. John’s, Petaluma, came the Rev. George Jenks and the Rev. John Partridge; from Woodland came the Ven. David Eldred Holt; from Holy Spirit, Vallejo, came the Rev. Robert Lindsay Macfarlane; and from Santa Rosa came the Ven. George Edward Swan.<sup>50</sup>

At the dawning of the new century, the people of Sonoma—presumably with restless hearts seeking something more—began to accumulate funds for a church building and the calling of a full-time priest.<sup>51</sup> The Sonoma Valley in the early 1900s was on the cusp of a period of renewed growth and prosperity, fueled by the engine that continues today: tourism. Promotional literature from the local Northwestern Railroad extolled the charms of the valley; new hotels and summer homes were being built. The *Index-Tribune* was among the most enthusiastic boosters: “Sonoma Valley...seems to have a roseate future.... Let those who love solitude and rusticity hie themselves to the hills, for the invasion is inevitable.”<sup>52</sup>

In February, 1911, the Rt. Rev. W. H. Moreland, bishop of the Diocese of Northern California, received a petition from Mrs. John F. Bateman asking that a mission be started in Sonoma. The bishop responded by asking the Rev. Thomas Parker Boyd, rector at Ascension, Vallejo, to begin conducting regular midweek services in Sonoma. The Rev. Boyd led his first service on a rainy weekday evening, attended by a faithful dozen

communicants. The midweek services continued until April, when Parker held his first Sunday morning service, assisted by Naval Chaplain A. A. McAllister of Mare Island. On June 1, 1911, Boyd became the official priest-in-charge at Sonoma, having resigned his position in Vallejo. His salary was \$100 a month, only a fourth of what John Ver Mehr had sought from the vestry at Grace Church a half-century earlier. Boyd took up his new duties with enthusiasm, conducting services around town at various rented locations and presenting to the bishop fourteen candidates for confirmation by the end of his first month on the job. St. Barbara's Guild was organized with Mrs. L.C. Duhring as secretary, presumably a daughter or daughter-in-law of the music teacher who had enriched Ver Mehr's faculty at St. Mary's Hall.<sup>53</sup>

Bishop Moreland granted the Sonoma petition for mission status at a meeting on January 21, 1912, a milestone in the development of Trinity Episcopal Church.<sup>54</sup> The Rev. Boyd reported to the diocese that "this mission is a lively infant." Services were being conducted in a large store room "fitted up with churchly appointments."<sup>55</sup> The space had been generously provided by parishioner J. K. Bigelow, publisher of *The Expositor* (an early rival to the *Index-Tribune*) and owner of a 238-acre ranch that today is the site of the Sonoma National Golf Club.<sup>56</sup> Anthems and other service music were provided by a vested choir. The ladies of St. Barbara's Guild began in earnest to raise money for a

building lot, clearing \$250 from a single night's church bazaar. Following the official designation of Trinity as a mission, Dr. J. F. Bateman was selected as warden, J. K. Bigelow as treasurer, and pharmacist L.S. "Dad" Simmons as clerk.<sup>57</sup> The building that housed Simmons Pharmacy, complete with its white marble soda fountain, still stands on the south side of the plaza.<sup>58</sup> The Rev. Boyd shared the same disposition of expectancy that John Ver Mehr had felt when he first came to Sonoma. In February, 1912, he reported to *The Sacramento Missionary*: "We expect before many months there will be thirty communicants here, whereupon a parish will be formed with full corporate powers."<sup>59</sup>

Trinity occupied its first permanent home during mid-Lent, 1912, in the building still standing on the northeast corner of East Napa and Second Street East. Having accomplished a great deal in a short time, Thomas Parker Boyd resigned his position as vicar at Trinity and was replaced by the Rev. Irving Spencer.<sup>60</sup> He reported in May, 1913, that Easter services were attended by parishioners who had traveled ten miles to receive Holy Communion and that the offering of \$51 was the largest ever received.<sup>61</sup> Upon Spencer's departure in 1914, apparently to join the Order of the Holy Cross, Trinity welcomed New Yorker J. Henry Oehloff as its next priest-in-charge.<sup>62</sup> The following January, Oehloff reported that St. Barbara's Guild was continuing to help underwrite the work of the church through its successful fund-raising bazaars. Meanwhile

the Sunday School decided to try its hand at outreach, renting the local Motion Picture Theatre and sponsoring a free showing of four one-reelers. (The venue was the Sebastiani's predecessor, the Don Theatre on East Napa Street.)<sup>63</sup> The films shown were "humorous, helpful, and instructive," and accompanied by a well received duet for piano and accordion. Also shown on the silver screen was a slide saying "Trinity Episcopal Church wishes everyone a Merrie Xmas." Less encouraging was the Christmas service of Holy Communion, attended by a disappointing few. "It seems too bad that more will not come," lamented the priest of Trinity.<sup>64</sup>

Among the church's strongest early leaders was the Rev. William Therrel Holt, the son of the Ven. David Holt who occasionally had conducted services at Sonoma in the first decade of the twentieth century. William first served as Trinity's vicar from 1915 to 1917.<sup>65</sup> These were years when the nation's attention was focused on the unfolding horrors of The Great War; the United States entered the armed conflict during the final year of the Rev. Holt's tenure. In February, 1916, the month that opened the Battle of Verdun, Holt sensed a growing maturity of his congregation: "Trinity, Sonoma, is entering upon a new era in its development. The loyalty to the Church, devotion to duty, and the prayer of the faithful, is beginning to manifest itself in a greater degree of fruition." He credited the hard work of the bishop's committee (comparable to the vestry of a parish), including such stalwarts as publisher Bigelow,

pharmacist Simmons, merchant Duhring, and Duhring's cousin Wilhelm F. Clewe.<sup>66</sup> The latter was the prosperous owner of a store on the southwest corner of Broadway and First Street West (today the site of Washington Mutual Bank) and the proud owner of one of Sonoma's most elegant homes (still standing at the southwest corner of East Napa and Second Street East).<sup>67</sup> Clewe also happened to be the father-in-law of the vicar.<sup>68</sup> With such able lay leadership, the mission was being put on a sound business foundation.

Holt also gave special credit to St. Barbara's Guild, presided over by the faithful Mrs. F. T. Duhring. Holt reported that the ladies were "doing even better work than they have ever done [and] that is saying a great deal!" Notably the guild was taking on the "running expenses" of the church, as well as nearly paying off the debt on the church lot and building. Nor was the progress of the church limited to matters financial. The vicar concluded his diocesan report in February, 1916, with this meditation: "If the distinction can be made—it is evident that the spiritual is keeping pace with the material development of the mission, as the truth spreads that the real rector and priest in charge of the mission is the imminent Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.... May those who hear the voice of the Shepherd pray for us, that from the grace of His presence we may progress ever in the way of truth and life."<sup>69</sup>

A series of fifteen priests served Trinity during the early decades of the twentieth century, several remaining for only a year or two. Among those with a longer tenure was the Rev. William Therrel Holt, serving a second tour of duty as vicar from 1937 to 1941.<sup>70</sup> It was in the latter half of the century that Trinity entered its strongest era. During the booming years following the Second World War, Sonoma and California were transformed by massive economic and social changes. From this point forward, Trinity's story becomes a part of living memory; it transcends our present narrative of "background and origins."

Parishioners today can recall with clarity and satisfaction the achievements of the postwar era and beyond. Two of the priests with the greatest impact on Trinity's modern development served during these years. The Rev. Dr. Harold St. George Buttrum remained at Trinity for eleven years, from 1945 to 1956. Under his leadership, Trinity became a full-fledged parish in 1951.<sup>71</sup> This was a fitting year, for it marked the centennial of John Leonard Ver Mehr's first visit to Sonoma.

The priest with the longest tenure, by far, in the history of Trinity was the Rev. Martin Knutsen. He arrived in Sonoma in 1959 and remained as rector for twenty-seven years. His most notable accomplishment was the design and construction in 1962 of the present church buildings and grounds at 275 East Spain Street, a

site acquired from parishioners and community leaders Carroll and Katherine Andrews.<sup>72</sup> (Landscaping continued the following year—workers were digging holes for the trees in Abbot Courtyard on November 22, 1963, the day John F. Kennedy was assassinated.) Reminiscent of the restless longing of John Ver Mehr for a *spiritual home*, Fr. Knutsen challenged the architectural firm of Ian MacKinlay & Associates to design a building for worship that felt "like a spiritual home."<sup>73</sup> The resulting building, with its warm redwood walls and intimate relationship between altar and pews, admirably achieved the rector's goal. Among the outstanding furnishings were the altar and communion rail, adorned with carvings by parishioner and famed sculptor Marian Brackenridge.<sup>74</sup> It was also during Fr. Knutsen's tenure that Trinity became the home of Meals-on-Wheels, an independent organization that would serve thousands of meals to those in need throughout the Sonoma Valley. Fr. Knutsen serves the parish still as its esteemed rector emeritus

Trinity's two most recent rectors, the Rev. Richard Simpson and the Rev. Canon Stephen N. Brannon, have overseen continued expansion of the church's ministry. Fr. Simpson served from 1987 to 1993, a time of revitalization of the Sunday school and the inauguration of other services to youth. At an all-church conference early in his tenure, the parish adopted its current mission statement: "We at Trinity are committed to be an expression of God's love through

Jesus Christ: teaching and nurturing one another in our journeys in faith, equipping one another for service, and expressing God's love to our community and the world." This statement of commitment expressed the questing spirit that so long had characterized ministry in Sonoma; its focus beyond the parish conveyed the heritage of inclusiveness. One embodiment of that sentiment was the formation of Operation Youth, an organization that began at Trinity during Fr. Simpson's tenure and later evolved to become a community-based non-profit foundation sponsoring a host of services for the youth of the Sonoma Valley.<sup>75</sup>

Additional "churchly appointments," reminiscent of those that adorned Trinity's store-room home in 1912, were added during Fr. Simpson's rectorship. Among these was the stained glass window above the altar, donated by parishioner Helen Pendleton as a memorial to her niece Eleanor Pendleton Price. Another striking addition was the bronze crucifix and mosaic above the altar, memorial gifts of parishioners James and Marguerite Vanderbilt. The crucifix, depicting the risen Christ, was designed and created by Cuban-born artist Rosa Estebañez; the background mosaic, by artisan Anthony Stellon.<sup>76</sup>

The parish's current rector, Fr. Brannon, arrived in 1995. Under his leadership, Trinity continued to build upon the traditions of its rich heritage. The restless heart of the parish found eloquent expression in the

construction of a meditative labyrinth among Trinity's circle of redwood trees, and in a new stewardship hymn, composed by parishioner and renowned organist John T. Burke, "Come Join Our Journey of the Heart." Active seekers in the parish participated in Centering Prayer sessions, Celtic Worship Experiences, Education for Ministry (EFM) classes, and a multitude of short-term courses of study. Overcoming obstacles without becoming discouraged remained a challenge, as the congregation wrestled with the day-to-day exigencies of parish ministry. Reminiscent of John Ver Mehr's financial struggles in the mid-1800s and the fund-raising bazaars of the early 1900s, Trinity turned to supplementing its parish income with English Country Faires, car-washes, and trash pick-ups at the annual Salute to the Arts.<sup>77</sup>

Parishioners generously supported a number of special projects, including the construction of a Memorial Garden and Columbarium just to the east of the Celtic cross in leafy Abbot Courtyard. This lovely and tranquil space was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Jerry Lamb, bishop of the Diocese of Northern California, in September 2000. Also noteworthy was the donation of jewelry, precious stones, gold, and silver from many participating families in the parish and broader community to fashion a Millennium Memorial Chalice to be used in the celebration of Holy Communion on special occasions.<sup>78</sup>

Recalling its origins in a school for girls, Trinity continued to honor the role of women and youth. In 2002 the parish called the Rev. Helen McPeak to serve as assistant rector, focusing her ministry on children, youth, and young families. Trinity also served as the home for Presentation School, an independent school in the Catholic tradition. Here a circle was completed. Ver Mehr had housed his Episcopal school in the home of a welcoming Roman Catholic, and Trinity Episcopal Church now gladly hosted a Catholic school. The ecumenical spirit, present in Ver Mehr's relations with clergy from a wide variety of traditions, thrived in Trinity's participation for several years in an interdenominational Vacation Bible School and the prayers read each Sunday in the Sonoma Valley Cycle of Prayer. St. Barbara's Guild remained in active service, and women served in all positions of lay leadership. One such parishioner was Jean Holt French, a link with Trinity's past. Her father William Therrel Holt was the vicar who twice served Trinity in its formative years, her paternal grandfather David Eldred Holt conducted services in the early 1900s, and her maternal grandfather Wilhelm F. Clewe served on the ruling council of the bishop's committee. Her family also included those stalwart Duhring women, notably Dorothea Duhring, the German-born music teacher hired by Belgian-born John Ver Mehr in 1856 to teach music to those Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students in Mexican patriarch Mariano Vallejo's *Casa Grande*.<sup>79</sup>

Reflecting statewide trends, the ethnic diversity of the Sonoma Valley steadily increased during Fr. Brannon's tenure. The 2000 census revealed that ethnic minorities made up more than half of the state's burgeoning population; in other words, every Californian was a member of one minority group or another. The largest numbers of new arrivals were Latinos, most of whom were of Mexican origin.<sup>80</sup> Trinity's tradition of inclusiveness and outreach was expressed in ministries such as Beyond Ourselves and the establishment of a sister-parish relationship with the Cathedral of San Juan Evangelista in El Salvador. Financial contributions provided scholarships and other forms of aid to numerous Salvadoran families. An annual poetry series, held each summer at Trinity, set aside a day for Spanish-speaking poets, while the rector, assistant rector, and several parishioners committed themselves to the goal of becoming bilingual.

When the Rev. John Leonard Ver Mehr first came to the Sonoma Valley he had a sense that his coming was providential. He reflected back on what his life had been and he envisioned what might lie ahead. There was a restless spirit within him and a hope for the future. "All this made me go to Sonoma," he said, "with an 'expectant' disposition." As we look to the future of Trinity, may that same disposition be within us. For surely there are yet among us those with restless hearts, are there not?

## Notes

---

<sup>1</sup> James J. Rawls, *Indians of California: The Changing Image* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), p. 7; James J. Rawls, *California: An Interpretive History* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 8<sup>th</sup> edition, 2003), p. 10; Robert F. Heizer, ed., *California*, vol. 8, *Handbook of the Indians of California* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1978), p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> Rawls, *California*, pp. 1, 19.

<sup>3</sup> D. O. Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914* (San Francisco: Bureau of Information and Supply, 1916), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Rawls, *California*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>6</sup> James J. Rawls, *Never Turn Back: Father Serra's Mission* (Austin, Texas: Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 1993), p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Rawls, *California*, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 48-52; Rawls, *Indians of California*, pp. 13-21; James J. Rawls, *Historia de la California Hispánica* (Berkeley: The Bancroft Library, University of California, 2001), *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> Maynard Geiger, O.F.M., *Franciscan Missionaries in Hispanic California, 1769-1848* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1969), p. 7; Tekla N. White, *Missions of the San Francisco Bay Area* (Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1996), pp. 48-49.

<sup>10</sup> White, *Missions of the San Francisco Bay Area*, p. 51.

---

<sup>11</sup> Geiger, *Franciscan Missionaries in Hispanic California*, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> White, *Missions of the San Francisco Bay Area*, p. 51.

<sup>13</sup> *The Sonoma Index-Tribune*, March 28, 1999; James J. Rawls, "The California Missions," *California Chronicles* (September 1999), p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> White, *Missions of the San Francisco Bay Area*, p. 51; James D. Hart, *A Companion to California* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 415; James B. Alexander, *Sonoma Valley Legacy: Histories and Sites of 70 Historic Adobes in and around the Sonoma Valley* (Sonoma: Sonoma Valley Historical Society, 1986), p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> Hart, *A Companion to California*, p. 460; Rawls, *California*, pp. 89-90, 95.

<sup>16</sup> Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, pp. 18-19; Madie D. Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," *The Academy Scrapbook*, Vol. 1, No. 10 (April 1951), pp. 297-298. Courtesy Sonoma Valley Historical Society.

<sup>17</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," pp. 297-298.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 298; Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, pp. 7-9.

<sup>19</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," pp. 298-299.

<sup>20</sup> James J. Rawls, "Introduction," in Rawls and Richard J. Orsi, eds., *A Golden State: Mining and Economic Development in Gold Rush California* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), p. 9; Rawls, *California*, p. 113.

---

<sup>21</sup> Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, pp. 8-9; Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 299.

<sup>22</sup> Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> Rawls, *California*, pp. 111, 123.

<sup>24</sup> J[ohn] L[eonard] Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life: In the Old and New World* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft and Company, 1877), p. 378.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 377-378; Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, p. 9; Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 299.

<sup>26</sup> "Episcopal clergy who have served Trinity Episcopal Church, Sonoma, California," undated typescript. Courtesy the Rev. Canon John Bogart, Benicia, California; Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 299.

<sup>27</sup> Alexander, *Sonoma Valley Legacy*, p. 58.

<sup>28</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 379.

<sup>29</sup> Robert M. Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story: Pages through the Ages* (Sonoma: The Sonoma Index-Tribune, 1997), p. 52.

<sup>30</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, pp. 379-380.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 380-381.

<sup>32</sup> George and Roger Emanuels, *Schools & Scows in Early Sonoma* (Sonoma: Sonoma Valley Historical Society, 1998), pp. 4-5.

<sup>33</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 381.

---

<sup>34</sup> Vicki Whiting and James B. Alexander, "Romantic Past Surrounds Leese-Fitch Adobe," *The Sonoma Index-Tribune*, July 19, 1991; "Another Business Building is Sold," *ibid.*, April 18, 1968; Celeste Murphy, *People of the Pueblo* (Sonoma: W. L. and C.G. Murphy, 1937), p. 184; Alexander, *Sonoma Valley Legacy*, pp. 35-41; "Leese/Fitch Adobe," undated typescript, Sonoma Valley League for Historic Preservation.

<sup>35</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 386.

<sup>36</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 299.

<sup>37</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 381.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303; Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 303; Emanuels, *Schools & Scows in Early Sonoma*, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, pp. 381-383.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 384.

<sup>41</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>42</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 300; Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, pp. 386-387.

<sup>43</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 388-389.

<sup>44</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, pp. 122, 154, 281.

<sup>45</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," pp. 300, 304; Emanuels, *Schools & Scows in Early Sonoma*, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> Brown, "Reverend Doctor Ver Mehr," p. 301.

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 303-304; Kelley, *History of the Diocese of California from 1849 to 1914*, p. 19.

<sup>49</sup> Ver Mehr, *Checkered Life*, p. 385.

<sup>50</sup> “Episcopal clergy who have served Trinity Episcopal Church, Sonoma, California.”

<sup>51</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, January 1899, p. 28. Manuscript copy, courtesy the Rev. Canon John Bogart, Benicia, California.

<sup>52</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, pp. 132-133.

<sup>53</sup> “History of the Congregation [Sonoma],” typescript dated 1967. Courtesy the Rev. Canon John Bogart, Benicia, California.

<sup>54</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, June 1911, p. 6; *ibid.*, February 1912, p. 6; “Sonoma-Trinity (1912) 1951 #36,” typescript dated December 7, 1997. Courtesy the Rev. Canon John Bogart, Benicia, California.

<sup>55</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, January 1912, p. 12.

<sup>56</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, pp. 156, 162.

<sup>57</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, February 1912, p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, pp. 140, 155, 270.

<sup>59</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, February 1912, p. 6.

<sup>60</sup> “History of the Congregation [Sonoma].”

---

<sup>61</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, April-May 1913, p. 6.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., February 1914, p. 12; “History of the Congregation [Sonoma].”

<sup>63</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, p. 153.

<sup>64</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, June 1915, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> “History of the Congregation [Sonoma];” personal communication with Jean Holt French, Sonoma, July 21, 2003.

<sup>66</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, February 1916, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> Lynch, *The Sonoma Valley Story*, p. 173.

<sup>68</sup> Personal communication with Jean Holt French, Sonoma, July 21, 2003.

<sup>69</sup> *The Sacramento Missionary*, February 1916, p. 7.

<sup>70</sup> “Episcopal clergy who have served Trinity Episcopal Church, Sonoma, California;” personal communication with Jean Holt French, Sonoma, July 21, 2003.

<sup>71</sup> “History of the Congregation [Sonoma];” “Episcopal clergy who have served Trinity Episcopal Church, Sonoma, California.”

<sup>72</sup> Martin Knutsen, “Chronological List of Trinity Church Rectors,” typescript dated May 1986 in author’s collection.

<sup>73</sup> “Parish Request: A Spiritual Home,” *Architecture West* (December 1965), pp. 20-21.

---

<sup>74</sup> Undated photo album, Trinity archives; “A Guide to the Chapel and other Liturgical Art Forms in Trinity Episcopal Church, Sonoma, CA,” undated typescript in author’s collection.

<sup>75</sup> Personal communication with John Randall, Sonoma, July 23, 2003.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> *Trinity Notes*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (July 20, 2003).

<sup>78</sup> Personal communication with Arthur Green, Sonoma, July 22, 2003.

<sup>79</sup> Personal communication with Jean Holt French, Sonoma, July 21, 2003.

<sup>80</sup> Rawls, *California*, pp. xiii, 549.