



TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS A Free Man

The Journal of Gabriel Bibbard Moore

ANGELA LINDSAY & DIXIELAND SCHOOL 8TH GRADE CLASS
MADERA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Angela Lindsay & Dixieland School 8th Grade Class*

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Drawing by Evelyn Munoz.

Dedicated to
the millions of Americans
who are still struggling
to be free.

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Introduction

Books, movies and popular culture have often focused upon slavery or the lives of slaves. This is not that story.

A group of fourteen 8th grade students from the tiny K-8 Dixieland School in Madera, California set out to tell the tale of Gabriel Bibbard Moore, a former slave who lived the last twenty-seven years of his life as a free man. This project started out as one for the entire class. The students started learning about Mr. Moore under the guidance of William Coate, historian, author, educator and the architect of the Madera Method. They studied primary source documents and learned about his life within the context of history.

The students were set to travel and visit Mr. Moore's grave when the unthinkable happened. A global pandemic was to change everything. Schools across the nation were closing. On Friday, March 13th, they left for the weekend not knowing they would not return for the last quarter of their 8th grade year.

As school shifted to "distance learning" the focus was to help students retain the knowledge and gains they had made thus far. However, fourteen students went above and beyond. They pushed forward; this was not merely an assignment. Through emails and digital submissions, they became fourteen authors and the illustrator of a work of historical fiction. This is their book.

Gabriel Bibbard Moore

So what makes Gabe Moore's story the subject of our focus, and how did someone from such a humble background find a place in the early history of Fresno County, California? Gabe came to the attention of William Coate while he was doing research in the Fresno County Library. There was a newspaper article from January 4, 1871 which stated that Gabe Moore was refused the right

to vote in Fresno County by the then County Clerk, Harry St. John Dixon. Two things make this article intriguing, first, Gabe was refused the right to vote because he was black, and second, the Fifteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, ratified February 3, 1870, granted him the right to vote.

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” - Amendment XV

Here was a former slave living in the “free state” of California since being brought to California by the Glenn family. Once he arrived in 1853 he was a free black man. Gabe began farming and ranching, he amassed a considerable amount of property and wealth. But when he tried to exercise his newly granted rights, Gabe was met with a County Clerk that refused to acknowledge the power of the federal government over the State of California. The clerk argued that since California had not ratified the Fifteenth Amendment and the California Constitution did not allow black people to vote, he was not obligated to recognize Gabe’s rights. Despite the rule of law in his favor, the attitude of Henry St. John Dixon was echoed by the community and Gabe was turned away.

Despite this obvious slap in the face, Gabe continued to farm and raise his cattle along the Kings River. He did eventually register to vote. In 1880 his life ended tragically while crossing the Kings river with his cattle. The newspaper reported Gabe had left an estate worth \$15,000, a huge sum by the standards of the time. He is buried in the simple Akers Cemetery outside of Centerville under a stone that was vandalized in the 1960’s.

By contrast, Henry St. James Dixon died in a mental institution, yet lies beneath a huge memorial complete with a visitor’s bench in a cemetery on Belmont Avenue. In life and in death, the injustices of the time are clear.

However, Gabe reached a potential no one could have predicted of a child born into slavery. At the age of sixty-seven, Gabriel Bibbard Moore died after twenty-seven years a free man.

The Madera Method

The Madera Method started out in September of 1985 as a project created by William Coate, then a 6th grade teacher at Howard School in Madera, California. His students researched the Minturn family, pioneers who lived on the banks of the Chowchilla River. This first group of scholarly researchers and authors inspired other groups of students to follow their example for the next two decades.

In 2019 the Madera Method Special Collection and Archive was opened and dedicated to those first authors. We are proud to continue their legacy.



Twenty-Seven Years A Free Man:
The Journal of Gabriel Bibbard Moore

May 31, 1853

Dear Diary,

Today I finally arrived in the wonderful state of California after a long journey from Arkansas. It has been a long trip. When we left our old home, we went to Texas, where the Akers lived. Then we joined their wagon train.

It took us two months to get here from Texas. We crossed into California at the Yuma Crossing. When we did that, I became a free man. After living as a slave for 41 years, I am now free.

I traveled with William and Richard Glenn on their wagon. I brought some watermelon seeds with me because I want to try planting them to start a farm and see if I can make money.

We decided to stop at a little place called Scottsburg on the Kings River. After I finished unpacking my luggage from the wagon, I settled on a field and started planting the watermelon seeds; while planting them, I noticed an Indian village not far away.

After a while, I grew tired because of my long trip and the work I did preparing my farm, so I took a nap. When I woke up, I decided to cover my watermelons and go see what the Glenn brothers were doing. They had found a cabin that a pioneer had turned into a saloon. They were inside getting a drink. I couldn't go inside because they won't let Blacks drink there, so I decided to go back to my camp. I wanted to make sure no creatures were picking at my watermelons. When I got there I saw some women from the Indian village taking some of my watermelons. Before I could do anything, the women fled to their settlement, so all I could do was watch them leave with my hard work. But alas I couldn't stay angry about this robbery forever or else I'll make less money, so I will begin to take more precautions when leaving my farm.

(Anthony Vega)

May 9, 1856

Dear Diary,

I have moved into a new county called Fresno. From what I have heard from the newspaper, Fresno was made from a part of Mariposa county. The newspaper also states that Millerton is the new county seat, I guess now the white people are happy now that they don't have to travel to Mariposa to go to court and do business. Now that Fresno has become the center of attention maybe I CAN make a lot of money from my farm.

The courthouse in Millerton will be built near a bank saloon, so most of the lawyers are mostly going to be drunk. At the end of the day, most of this doesn't interest me because it won't help my farm make me money.

Good bye.

(Anthony Vega)

February 12, 1857

Dear Diary,

Today started out to be another wonderful day at my ranch. I had just attended a contest of farm animals in which my horse participated, and we got second place, which is not bad for a starter like me and my animals. Right after that, I came home and finished everything that needed to be done. My watermelons that I had growing in my fields were nice and fresh and ready to pick. I was gathering them up when the Indian woman who lived down the road came up and asked me for some of my watermelons. I said no because I had worked too hard to get this crop. She was upset and said that she was going over to the Indian agent and give him some important information about me. I couldn't imagine what that could be; I had done nothing wrong, but I was worried anyway. She could tell him anything.

Later Mr. Campbell came to my house and handed me a paper that said I was accused of attacking the Indian woman. Pretty soon after that, some men came and tied me up. They said they were going to have a trial for me, and they took me to a cabin back in the woods. It was filled with white men who were drinking. After an hour or two, the Glenn brothers came in with their guns drawn. They said they were going to make sure that I got a fair trial. After debating and presenting information, they found me not guilty. I hope my life gets back to normal again. I am so grateful for what I have and what I have accomplished so far and in this country.

(Yasmin Moreno)

March 8, 1860

Dear Diary,

Today is my 48th birthday, and I'm so glad I didn't spend it alone. William and Richard gave me a birthday party at my house. Delila Akers and her four sons came over to spend this time with me. We gathered around the dining table and they sang me Happy Birthday. Right after that, two of Delila's sons came in from the kitchen holding a one-layer cake. It was a chocolate cake with vanilla icing and a variety of fruits on top.

We sat in the living room enjoying the cake and talking about the good old days we had in Arkansas.

September 4, 1860

Dear Diary,

I want to tell you about this school that was built near Fort Miller in Millerton. It is the first school in Fresno County. The reason I know about it is because I passed by it quite a few times

and asked some people about it before it closed down. The thing I very much hated about the school was I heard that black people were not allowed to go there.

The teacher name was Miss Rebecca Baley. I was told she was the only teacher who worked there.

Her pay for teaching, which sounds like quite a bit for most people, was fifty dollars a month. I think that is a good salary, not that I would be a teacher, because I have a happy life where I am right now.

Some of the students going to that school were Mary McKenzie, Mary Daulton, Ellen Baley, the teacher's little sister. The school only lasted about three months. The reason the school only lasted three months was because the county ran out of money.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

December 15, 1860

Dear Diary,

It is now the end of 1860. I have been in California for seven years now. I own a lot of property. I hired 2 Indians to work for me, and I gave them a spot to live. One is a servant named Ned. He is 24 years old, and the other one is a field hand named Jose, age 35.

I have 114 acres of government land; one house that is on the west side of the Kings River and half a mile above the Royal store; One barn, one brush fence, 2 Spanish Horses, five Spanish Mares, and 2 Spanish Mules. I have 40 mixed stock cattle and 20 hogs.

I think white people feel like black people should not have servants. I think that they think Blacks should do the work all by themselves. White people think that it would be disrespectful for black people to work for other black people. They think it is alright for black people to work for white people. White people think that they should be the only ones who should have servants.

(Joseph Diaz)

December 20, 1860

Dear Diary,

The election is over, and the new president is Abraham Lincoln. I think he is a good man because he said he would end slavery. He ran against 3 other men.

The slave owners from the Southern states are not happy with him. They say they will leave the United States and start their own country.

The day after the election, South Carolina held a meeting to discuss leaving. Today, December 20, 1860, it happened. They voted to leave the United States. People are saying that South Carolina plans to take over a United States fort near Charleston, South Carolina. Its name is Fort Sumter.

When I heard that South Carolina left the United States and that they planned to take over a fort in Charleston, I knew that this was getting serious and that this was going to lead to a civil war.

If I was still in slavery I would have been caught on the South's side, but that won't happen now that I am in California. I will stay on the North's side because I am no longer a slave. I am glad my owners brought me to California.

(Bernardo Barron)

April 15, 1861

Dear Diary,

This has been a hard day, but most of my days have been hard work days. At least my life has turned for the better. I am free.

I walked over to see Richard and William Glenn this evening. They had some news to tell me. They said six more states have left the United States. They are Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. There are probably more, but these are for sure. The leaders from these states and South Carolina met and formed their own country. They are calling it the Confederate

States of America. They have elected a man named Jefferson Davis as President. Alexander Stevens is their Vice President. Some people call this new nation The Confederacy.

On April 12, the Civil War began when Confederate (Southern) troops fired cannonballs at Fort Sumter in the Charleston harbor. The Union Northern) troops had to give up and leave. This looks bad for the North. I don't know who is going to win this war. I am just glad that I am in California.

(Evelyn Munoz)

April 16, 1861

Dear Diary,

Now that the Civil War has started, and I am in California, I can be for the North. It wants to end slavery. The South wants to keep slavery. Most likely, people in this county are going to support the South because most of them are from the South.

Well, I am not. I'm going for the North. As a black man, I've gone through slavery. I know what it is like. None of these other people know what it is like to be owned by another person.

I got a surprise today. I was on my way to Millerton to vote but the sheriff stopped me and asked, "Where are you going?" I replied, "I'm going to go vote."

He said, "You can't vote; you're black." I stayed silent with rage and frustration. I thought I was free in this state. I pledged revenge on the sheriff because I was so angry. I didn't like the idea of black people not being able to vote because they were different and the color of their skin was different. I don't know what got into me. That sheriff knows how to get under my skin. He doesn't know what it feels to be Black. He doesn't know how hard I worked to come to this state. I had to go through slavery and now I want to vote. That privilege is not going to be taken away because of some sheriff. No matter what they say, I'm going to vote someday. I don't care what the sheriff says.

(Belinda Higareda)

May 24, 1861

Dear Diary,

It feels as if I shouldn't be alive during these times right now. The reason is because I heard news about how the South had fired their cannon at Fort Sumter. Now because of that, President Lincoln ordered 75,000 volunteers to fight the Confederates. That means that a bunch of innocent men are risking their lives to fight those Confederates, which is absolutely insane. Now we have our Americans fighting Americans over mainly Slavery. Yeah Diary, you heard that right, Slavery. I really can't believe that we are at war over letting people with a different skin color work basically all of their lives. That hits me more, Diary, because I was in the shoes of being a Slave. Let me go back to telling you the news about the 75,000 volunteers. Well, let's just say that that made the South mad, obviously. So Arkansas, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia all decided to leave the United States and be part of the Confederate States. Based on hearing that, I know right now it will be a big and long war. The United States is called The United States for a reason, meaning that President Lincoln will send as many men as he needs to fight and keep the United States united, as it should be. So life for me used to be happier, waking up and doing my same routine without worrying about a war. But now everyday as I wake up I feel depressed thinking of all the families out there who will never be the same again because of their lost loved ones. My apologies Diary for not being the same happy Gabe anymore, but I hope you will understand how hard times are right now. The thing I hope for is that the United States stays united and that the slaves can finally be free once and for all. So I guess it's Goodnight Diary. Talk to you some other time.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

July 25, 1861

Dear Diary,

A newspaper came this morning. It announced that the big battle had just finished. It is the first battle of the war, and I haven't been able to get much sleep. It felt like I could almost hear the gunshots. The North lost that battle; they ran for their lives all the way to Washington, D.C.

The President announced that he was surprised that the Northern army lost. The battle was called Bull Run or the Battle of Manassas Junction.

(Yaretsi Flores)

February 16, 1862

Dear Diary,

Today is February 16th, 1862. At this time, the South is winning the battles in the East, while the Northern army is winning and conquering land in the West. The North wants to capture the Mississippi River, and if they capture the river, they will split the South. It would be unimaginable if the North captured the river and split the South. If the North could, Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas would be on the West side of the river. The rest of the Confederate states would be on the opposite side, in the East. The South has a fort in Vicksburg, Mississippi which is built over a high cliff overseeing the river. No man or ship would survive the guns of the fort; the guns of the fort would sink any ship on the river. It would be crazy if anyone had the idea to sail on the river while there is a strong fort that could take them out in a matter of time. As long as the South has Vicksburg, the North won't be able to take defeat the Confederacy. I have to go now; I will write more when I have the chance.

(Melanie Mendez)

March 8, 1862

Dear Diary,

Today the Confederate army was defeated by the Union army near Elkhorn Tavern. The battle started when the Union General led his army against the Rebel army. The Union army pushed the Rebel army into Arkansas from Missouri. This battle took place near my old home in Arkansas when I was a slave. If I was still there to this day, I probably wouldn't have a chance at surviving.

(Yaretsi Flores)

March 15, 1862

Dear Diary,

On March 10, 1862 an amazing thing happened. That day the North and the South had a sea battle between two ships that were called "ironclads." An ironclad ship is one that is covered with iron so that cannonballs just bounce off of it, and it is protected by iron and steel. On March 8, the Virginia, a Southern ironclad, attacked the Northern ships that were near Hampton Roads. Some of the Northern ships got hit, and one sunk. It was pretty scary that there were people in there. I wasn't expecting anything to happen like that. That night the Virginia wasn't hurt like the rest of the Northern ships. Then the next day the Monitor, a Northern ironclad, began to battle with the Virginia. The Virginia wasn't expecting it that day. Both the Monitor and the Virginia shot cannon balls at each other the whole time, but they would just bounce off. That night it was very scary, but at the end of the day, no one won. After that day, the Virginia sailed away. I personally think they should not have battled because at that point both ships were covered with iron and steel. The Monitor should've gone its way and the Virginia should've gone its way. It was a waste of time for both of them.

(Magdaley Herrera)

April 9, 1862

Dear Diary,

Everyone has been spreading the word of the Battle of Shiloh.

The Northern army in the West was almost wiped out last week. Forty thousand of General Grant's army was camped at Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River. General Grant put General Longstreet in charge of them. On the morning of April 6, they were attacked by the Rebel Army led by General Johnston. They almost destroyed General Grant's Army of the Tennessee. The two armies fought all day long. By the next morning, General Grant sent more troops to help General Longstreet. Finally, the Northern army had more troops there than the Southern army, and the Confederates had to retreat. It was a very close call. Twenty-three thousand men died in the fighting at the Battle of Shiloh. It was a bloody place; there were dead soldiers all over the place. Only a small percentage lived, and most of them were badly hurt.

(Evelyn Munoz)

April 30, 1862

Dear Diary,

I just received information that the South has been defeated terribly at New Orleans, which means that there will be no more war soon. On April 25, Admiral Farragut and his troops attacked the port, and as a result the North now has control of the Mouth of the Mississippi River. Northern ships are going up the Mississippi river; they can go up as far as Vicksburg now.

(Yasmin Moreno)

May 1, 1862

Dear Diary,

New Orleans is the largest city and the most important city in the Confederacy. The job to capture it was left to Commodore David Farragut. He was in charge of a fleet of 17 deep-sea vessels and many smaller boats. General Mansfield Lovell had 4 or 5,000 men to try to keep it for the Confederacy. He had some infantry soldiers and naval ships to use against Farragut. New Orleans has been an important city to the Americans for more than a hundred years.

(Lilia Gonzalez)

May 5, 1862

Dear Diary,

Five days have passed since the Port of New Orleans fell to Admiral Farragut. Everything probably looks a lot different there now. It probably looks devastated, and people are probably out on the streets now. The last time I wrote in this diary, The Northern troops were close to Vicksburg. If the North captures Vicksburg, then the South will have total control of the Mississippi River. If that were to happen, then the Confederacy would finally be split.

I feel that if the Confederacy is split, then maybe this war will quickly be over.

(Yasmin Moreno)

July 8, 1862

Dear Diary,

Today is July 8, 1862, the Union Army has invaded Millerton, this is terrible. The army has been staying in the fort near Millerton, which they named Fort Miller. They made the Indians build them

the fort back in 1852. When the army invaded Millerton, they came from San Francisco. When they reached the San Joaquin River, they sent one soldier across on a raft holding a white truce flag. When he reached Millerton, all the people clapped for him, so the rest of the army knew it would be safe to come across. People say that the army invaded Millerton because of all of the Southerners who live in Fresno County. I guess we will just have to wait and see what happens during this time while the army is in control of Millerton.

(Melanie Mendez)

August 11, 1862

Dear Diary,

Today was such a disappointing day. My farmhand, Ned, took off. I am writing this in my journal trying to figure out why he ran away. Yesterday was August 10; I had just woke up. I went outside to go check if everything was okay and under control.

I was walking by the animal pen, and there seemed to be something wrong. It was my Spanish mules. They were gone. I assumed it was Ned because he is the only person who is here every day. I confronted him. He acted very suspiciously, more than usual, and told me he knew nothing about the mules. I insisted that my Spanish mules were gone. He couldn't even look me in my eyes. That's when I knew that he took them. I suspected him so I asked him, "Where are they?" Ned acted dumb.

I took Ned to my neighbor, Richard Glenn, who was my owner in Arkansas. I asked Richard and his brother, William, if they could help me out. They tied Ned to a tree, then I gave him a whipping. I knew it was him. I was so disappointed and shocked that he lied to my face. He refused to tell me the truth. With anger, I beat him with my whip until he told me the truth. After some time, he broke down and told me the truth. He had been using them, and I had told him to put them back in the pen, but he didn't. I was furious.

When I left Richard and William, I was so angry. How could I keep him if he was just going to lie to my face? What if he stole other animals without my noticing? I started to wonder if he did this to me because I am Black.

(Belinda Higareda)

September 16, 1862

Dear Diary,

When I woke up this morning, I had a strange feeling. I had a dream last night that was so real. I dreamed that I was in the war. I was in Maryland in the town of Sharpsburg. I was about to eat breakfast. Suddenly I heard a loud sound and then a few seconds later another, and it seemed like they would never stop. I didn't know what it was and was scared to go outside, but I was curious, so I peeked outside and saw nothing. I had never heard anything like this before in Sharpsburg at Antietam Creek. I left the house and went towards the loud sounds. I went up the hill a little. I didn't know exactly where the sound was coming from. When I got to the top of the hill, all of a sudden I saw two armies fighting each other with guns. There were so many I couldn't even count them. Then I realized in my dream that it was The North and The South fighting. I knew it was them fighting because I remembered General McClellan and I was sure it was him who was leading the Northern troops. I didn't know if the southern troops' commander was General Lee or not but I had a feeling it was because Lee is the top southern general. The battle lasted for about 10 hours. More than half of the troops in both of the armies were killed or wounded. However, the Northern had the advantage. It was the first time the South had invaded a northern state. General McClellan's army knew the place better and was fighting for their people and land, if they had lost, they would have lost it all.

I watched more than half the battle. It seemed so real. I was about to go home, but the gun shots got quieter. I turned back and saw the Southern army running and the Northern troops were just shooting and not chasing them. I don't blame them; they had been fighting for many hours. After a while,

Lee's army was super far away, almost like a dot from the hill. That's when I woke up. I realized that it had all been a dream. It was so real.

I got out of bed and went into Centerville. When I got there, I got the surprise of my life. People were talking about the Battle of Sharpsburg. I had dreamed what they were talking about. This is really weird.

A few days later I heard that President Lincoln got mad at General McClellan for not killing all Lee's troops.

(Fabi Xi)

October 15, 1862

Dear Diary,

People are saying that President Lincoln is going to free the slaves. They say he is going to write the Emancipation Proclamation. This will free all of the slaves in the southern states except Tennessee, but there is a big problem. It doesn't free the slaves in Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, Maryland, and some parts of Louisiana. This means that some of the slaves will be free and some will not be free.

I feel this is not fair that only some slaves get to be free. One slave could be free while some of their family members have to remain slaves.

(Joseph Diaz)

December 15, 1862

Dear Diary,

It's such a marvelous day today, but I had trouble with the two Indians living and working for me, Ned and Jose. I fired them because they weren't doing your jobs the way I wanted them to do. So now I don't have any Indians working for me or living with me. But I really needed them because since I own a lot of land I need some help with it. Then I have my house and my barn for my animals. The fence doesn't take that much time to keep up. It is about ½ mile over by the Royal store on the west side of the Kings River.

The cost of the land and the improvements are \$314. I have had the same number of animals for a while now, and I'm really proud of all I have accomplished since moving to California. I now own all these beautiful animals like 2 Spanish horses, 5 Spanish mares, 2 mules, 40 mixed stock cattle, and 20 hogs. I love my animals very much. I also have that \$23 note from the man who bought one of my cows on credit. Today was just such a great day, and I liked telling you about it.

(Alondra Rojas)

January 1, 1863

Dear Diary,

I just found out that President Lincoln's proclamation freed the slaves in the north, but unfortunately it didn't free those in the South. Hearing this took my mind back to when I was a slave in Arkansas. I was owned by Margaret Glenn and she was so kind to me and didn't really treat me like a slave, but a friend. I'm 10 years older than her two sons, so I would look after them on the Glenn plantation.

(Yaretsi Flores)

July 8, 1863

Dear Diary,

Today I found out that General Lee again tried to invade the North, but this time it was different, and he reached all the way to Pennsylvania. If you ask me, that's pretty far. He got as far as a small little town called Gettysburg, but the Northern Army was camping there already. The Northern army found out that Lee's Army was there. When they found them, they all started fighting. The fight lasted for three whole days, and the Northern army won the fight. General Lee couldn't take any more, so he had to turn back and take his army back to Virginia. A few days later, the North won another great, important battle. General Grant captured Vicksburg, Mississippi. The North now controls the Mississippi River from now on. People are saying that the South is going to be finished in a few days. Today was a great day for me because I am in California, and the war can't reach me here.

(Alondra Rojas)

June 15, 1864

Dear Diary,

The whole Northern Army is now led by General Grant. He has been chasing Lee's army. A lot of Lee's soldiers have been killed. They call General Grant, "Butcher Grant." Thousands of Union soldiers have also been killed as well as the Southern soldiers. Fighting is now going on at Cold Harbor. General Grant said no matter what, he is going to defeat Lee's army, so mark his words.

(Abel Elisarraraz)

November 9, 1864

Today was the happiest day for humankind. This is a great day for Black people like me, especially the slaves. We know it's difficult not to be White. It would be so much easier if I was White because I'd have privileges.

Well, I'm happy today because Abraham Lincoln has won the election. If I could have voted, I would have voted for him because he is so much different from the others. He believes that everybody is equal, and no one is better than anyone else.

One part of the election I didn't like was Andrew Johnson got elected Vice President. I don't really like him. I don't know why the people chose him. It seems very strange. He is a Democrat from Tennessee, a Southern State. I think he will be a bad influence, especially when he is drinking.

I'm so grateful that President Lincoln will take the oath of office for a second time on March 4th, 1865. In my opinion, I see President Lincoln as an opportunity, an opportunity for life for slaves all over the country. I'm grateful for this day. I'm hoping white men won't see me any differently from other men. I know they probably will, but it's a change; they will have to deal with it. President Lincoln has demanded no slavery in the North or South—no slavery at all.

I'm so exhilarated. I don't want anyone to feel the torment and torture I have had to go through. It was time for a change. Finally, we have a President who understands slavery and the pain they had to go through. Also, the fear of being tortured, even as a kid by their owners. They couldn't do anything, just sit and get beaten.

It is just wrong. Just to make money for their owners, not themselves. I wonder how Delila Akers must feel. She must be so happy, filled with all kinds of emotions. I should head on my way to go see.

(Belinda Higareda)

December 25, 1864

Dear Diary,

Richard Glenn told me that General William T. Sherman knew that if he had a large number of troops, he could walk from Atlanta to Savannah, Georgia and take the southerners crops and farm animals. He thinks this will terrify the civilians, and they will see how committed he is and how dedicated his troops are. General Sherman knew that beating the Confederates on the battlefield wouldn't be enough, so he had his soldiers go onto the people's property and take every bit of food and supplies they had. General Sherman is wanting to spread fear through the destruction of civilian property without harming or killing them. Once they got to the state of South Carolina, the first state to secede from the Union, Sherman knew his men would be even harder to control. An expression that General Sherman used was "I have never shed any tears over these events because I believe they hasten what we are fighting for, the end of the war."

In my opinion, I think General William T. Sherman knows what he is doing. He wants to show who is boss and take control. He knows what is right and wrong; he didn't want to commit a crime such as harming or killing civilians. He just wants the war to be over. General Sherman is a role model for his troops and shows them what is right.

(Belinda Higareda)

April 1, 1865

Dear Diary,

These are some crazy times I'm living in, and I'll tell you why. I got the newspaper today and read something about the Civil War. Right now I have just finished feeding the livestock and am going to tell you what I read and what my thoughts are on this War.

I read that General Lee got caught in a trap at Petersburg by Generals Grant and Sherman. Also that Lee decided to leave Petersburg and lead his army to some western part of Virginia. The place he went to was a place named Appomattox Courthouse. Now because of this, people are thinking that this will be the end of the war. The reason they think that is because if General Lee has to surrender, then that will force the South to surrender.

When reading all of that from the newspaper, I have mixed emotions. I feel sorry for all the families losing loved ones first of all. Since this is a war, many men are giving up their lives for either freedom or slavery.

If the whole country could just agree that everyone, regardless of skin color, could just be free. If the whole country could agree with that, then maybe this war would have never even started.

Also I feel bad for President Abraham Lincoln because I'm sure that a lot of people think that he is a bad man because he wants to free the slaves.

It's like the people who own slaves don't even know how it feels to work every day and to be treated poorly. How could anyone hate President Abraham Lincoln because he wants to free the slaves?

The war has been going on for so long. So many have died. My guess is half a million already. So if half a million lives might be dead already, then why is this war still going on? Can you imagine all those bodies just lying dead?

I hope the next battle is the last one, and that once and for all everyone can be free. The sad thing to me is that this war reminds me of the Declaration of Independence because the colonists fought for freedom. This means men died for freedom, and now some men are dying to let one side still be able to own slaves. It shows how fighting for something right costs a lot.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

April 15, 1865

Dear Diary,

Right now I feel more sorrowful than I can ever explain to you. Sadly, I read in the newspaper today that President Abraham Lincoln has been shot dead by a man named John Wilkes Booth. Also right now here in Fresno most people are happy about the fact that John Wilkes Booth killed President Abraham Lincoln because the people of Fresno didn't like the fact that Lincoln wanted to free the slaves. This is disgusting in my opinion, because, sure you can strongly disagree with someone or someone's beliefs, but never be happy about someone's death, never ever.

The other thing I wanted to tell you Diary is that if I had the chance to kill John Wilkes Booth, I would kill him. You may ask why would I do such a thing. Well first of all, how dare anyone kill a President who wanted everyone, regardless of color, to be free. Second of all, President Abraham Lincoln did nothing wrong to John Wilkes Booth, and finally why should President Abraham Lincoln have to die while a murder gets to live? Right now it is an hour away from lunch time and I haven't told my wife yet about President Lincoln's assassination. I hate to have to tell her this because every time we got a newspaper about the President, we would both talk about how lucky we are to have such a great President. We also talked about how insane it is that there are such racist people who still want slavery.

When I heard my wife's footsteps coming close to the kitchen I got nervous butterflies in my stomach. I was afraid of her reaction.

As my wife came in, she first said "What should we have for lunch baby." I then said "Honey, I am not that hungry right now because I have some terrible news to tell you." She said while rubbing my back "C'mon baby, you can tell me." With tears, I got up to read the newspaper. I read how President Abraham Lincoln was shot dead." As I read that, Mary started to cry. Then after letting her cry for quite some time, I got up and began to hug her and tell her "It's ok Honey, I'm sure that people will remember

what Abraham Lincoln said about how this country won't survive half-free and half-slave. Congress will listen, and America will be a better place."

She stopped crying and said "You are right baby. Hopefully slavery will end once and for all." I told my wife "I think Abraham Lincoln would like us to move on and not worry."

When I sat down and tried to eat, I must admit that I couldn't. All I could think about was that cold blooded killer, John Wilkes Booth. Man. if I had the chance I would pull my gun out and pull the trigger. as I said earlier. How could he do such a thing like that?

I got up from the table and ran outside to get my axe. Then to let out my anger, I began to chop at trees on the ground that had already been cut down. I keep chopping and chopping, over and over.

Finally, Mary came out and said, "Oh Baby, I get that you're mad, but there is nothing we can do." I said, "You're right Honey, I must be insane. I'm sorry for letting this happen."

She said, "I left your food in the pot over the fire to keep it warm for you." After I got inside, I began to calm down. Before I go to bed, I want to tell you, Diary, that I may not get that much sleep, I hope President Abraham Lincoln is in a better place and that they catch John Wilkes Booth and put him in jail. Anyways, Goodnight Diary, I will talk to you some other time.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

April 16, 1865

Dear Diary,

Today, April 16, 1865, is the second day since the former president, Abraham Lincoln's assassination. Now, Vice President Andrew Johnson will be the new President of the United States of America. I think I have the answer to why people fear this new change.

Johnson was pro-slavery. For people like me, a freed slave, our rights as African Americans could be changed and not guaranteed. I hope for the worst not to come.

Good bye.

(Anthony Vega)

March 11, 1866

Dear Diary,

Today was the most intense time of my life. I was so nervous because this is the day I decided to ask a beautiful woman to marry me. Her name is Mary Boyd. Mary lives in Tulare, so I had to ride down there to meet her.

When I got to her house, I made a special breakfast of buttermilk pancakes, bacon and eggs, and coffee. When I got everything ready, I yelled to my soon-to-be bride that breakfast was ready. When she came into the kitchen, she looked really impressed to see all of the delicious food I had made. She came over to me and gave me a fifteen second hug and a good kiss. Let me tell you, Diary, that really made me feel good. As we were eating, she told me that this was the most delicious meal she had ever eaten.

After we finished eating, I cleaned the table and washed the dishes. While I was doing that, I told Mary that I had a surprise for her. I told her we were going to have a picnic at a nice place by the river. She thought that was the surprise. I packed all of the things we would need for the picnic and put them in the wagon. We were ready to go.

“Wow, Honey,” she said with a smile. I wasn’t expecting you to go to all of this trouble to have such a fun day.

When we got to the river, I tied the horse to a tree and then set up the picnic. I brought sandwiches, crackers, dip, tea, and a jug of water. When we began to eat, I felt nervous and excited about what was going to happen. When we finished, we walked

around and looked at the beauty of nature. Man, oh man, Diary, the woods down here in Tulare are beautiful right now. I am so glad I picked this day to propose.

After quite some time of exploring, we headed back to our picnic spot. Once we sat down to take a break and drink water, I got more and more butterflies in my stomach. Finally, after a long wait, I decided that it was time. I stood up and said “Honey, I have something important to ask you.” She replied, “What is it Baby?”

I said, “Mary, I love you so much, and I never thought in my life that I would ever meet a special woman like you. It’s like we are meant to be for each other, and I just have to ask you something that I have planned on asking you for months now. Mary, will you marry me?”

Once I said that, she started to cry. Then she gave me the best hug ever. While she was still crying, she told me “Yes of course. Of all the men I have met, you are truly the best, and I will be more than happy to be your wife forever.”

I happily put the ring on her finger and then told her that I had one last surprise for her. She replied with a laugh “I am already happy with the surprise you just gave me.”

We packed up and drove the wagon to my farm on the Kings River to give her the surprise I didn’t tell you about, Diary. I had decided to make dinner and prepare a relaxing bubble bath for her. When we got back to the farm I told her about dinner and the bubble bath.

First I made a fire to heat some water. Then I gathered some mint leaves and flowers. When the water was ready, I poured it into the tub and put in the leaves and flowers. Then I told Mary that her bath is ready in the back room. While she took her bath, I made dinner. I had prepared steak, broccoli, carrots, potatoes, and bite sized cinnamon rolls for dessert.

After almost an hour, I knocked on the back room door and said, “The food is done Honey.” Mary answered, “I am getting dressed now, and I’ll be right out, Baby.”

When she came out, she was shocked to see the dinner I had made. It was delicious. When we were finished eating, it was time for bed. Mary went to the back room to sleep, and I decided to sleep in the kitchen. Before I went to bed, I looked in on Mary. She was asleep already. I didn't blame her. It had been a long day, and by then it was late at night.

Before I go to bed, Diary, I just want to tell you how excited I am. I mean I just proposed to Mary, the woman I truly love to death. What more could I ask for? We will always be together; we will never part. In a lot of ways, my life here on the Kings River has been lonesome. Now I will never feel alone again. Anyways Diary, Goodnight, talk to you some other time.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

May 17, 1867

Dear Diary,

It is raining and it has been raining for 20 days and nights. When I went outside the rivers were flooded. Mary and I were trapped in our cabin because all the rivers and creeks were flooded. The Kings River was one of these and that one had really overflowed. Many of our cattle are dead, and we couldn't do anything to help those who were not dead. Mr. Campbell, the Indian agent, has lost all of his cattle. Almost all the Indians have gone to the mountains, and we had stayed in the cabin. I was really scared; we didn't know what to do.

The Kings River starts running wild every year about this time. The snow from the mountains melt and fill the river beds. Just a few months ago, I could almost walk across the Kings River. Now I don't dare go near it. I am afraid of that river. It could kill me. It is like it is angry at me.

(Magdaley Herrera)

September 27, 1867

Dear Diary,

A strange thing has happened here. Two men got in an argument about who should be the new sheriff of Fresno County. The men were named William Crowe and Charlie Converse. I heard a while back that Charlie was the man who built the new Fresno County Jail at Millerton. The next thing that happened shocked me, and that was that Charlie shot William. Charlie is going to get arrested and will become the first prisoner in the jail he built. Once I heard about this, I was surprised and never thought this would happen because I never heard of the builder of a jail getting arrested and put in something that he built.

(Bernardo Barron)

April 3, 1868

Dear Diary,

Today was the worst day ever. My best friend, Delila Akers is dead at 64. She was my best friend, neighbor, and I thought of her as family. One second, she was here, next thing she was gone. It was just horrible. I just keep on replaying her death, when she was on her bed in pain.

I was wishing it would stop. She couldn't move, she couldn't even talk or see. That's how much pain she was in. A moment later, her heartbeat stopped. I screamed, "Doctor Leach, Doctor Leach! Her heartbeat stopped"! He ran in and told me to get out of the room. I did.

Dr. Leach's wife brought in some drugs. I just looked from the other side. There was nothing I could've done during this situation. I just had to watch and see what would happen.

Dr. Leach shouted, " I'm losing her, I'm losing her"! That's all I heard; I am so depressed. She was one of the few persons who stood up for me on the wagon train to California. She cared about me and just loved me for who I was, even though she was White

and I was Black. I just feel so lonely without her. She was the only person who I opened up to. It's so sad I just don't know what to feel or do. Once she died, I just didn't believe it; I didn't want to believe it. I was just shocked and hurt with pain.

They are going to bury her in the Akers Cemetery in Centerville. On her gravestone is going to say, "Delila Akers, loving best friend and loving person." Passed away at 66, 1802-1868.

(Belinda Higareda)

July 4, 1869

Dear Diary,

This afternoon, I saw an Indian friend from the village, which is not far from my farm. He was running to me. As he got to me, he was out of breath. I yelled out loud for Mary. As she ran out of the house with a worried look, I then yelled "Bring a big cup of cold water." She quickly ran back in the house. Then my Indian friend started to say "Gabe, you won't believe what has happened in my village just now. One of our warriors got drunk. He went to our Medicine Man's tepee and called for him to come out. Once the Medicine Man came out, the warrior shot the Medicine Man dead. As soon as the warrior shot the Medicine Man, white people began to chase after him.

Throughout his story I was in so much shock. I ask my Indian friend why this happened? He told me that the warrior's wife needed help because she was dying. The Medicine Man tried saving the warrior's wife, but there was nothing he could do. She was too far gone. When she finally died, the warrior decided to kill the Medicine Man. This is a custom with these Indians.

I felt bad for the warrior because I can't imagine losing my wife, but I do not think what the warrior did was right at all, even if it is their custom.

First of all, the Medicine Man tried saving his wife. Sadly, the Medicine Man could do nothing. Also think of the damage the warrior did to the village. That village will never be the same again.

Our Indian friend told us this to keep an eye out for the dangerous warrior. Then he ran back to his village.

After my wife went to bed, I climbed on top of the roof. While I was up there I felt anxiety, depression, and alertness all at the same time, which is giving me a headache. This has been such a weird experience for me.

After a while I decided to go back inside, and as I was climbing down, I saw our Indian friend running to the farm. When he came to me, he gave me the good news. He told me that the warrior was found and brought to the Millerton jail.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

April 15, 1870

Dear Diary,

I have the craziest thing to tell you right now. My son Ephraim, who I last saw in Arkansas, knocked on my door and told me that he wanted to move in with me. I was shocked to see him, and I am just so happy that he came, because it's been a long time since I have seen him.

We were both slaves in Arkansas, but we had different masters. It was very sad when I had to tell him goodbye. Now that there is no slavery, he doesn't have to stay in Arkansas, so he came here.

My son got his luggage and started to unpack. After some time of unpacking, I introduced him to my wife Mary, who was busy with her sewing machine. We spent some time getting to know each other.

For dinner, since my son is here, I decided to make us pot roast. After dinner I did my usual nighttime chores of checking the barn and making sure everything is locked up. After I came back inside, I told my son that if he wanted to live here then he had to respect me and my wife Mary and follow my rules as well. He agreed, and I told him that tomorrow morning I would show him his chores. Then I headed to bed.

Before I fall asleep, I want to tell you why today may have been one of the best days of my life. The fact that my son came to live with me is so special and now we can make great moments together again.

Anyways, goodnight Diary, I'll talk to you again some other time.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

April 23, 1870

There is a rumor going around that some Indians have gone mad and want to attack. I worried about it all morning and have no idea what to do.

I heard this rumor yesterday after I finished feeding the animals and went to town. I said good morning to everyone like I always do. I went into the little market and asked the clerk if he had any new merchandise. He said there was some new things in the back, so I went to check it out. There were some new hats. I picked one up and tried it on. It was a western-style hat made out of straw. I then looked at the leather or suede cowboy hats. I found one that I liked and went up front to pay for it. That's when I heard some lady talking to her husband very loudly that the Indians were coming and they weren't going to leave without a kill. Her husband told her to lower her voice down. I wasn't paying much attention then, but now I'm thinking, could they be coming after me?

I have a fence around our house. It is taller than me. Also, I know how to use a gun, and I taught Mary how to shoot.

When I got back from the store, we went outside to practice her shooting. I told her how to hold the weapon. She was holding it correctly, but when I told her to shoot she ended up closing her eyes and missing the target. I told her not to be afraid of it. She knows how to reload.

We have been on alert all day but didn't see any Indians.

(Evelyn Munoz)

August 4, 1870

Dear Diary,

Today I wanted to ride to Millerton. It is a small town. I rode my horse over there. It was a good day to go visit and be outside. When I got to the town, it was deserted; the people were gone and there was no one around. I remembered that there was a river nearby. The people had gone to the river. I rode down to the river and found everyone there. Men, women, boys and girls were fishing and having fun. The crowd was really big, and everyone was trying to catch fish. They were using all different types of things to catch fish. Some had spears, pitch-forks, shovels, shotguns, and pistols. Some were even trying to catch fish with their bare hands, which is an excellent idea. At least they were having fun with each other. I used a rope to catch a fish. When I caught it. I was surprised that it was a big salmon. Everyone was catching different types of fish. We were all surprised that we caught fish. I took the salmon home and Mary cooked it. I helped my wife cook it. When it was ready, we ate it. It was pretty good. I'm glad I caught a good salmon to eat and had a good day.

(Magdaley Herrera)

November 9, 1870

Dear Diary,

The Civil War has ended and the slaves are free, which is great news to hear. Most of the people here in Fresno County are from the South, and I have become friends with most of them. Not far from my home I noticed a group of pioneers that are settling on Cottonwood Creek. I learned that one of these southerners is the county clerk. His name is Harry Dixon. This fellow is from Mississippi and fought in the Civil War to keep his slaves, but

slavery has ended, which I'm sure made him furious. There is another thing, He does not like black people which means I do not want to get into trouble with him.

(Bernardo Barron)

December 15, 1870

Dear Diary,

The tax man took inventory of my land and property today. I owe taxes on 274 acres of land. I own the South West $\frac{1}{4}$ of the North West $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 3; the North $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 4 and 154 acres adjoining acres. The value of my land is \$548. The improvements are worth \$200. My homestead, about 1 mile north of Centerville on the stage road is worth \$450.

I have one Stallion (\$200), 7 gentle horses (\$350), 30 stock horses (\$450), 4 milch cows (\$100), 75 stock cattle (\$750), 50 stock hogs and 25 pork hogs (\$135), 2 wagons (\$150), Farming utensils (\$10), Firearms (\$20), Furniture (\$50), Poultry (\$10), and one male dog. I don't know how much my dog is worth.

(Abel Elisarraraz)

January 4, 1871

Dear Diary,

This was a sad day for me. I was sitting at my cabin on the Kings River thinking about the election. Then it hit me. I decided to vote for the first time. I saddled my horse and headed for the Millerton Courthouse. That is where I had to go to vote. When I got there, I walked inside to the County Clerk's office. His name was Harry Dixon. He asked me what I wanted, and I told him that I wanted to register to vote. He told me that he was not going to allow me to register to vote, and I asked him why? He said it was because I was a black man. I felt angry and disappointed. All I could think of was

getting him back. After a few minutes, I got back on my horse and went back home. This is wrong not to allow Black people to vote. I hope it will change some day.

(Bernardo Barron)

May 8, 1872

Dear Diary,

Today was such a great day. The sun was out and shining; it was so beautiful, and my animals are doing okay too. The railroad people are starting a little town near here, and they are calling it Fresno. They decided to build a depot in Fresno. Now you can send your crops that you grow on your farm to a place called San Francisco. This is a really good thing for some people and a bad thing for other people.

So now you can grow more crops on your farms and raise more cattle. I am thinking that I should buy more land, so I can make a bigger farm and grow more crops and raise more cattle than I have. I told my wife about what I was thinking and how we could become rich some day in the future. I think she is going to be okay with my plan. I think this railroad is going to make all of the farmers rich.

(Alondra Rojas)

June 1, 1872

Dear Diary,

It's been a couple of days since that wonderful thing happened. I am talking about that railroad they built from Sacramento all the way to the Kings River. They are working on building the bridge across the river now. I can't believe it. Now farmers can ship their crops and cattle to market by the railroad.

Like I said, the railroad built a little depot and started the new little town of Fresno not far from here. That is the Spanish word for Ash. I heard that a lot of farmers are going to live in the new town of Fresno. A lot of people from Millerton are to going to Fresno too.

I heard that the outlaw Tibercio Vasquez has been robbing people in Fresno County. He has a tough gang that rides with him. Not long ago, he captured the whole town of Kingston. He and his gang just rode in and started shooting. The people just gave up and let him have whatever he wanted.

Everyone around here is prepared for Vasquez if he ever tries to rob us. We will shoot him, and then we will hang him. That's one bad thing about California. There are a lot of outlaws here.

(Lilia Gonzalez)

August 3, 1872

Dear Diary,

This is the day I got the good news. It is time for me to get registered to vote. I was really surprised that it finally happened. Almost two years ago, Harry Dixon, the County Clerk refused to register me to vote because I was a black man. At this point it should've been fair for everyone to vote, and it shouldn't have mattered about the color or where you were from in order for you to register to vote. Now I can finally vote. I was excited. On August 3, 1872, my name, Gabe Moore, was on the voting rolls. Harry Dixon at that time was no longer the clerk; the people chose someone else who was running for clerk. When he was elected, Harry was removed. So the new clerk let me register to vote to be fair. It didn't matter how you looked or anything like that. In November I will be allowed to vote for the President of the United States, and at this point I am really excited. I am going to vote for Ulysses S. Grant. He is a Republican, and I decided to vote for him because I didn't like the other person that was running. Ulysses was running against Andrew Johnson. I personally don't like

Andrew for one reason. The reason why I don't like him is because he is from the South. My reason for voting for Ulysses is because he was the leader of the Northern Army. He thinks everyone should have the right to vote. It doesn't matter about the color of their skin or what their race is. After this I was proud of myself for choosing someone that would be a good President.

(Magdaley Herrera)

August 18, 1872

Dear Diary,

It was a sunny day; the weather was great. I woke up, brushed my teeth and then got dressed. As I was getting ready for the day, I looked outside at the perfect view and said to myself, "I need more land." As I was going outside, I went to feed the animals and to see if they were good on supplies They need to stay hydrated and well fed. As I was doing that, I realized that I'm running low on animals as well. Since farming is my main interest, I decided to take care of the things I need to become successful.

I linked up with William Glenn at the auction and told him I needed animals, more land, and more supplies, asap. We saw this land for sale; it was 80 acres, so I bought it, and now I have 160 acres in total. So we went back to the auction, and I met with Richard Glenn to buy livestock. I bought 20 cows and 22 hogs from Richard and paid him 400 dollars for the cows and 52 dollars for the hogs. I also bought a fence to build around the cow pasture. Now I have 46 cows and 17 horses. And since it was Mary's birthday, I bought her a sewing machine for 40 dollars, the total of the money I spent was 492 dollars.

(Abel Elisarraraz)

September 30, 1872

Dear Diary,

I work as a farmer and my farm is getting bigger, so I need more help. My son is too lazy to help me. I want to kick him out and show him what hard work means, but Mary won't let me; she says he'll change. Well, I don't believe that, so instead of kicking my son out, I hired a helper William Cruse. Mary doesn't want William Cruse as a helper because he only has one arm. It is difficult enough to be a black man and to have only one arm is worse. I feel sorry for him.

I told him, "I'm very glad that I have you as my helper. The reason I hired you is that my son is too lazy to help me around the farm." He replied, "Oh well, my son would never do that to me because he knows the difficulties of me working with only one arm." He said, "I'm so glad that you hired me to be your helper, but if you don't mind me asking, can I teach your son the meaning of hard work instead of being lazy?" I replied, "It's not necessary, but I'll be grateful if you do." Afterward, I talked to Mary, saying William Cruse is going to teach our son about hard work instead of me kicking him out. Mary didn't like the idea of having someone teach our son about hard work, but she is glad that I am not kicking him out.

I asked William Cruse how he lost his arm? He said he lost it during the Civil War." I replied, "Thank you for your service. That was a hard time for both of us." He said, "Yes what happened to you during the Civil War?" I said that I wasn't in the war, but it was still bad for Blacks here in California during the Civil War. People always judged me because of my color. They wouldn't let me vote.

He replied, "Yeah, it is very difficult when people judge us just because of the color of our skin. And there was more for me. A lot of people judge me because I have only one arm."

(Belinda Higarreda)

December 15, 1872

Dear Diary,

I usually don't talk about what I own, so I'm guessing I am not having an amazing day or even just an interesting day, since I'm going to write about my property. Before telling you, what I own, I want you to know that I've worked hard for this. I had to go through sweat, in the heat, and through cold. Life for me wasn't easy as you can see from my past. I am very proud of my accomplishments. I hope this shows that whatever you want in life, you can succeed. You just need to work hard and smart for it.

Here is what I own today, December 15, 1872.

The Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.

The North $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.

The Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.

My homestead, the Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 6.

(154 acres of swampland.)

Improvements thereon; fencing and orchard = \$300.

House and fencing = \$600.

2 wagons and harnesses = \$100; Farming equipment = \$13;

1 Stallion = \$200; 5 Gentle Horses;

30 stock Horses; = \$750; 6 Milch cows = \$210;

30 Stock cattle = \$360; 25 Beef cattle = \$300; 1 Mule = \$30;

44 Stock hogs, 36 Pork Hogs; \$232; Furniture = \$50;

Poultry = \$10; Firearms = \$15; 2 dogs = \$50; 1 Cows = \$30.

As you could see, it took time to figure everything out. I would have never thought that I would make it here. I always thought of myself being a slave. I thought everything would stay the same. But hey, I'm here aren't I? Thanks to the amazing people who helped me along the way, I am happy for what I have done so far.

(Evelyn Munoz)

December 12, 1873

Dear Diary,

Last week I went to the Kutner, Goldstein, and Phillips store to open a charge account. William Phillips is the main partner. He is in charge of the store. He seems to like me. This surprises me because he is from Mississippi and used to be a slave owner. He let me open a charge account even though I am Black. I think William and Richard Glenn talked him into it. They told him I was a good farmer and would pay my bills.

Today I bought some whiskey for \$7.00 and a whip for a \$1.00. My son, Ephraim wanted to buy some candy and a soda, but I don't have enough money to pay for that later. I had to say no. I told Mister Phillips that I didn't want anyone else using my charge account.

(Yaretsi Flores)

May 23, 1874

Dear Diary,

I read the in the Fresno Expositor today that the town of Millerton is not going to be the county seat anymore. Instead, the new county seat will now be Fresno. Diary, I wanted to go and check this out for myself, so I asked my wife if she could take care of the farm while I was gone.

I decided to take my best riding horse to see this new town. When I got there I saw new buildings that I am not used to seeing. I also saw this clock tower, and finally I saw the new courthouse. This town altogether is just so fascinating to me. Since I am used to living on a farm most of the time, seeing this is like a treat to me.

Since this town of Fresno has all of these cool looking buildings in it, I think that is why they chose this as the new spot for the courthouse. While there I decided to hang out and try to talk to people. I went first to the west side to talk to someone. As I talked to one person, I became sad because everyone on the west side

seemed to speak Chinese and looked Chinese. I figured out why by talking to a Chinese man who also spoke English. When I asked the Chinese man, “Why does everyone here speak Chinese and no Chinese seem to be on the other side of Fresno?”

The Chinese man replied, “Well sadly Chinese people can not live with white people.” As soon as the Chinese man told me that, I felt as if I could relate. I mean I have been a slave before and know what some white people may do to people of different races. Sadly this problem may not go away for a while. But I decided to hang out with this Chinese man, and now we are friends.

The Chinese man told me his name was Ah Kit. I asked him “Do you want to hang out here? I can introduce you to my wife and show you my farm.” Ah Kit said “Yes,” so we walked around the west side and got something to eat. Then I let him get on my horse and we rode to my farm.

When we got there I introduced Kit to Mary. After that I showed him around my farm, and he was fascinated because I told him that I maintain all of this every day. I told Kit that since I was once a slave, I am used to doing this kind of work. Kit then asked me if he could one day learn this kind of work. I told him “Yes, I will schedule a day of the week and look for you on the west side to come and learn.” Right now at this point I am happy that I have made a friend and I am surprised that a man like Kit wants to learn how to farm. Either way I am happy and can't wait to see him again.

Before we said goodbye, I invited him stay for dinner. So my Mary, Kit, and I had steak, mashed potatoes, and green beans. After that nice dinner I let Kit borrow one of my horses to ride back to Fresno. I told him to keep the horse as a gift. He thanked me and headed back to Fresno's west side. I went back inside to play dominoes with Mary for a bit. After quite a few games I got ready for bed.

This has been a great day. I saw a new town that had cool buildings. I met a friend, and tried new foods from the west side. I can't believe all that happened to me today. One thing that Kit doesn't know is that tomorrow I will pick him up to show him how

to do farm work, and I will make us breakfast, lunch, and dinner along with some desert as a reward. So I hope he is happy when I pick him up tomorrow.

I am still upset with this whole problem of racism because you should get judged for your personality not your looks or color. But I will not let that take from the fact that I got to meet a new friend and saw new buildings. Anyways, Diary, I will talk to you later, Goodnight.

(Sean Fitzgerald)

July 17, 1874

Dear Diary,

Yesterday I witnessed something crazy that happened in Kutner's store. While I was on a grocery run for some tomatoes and canned meat, I witnessed a fight break out. Someone by the name of Yank Hazelton punched another person, Moses Church, in the back of his head and knocked him down. Shortly after, Church got up and started fighting back. The fight going on was bad; both of their faces were bloodied and their hands were as red as tomatoes; nobody wanted to break the fight up because it was terrible.

Eventually, the two men got tired of hitting each other and stopped fighting. After the fight I asked people if they knew why they were fighting, and one person said that they were fighting over the new fence law. The law says that cattlemen have to put up fences so their cattle won't trample farmers' crops. Hazelton is a cattleman and Church is a farmer. The fight started because Hazelton disliked the new law so he attacked a farmer, Church, to get back at them. Cattlemen hate the new law; farmers love it. My opinion on the new law is still undecided. I have cattle and farm crops. I'll have to let time pass to see how I feel about it.

(Anthony Vega)

March 8, 1875

Dear Diary,

Today is a wonderful day. The sun is shining; the weather seems nice. It's not too hot, nor is it too cold. It is splendid. It is perfect.

As I was coming out of my room to the dining room I heard my wife, Mary, coming back from the store in Centerville. She went there to see if we had any mail. All of our mail goes to Kutner's store. I asked if we had any mail, and she replied, "My father sent me a letter asking how I'm doing with you." It was nice knowing that her father loves her enough to send her letters.

Mary made me the most delicious breakfast. Oatmeal with some blue berries on the side, and don't forget the flapjacks. They were soft on the inside with a bit of a crunch—delicious, I tell you.

My wife and I were discussing our family members, and I'm guessing she forgot that I didn't know my father. When she realized it, she felt bad and apologized. I told her it was nothing to apologize for.

As I was getting up from the table, I asked her if she needed help with the dishes. She kindly smiled and said, "Don't you have to move the cattle? I smiled back knowing I had someone beautiful in my life.

She gave me a kiss on the cheek and said not to forget that today she was going to have a celebration for my birthday. On the way out, she handed me a bottle of water. She said we had to stay hydrated, Then, she said, "I love you, bye." I waved as I left the house, Then I began to think about who my father was.

I knew nothing about him. Only the Glenns, who brought me here, would know who he was, so when I finished all my chores, I went looking for them and found Mrs. Glenn.

We were talking for a bit on how things are going. She was happy to see me. I asked her about my father, if she knew anything about him. She said "Not as much as I would like to." She said she would tell me more as soon as her sons, William and Richard came. Then She started off.

“Well, hear me out with no interruptions; you were named Gabe Moore for a reason. The governor, Gabriel Bibbard Moore, said he found you as a little baby at his doorstep. He said he didn’t know what to do with you, so he took care of you for some months. He sold you to a woman. I can’t remember her name, but she took you in until you were able to work, and that’s where I first saw you.”

“You kept asking about your father, but they never told you anything. They told you if you didn’t keep your mouth closed, you would get a whipping.”

“Some people say that the governor had some slaves of his own, mostly women, to clean around the house. I believe your mother was one of them. I’m not sure if they both fell in love with each other or he forced her. Keep in mind that the governor already had a wife and children.”

“I have to guess that probably your mother told him that she might be pregnant with a child. He was about to hit her, and she spoke up saying that the only man she has been close with was him. He didn’t know what to do exactly. He sat down for some time to think about this. Of course he didn’t want this known. He didn’t want his reputation ruined, so he had to do what he thought would be the best thing. He kept her in a room in the attic tied up. He didn’t want anything to do with her and didn’t want anybody else finding out. He brought her food and some bedsheets for her. In that room there was just a candle that was lit every time he entered.”

“In a matter of months you were born. He said that the next day he would sell her, but he had to make sure she wouldn’t say a word. He did what he said he would do; he sold her but kept the child. That day a news reporter saw him with the child and asked if it was his? All he said was that someone sold you, but others say that he said that he found you.”

“It really wasn’t the top news because nobody knew the truth. They just thought he bought you. His wife thought that he just bought you as well. She agreed to keep you since they wanted to have a garden but never wanted to get their hands dirty. Now they had somebody to work in their garden.”

“As you grew up, he treated you like any other slave. He was offered a higher ranking job and knew if he brought you, things wouldn’t go the way he wanted. They would get suspicious of you, so he sold you to us.”

“My family and I needed a worker, so we bought you. Soon after that, you met my sons; you were almost like brothers, and I knew this wouldn’t be a good place for us to live. So that leads us to where we are now. I know this must be hard for you, but look what you have become, an honest man, hard worker, you have your own family and friends.”

Hearing this just made me hate him for doing this to my mother, but what could I have done, nothing at all. I have been wondering how Mrs. Glenn knew this. I didn’t want to ask, so I thanked her and said goodbye. I was already out the door when one of her sons came running out. He said the reason she knew this was because she was friends with your mother and the governor’s wife. She wanted to help her but didn’t know what to do. I said thank you for everything and left. I didn’t know what to say. I was just shocked. On the way home I went to the market and bought some flowers for my wife. I wasn’t expecting to tell her anything. So I put a smile on my face and acted like I had a good day. She had a little party for me. It was nice knowing she cared for me. As the day ended, I went out on the porch thinking I would be a better man than my father. I wish I could have seen my mother. I hope she is somewhere safe now.

(Evelyn Munoz)

June 1, 1878

Dear Diary,

I have a very good friend named John Baker. He is also black like me; he lives near me, and as far as I can tell he is just like me. We have so much in common, but he is married to a white woman and white people don’t like it when a black man is married to a white woman or the opposite. She’s expecting another child, or

at least she was. She just recently gave birth to another baby girl. They already had three children, a daughter who is 11, another daughter who is 10, and a son who is 12 years old.

While John went to help his wife when she was going to give birth, he asked me if I could watch over his farm. I agreed and made sure that his farm was very well taken care of. John and I try to watch out for each other because we are both black men and very good friends. So today I made sure to help him out with his farm and everything while he was helping his wife. After the baby girl was born, they named their new child Mary after my wife, Mary. After hearing they named their new daughter after my wife, it was wonderful news. Today was a wonderful day and I will make sure to write soon.

(Melanie Mendez)

March 9, 1879

Today, so far, hasn't been a good day. One of my workers, William Cruse, has been causing me trouble. For example, earlier in the morning I was sitting outside my house on my porch, and before long a rock struck me near my shoulder and back. The rock was probably the size of both of my fists.

His actions caused our relationship to weaken strongly, and because of this I reported it to the authorities. Not long after that, they found William and arrested him.

Although William has been arrested and is now in jail, he said something to me before the cops took him away. He said that he was angered, even more than before. He said that when he gets out of jail he will promise to kill me. I think he got mad because I didn't give him more money. He wanted \$5 more per month, and I refused. After this death threat, I went to Kutner's store to get some extra shotgun shells. I want to be ready if he does come to kill me. I will do my best to try and prevent this from happening. I'm ready.

(Anthony Vega)

August 3, 1879

Dear Diary,

Today my beloved friend, John Baker, tried to cross the raging Kings River; sadly he did not make it across. It all started when he called me and told me that he was going to deliver food to people who lived across the Kings River. I told him to be careful. He said, "I am going to be okay; my son Aaron is coming with me just in case anything bad happens. If it does, he will come running to tell you." I felt better knowing that and got back to working.

It was 3:00 p.m., 3 hours had passed since they left. I was feeding my cattle when I heard a sudden scream, "Help! Help! My dad!" That was when I went running towards Aaron and asked, "What happened? Is your dad ok?" He quickly said, "No, he is not ok at all; he was trying to cross the river by swimming across, but he didn't make it." I saw his body being dragged along by the currents. I told Mary to go and check on the children. We went running to where they were, and we saw John Baker's body at the edge of the river. We got there as quickly as we could, but it was no use. He was dead.

I got the constable and watched as he took John away, and then I went walking to the house. there I saw that Mary and John Baker's kids playing. Mary told me that when she came to their house they were alone, and that Ephraim told her that their mom had left them to find a better life.

We know that the kids need a home and a new family, so Mary and I have decided to adopt Baker's kids, even the baby. We knew that we had to talk it out with the kids, and we told them everything that had happened to their dad and that their mom had left them. We know that it is going to be a long process, but we would do everything to make them feel at home and happy. So now our family has grown a lot, that makes 8 people living in the house. All of them were going to be hard-working farmers.

(Yasmin Moreno)

May 24, 1880

Dear Diary,

The Kings River is going wild right now, it flows really fast and the water looks like it is going to explode! This is really dangerous; if someone goes in it they might get pushed away by the water and won't survive. I will have to move my cattle to the other side of the river tomorrow. I don't think I can do it. I will be risking my life to move my cattle over. If I get help tomorrow, I might be able to do this. If I don't get help I will still have to do it by myself. I hope the river is calmer tomorrow when I do it. I really don't want to die. I hope someone can help me tomorrow, wish me luck tomorrow.

(Fabi Xi)

May 26, 1880

Dear Diary,

Today, sadly, will be the last entry in the diary that my husband, Gabe Moore, has been writing for a years. Yesterday, Wednesday, Gabe met his tragic end. Here is what happened. It was Wednesday afternoon, and Gabe was moving cattle across the river. He told me he would return back to me later. He had another cowboy with him, so I thought Gabe would come back home as regular.

When it began to get dark, I got worried. It got later and later and I got more worried. Finally I sent Ephraim out to look for his father. When he couldn't find him, I decided to go myself. Ephraim and I both went searching along the Kings River. When we didn't find him, we came back home. We thought he might be camped out with the cattle somewhere.

When he still wasn't home the next day, we knew something terrible had happened. Ephraim rode over to the Glens to tell them that Gabe was missing. They went out to look for him again.

Finally they found him down stream. He was still holding on to a branch that he had grabbed to try to get out of the water. He looked as though the raging waters swept him off his horse. He drowned holding onto that branch. What a sad and tragic thing.

I have decided to bury him In the Akers cemetery. I don't have any money, so I am going to charge some things at Kutner's store for his funeral. I will have Ephraim get them. I want to buy some pants and a shirt to bury him in—also a tie and collar. I am also going to buy a few things to give the Indians to dig his grave.

Later I want to put up a tombstone over his grave so that people will always remember Gabe Moore—born a slave; died a free man.

(Anthony Vega)



Afterword

Gabriel Bibbard Moore was born in Alabama on July 2, 1812. It is possible that he was named after one of Alabama's most notorious politicians, Governor Gabriel Bibbard Moore.

By 1850, Gabriel had been brought to Crawford County, Arkansas. At that time, he was the property of Margaret Glenn, a widow who owned a farm and just one slave—Gabe.

Mrs. Glenn also had two sons, Richard and William, and a daughter, Margaret. In 1853, they decided to join the Akers Wagon Train and come to California. They brought Gabe Moore with them. We don't know whether Gabe left Arkansas a free man, but if not, he certainly became one when he entered California, since slavery was outlawed by its constitution.

Gabe set about immediately to make his own way in life. He cleared out some swamp land and began to farm. By 1860, he was paying taxes and had employed two Native Americans to work for him—one as a servant. Not everything, however, came up roses, in Mr. Moore's new home. Although he was no longer a slave, he wasn't really free. He found that out when he tried to register to vote in Millerton, Harry St. John Dixon, the county clerk turned him down because he was Black.

The clerk told Gabe that the California Constitution prohibited all African-Americans from voting, so Gabe got back in his wagon and returned to his Kings River cattle ranch.

Gabe continued to farm and raise livestock, and by 1872, he owned 474 acres of land, a house and fence. He had an orchard, 2 wagons, some farm equipment, 1 \$200 stallion, 35 horses, 6 milk cows, 30 stock cattle, 25 beef cattle, 1 \$30 mule, 80 hogs, some chickens, household furniture worth \$50, two dogs worth \$50, and firearms worth \$15. Gabriel Moore also had a wife, Mary, and apparently her presence removed the need for the two Indian workers, because they disappeared from the census report for 1870.

With each year that passed, Gabriel Moore became more successful and prosperous, but that didn't mean that life for him was any easier. In 1879, he hired a one-armed man to work for him, which proved to be a mistake. In April of that year, Gabe's employee, William Cruse, became dissatisfied with his wages and started a quarrel. Cruse got so angry he threw a rock at Gabe, who then had William arrested. Cruse spent 20 days in the county jail, which by this time was in Fresno. When he was released, he went hunting for Gabe with the intention of killing him.

Gabe heard that Cruse was looking for him, so he got his shotgun ready. When William showed up at the Moore house, he had a knife. He swore he was going to kill Gabe.

Gabriel Moore would have preferred to settle the matter peacefully, but Cruse wouldn't allow him. Gabe warned Cruse that if he came any closer, he would shoot him. Cruse paid no attention and dared Gabe to fire. When William got within a few feet of Moore, Gabe fired his shotgun in self-defense. William died right away. The Fresno County Coroner held an inquest, and ruled that Gabe's shooting of William Cruse was justifiable homicide.

Another tragedy occurred on the King's River in 1879. Gabe's friend, John Baker drowned and left several children to be cared for. The census record of 1880, shows that Gabriel and Mary Moore adopted four of the Baker Children. By this time, they also had two African-Americans working for him, and their 35-year-old son. Ephraim.

By 1880, Gabriel Bibbard Moore was one of the most prosperous ranchers in the Kings River area. He had come a long way from his slave cabin in Arkansas. Now he was grudgingly accepted as a man of integrity and industriousness. Then just as he was about to finally enjoy the fruits of his labor, fate dealt him a horrible blow.

On May 25, while crossing his cattle across the Kings River, the swift water swept him off his horse, and he drowned. They buried him two days later.

Now, 140 years later, Gabe's shattered tombstone is still standing in the old Akers Cemetery near the pioneer town of Centerville, CA. In 1965, someone took a sledge hammer to it and knocked the top off. Then it slipped into oblivion until 2006, when Fresno County was celebrating its Sesquicentennial.

As part of that celebration, the Madera Method Wagon Train made a 13-day tour of the country schools, ringing the bell for Fresno County's 150th birthday. As fate would have it, the route took the wagons past the Akers Cemetery on Trimmer Springs Road. The muleskinners halted the wagons for lunch, and teacher Bill Coate hopped out to visit some of the old tombstones in the nearby graveyard.

In one corner, he saw a broken and battered marker; he ran to it. As he stood looking at the shattered monument, he was stunned. The wagon train crew wondered what was causing Coate so much excitement. It didn't say much—the name of the deceased had been broken off, and all that was left was a collection of mystifying carvings: "D... May 2... Age... 67 YS. 10... 23 DS."



The damaged headstone.

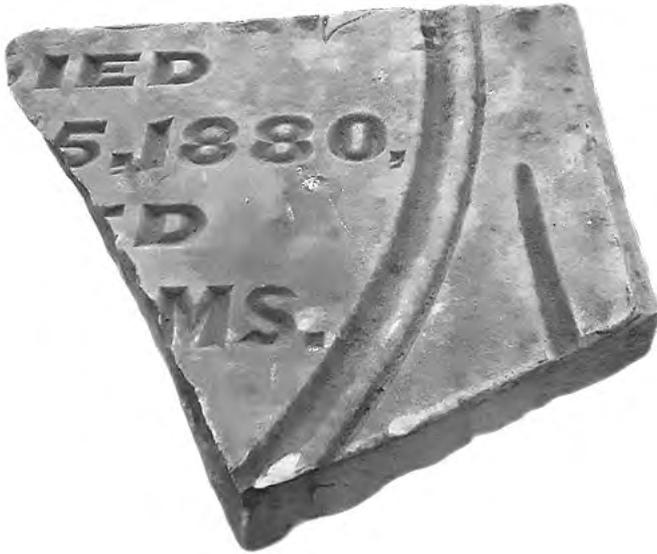
Little did the crew know what they had discovered!

A dozen years before, while doing historical research in the archives of the Fresno County Library, Coate had come across a newspaper article dated January 4, 1871, which told of an African-

American by the name of Gabe Moore who was refused the right to vote in Fresno by Harry Dixon, the County Clerk. This stuck in his mind.

Then on that same day he discovered another article about Gabe Moore. The newspaper reported that in 1880, he was drowned while attempting to swim his cattle across the Kings River. The article also said that Gabe left an estate worth 15,000 dollars. That meant that in 1880, Mr. Moore was a very rich man.

Later, Coate stumbled across a third document about Gabriel Moore. While searching in the library's "Ash Tree Echoes," he found an article written by local historian, June English, in 1965. In her article, she told of finding a grave in the old Aker's cemetery on Trimmer Springs Road that had been vandalized.



The top portion containing the name of the deceased had been knocked off and was lying on the ground in front of that part of the tombstone that remained. It told her that this was the grave of Gabriel Bibbard Moore. From the information that was left on

the marker and from what was on the pieces on the ground, Ms. English recorded what had originally been on the tombstone. It had once read

Gabriel Bibbard Moore
Died
May 25, 1880,
Age 67 yrs, 10 ms.
23 days

One week after her first visit to Gabe's grave in 1965, Ms. English returned to the cemetery only to find that someone had taken the broken part of the tombstone away—the part that told who was buried there and most of the other information.

Now, fast forward to 2006. Upon entering the cemetery, Coate went immediately to the broken tombstone and read what was left of the inscription, and he knew immediately who was buried there. June English's 1965 article had told him.

Armed with this basic information, Coate decided to learn more. He went on a scavenger hunt for primary source documents that would shed light on Gabe Moore. He found material on the refusal of Fresno County's Clerk to allow Gabe to vote. This injustice that occurred during Gabe's lifetime and the sacrilege that was perpetrated upon his tombstone struck the teacher in a powerful way. He continued his search for the pieces of Gabe's life.

Slowly but surely those parts of the puzzle were uncovered—census reports, probate records, old newspaper articles, tax records—they all came together to create a mosaic. Then came the kicker.

All Coate needed to make this a Madera Method project were some young historians. He found them at Madera Unified's Dixieland School.

Taking advantage of the opportunities opened up by MUSD's superintendent Todd Lile, Coate sat down with Dixieland's 8th grade teacher, Angela Lindsay, and told her as much of Gabe Moore's story as he knew. She took it from there.

Lindsay laid it all out for her students, and they agreed to resurrect Gabriel Moore in the only way humanly possible. They decided to research his life—to write his story, and that is how this book came to be.

The young biographical novelists assumed the identity of Gabriel Bibbard Moore and wrote his diary for him. Basing each entry on primary source documents, they told of Gabe's life and his feelings from the time he was brought to California in 1853, as a newly freed slave to his death in the Kings River in 1880.

Thus, these teenagers pressed on in spite of the complications brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the turmoil surrounding the tragic murder of George Floyd.

Gabe Moore was a black man who was abused all of his life, both as a slave and as a free man, but that's not all. Not even in death was he freed from abuse. In the same year that the Voting Rights Act was passed, someone added insult to injury by smashing his tombstone.

So here is the book. These young authors hope it will honor this ex-slave whose indomitable spirit kept him in pursuit of freedom in the fullest sense.



Appendix

General Store Ledger

On all Bills Overdue, Interest will be charged at the rate of 12 per cent per annum.

of Kutner, }
S. Goldstein. }
Cynthiana, Cal., August 17, 1880. }
F. W. Phillips,
Centerville.

M. p. Gabe Moore
Bought of Kutner, Goldstein & Phillips
Wholesale and Retail Dealers in
General Merchandise.

July 9	To misc Oil Rent	11.98
" 26	" Tobacco	25
" 28	" Bat and Bowling	1-
Mar 10	" 1 Black snake	1-
Apr 12	" 1 Pair of Muskies 200 ^o Hand 7 ^o	7.25
"	" Rope	50
"	" 200 Pairs of Muskies	50
May 29	" 1 Shirt 2 ^o 1 Collar 2 ^o	2.75
"	" Undershirt and Drawers	2.50
"	" 1 Necktie 15 1 ^o for socks	.40
"	" 1 Handkerchief	.38
" 7	" 22 for digging grave	6.00
Mar 8	" By Cash	.75
" 2	" "	.25
" 2	" "	1.00

Claim by Kutner, Goldstein, and Phillips General Merchandise Store against Gabe Moore's Estate for items charged.

The following items were charged to Gabe's account by someone after he drowned.

May 29 1 Shirt – 2.50; 1 Collar – 2.75; Undershirt and Drawers – 2.50; 1 Necktie and Socks – .40; 1 handkerchief – .38; Merchandise paid Indians for digging grave – 6.00.

Gabriel Moore on the Fresno County Tax Rolls

1857

- Improvements on Real Estate — \$400.
- Personal Property — \$490.

1860

- 114 Acres of Government Land.
- 1 house (Located ½ mile above Royal Store—west side of the Kings River).
- 1 Barn.
- 1 Brush Fence.
- 2 Spanish Horses.
- 5 Spanish Mares.
- 2 Spanish Mules.
- 40 Mixed Stock Cattle.
- 20 Hogs.
- 1 Note for \$23.

1862

- 114 acres of government land; Improvements on government land, House, Barn, and Brush Fence—about ½ mile above Royal's Store, west side of the King's River. Value of land and improvements = \$314.
- 2 Spanish horses.
- 5 Spanish mares.
- 2 Spanish mules.
- 40 mixed stock cattle.
- 20 hogs.
- Note for \$23.

Unknown Year

- South West $\frac{1}{4}$ of the North West $\frac{1}{4}$ of
Section 3. North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of
Section 4. 154 acres adjoining said land. Total
land Value \$548. Improvements – \$200.
- Homestead about 1 mile north of Centerville
on the stage road – \$450.
- Improvements thereon; house, corral,
fencing \$500.
- One Stallion \$200.
- 7 gentle horses \$350.
- 30 stock horses \$450.
- 4 milch cows \$100.
- 75 stock cattle \$750.
- 50 stock hogs and 25 pork hogs \$135.
- 2 wagons \$150.
- Farming utensils \$10.
- Firearms \$20; Furniture \$50; Poultry \$10.
- One male dog.

1872

- Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
North $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.
- Homestead Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 6.
- 154 acres of swamp land. Improvements
thereon; fencing and orchard = \$300.
- House and fencing = \$600.
- 2 wagons and harness = \$100.
- Farming equipment = \$13.
- 1 Stallion = \$200.
- 5 Gentle Horses; 30 stock Horses; \$750
- 6 Milch cows = \$210.
- 30 Stock cattle = \$360.
- 25 Beef cattle = \$300.
- 1 Mule = \$30.
- 44 Stock hogs, 36 Pork Hogs; \$232.
- Furniture = \$50.
- Poultry = \$10.
- Firearms = \$15.
- 2 dogs = \$50.
- 1 Cow = \$30

1876

- Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 4.
- Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.
- Improvements valued at \$1,000.
- 2 wagons @ \$200.
- 5 half-breed horses @ \$250.
- 10 colts @ \$100.
- 12 Stock horses @ \$120.
- 20 cows @ \$400.
- 20 calves @ 100.
- 26 stock catttle @ \$260.
- 22 hogs @ \$56.
- 1 sewing machine @ \$40.
- Furniture @ \$40.
- Poultry @ \$6.
- Farming equipment @ \$5.
- Firearms @ \$10.

1878

- Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.
- Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 6.
- Improvements valued at \$1,000.
- 1 wagon @ \$100.
- 5 half breed horses @ \$150.
- 12 Stock horses @ \$120.
- 14 cows @ \$210.
- 38 stock cattle @ \$304.
- 33 hogs @ \$90.
- 1 sewing machine @ \$40.
- Poultry @ \$10.
- Farming Equipment @ \$10.

1879

- Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.
- Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 6.
- Improvements valued at \$300.
- 1 wagon @ \$150.
- 5 half breed horses @ \$150.
- 5 Stock horses @ \$200.
- 10 colts @ \$70.
- 5 cows @ \$122.
- 5 calves @ \$15.
- 35 stock cattle @ \$350.
- 30 hogs @ \$75.
- 1 sewing machine @ \$40.
- Poultry @ \$2.
- Farming Equipment @ \$10.

1880

- Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
North $\frac{1}{2}$ of Southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 3.
- Northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 4.
- Northeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 6.
- Improvements valued at \$800.
- 1 wagon @ \$150.
- 6 half breed horses @ \$240.
- 12 Stock horses @ \$120.
- 12 cows @ \$300;
- 12 calves @ \$60;
- 35 stock cattle @ \$350;
- 100 hogs @ \$150;
- 1 sewing machine @ \$20;
- Poultry @ \$7;
- "Farming Equipment @ \$60.

Newspaper Articles on Gabe Moore

January 4, 1871 — Fresno Expositor

“Wouldn’t Register Him”

“Old Gabe,” a Negro living on King’s River, made application to our County Clerk, Mr. Harry St. John Dixon, a few days since to be registered [to vote], but his request was refused. Gabe got very wrathful at this and swore vengeance upon the officer. He says he will spend every cent that he has in the world or make the clerk register him, so we may expect soon to hear that an efficient officer is involved in a law suit with a Negro, simply because he will not bow to the mandates of radicalism, and thus perjure himself, but discharged his duty.

Mr. Dixon took an oath to obey the laws of this state, and one of those laws says that only white male citizens above the age of twenty-one shall be registered, and until that law is repealed by the Legislature of this State, Clerks have but one course to pursue and obey their oaths of office, viz: To refuse registration to Negroes. It is true Clerks in other counties in this State have violated their oaths of office, but that does not signify that all must do likewise.

January 25, 1871 — Fresno Expositor

(Quoting the Oakland News)

“Needs Reconstruction”

“Fresno County is apparently in need of reconstruction, being at the present under the control of a lot of rank secessionists. A short time ago, a Union man was murdered by a secessionist during a dispute on politics, and the murderer was discharged after a farce of an examination. We now hear that an unreconstructed County

Clerk in the same county has refused to register a Negro voter, and that he is sustained in his defiance of the supreme law of the land by the county paper.”

The above paragraph clipped from the Oakland News is a fair sample of the means taken by Radical papers and politicians to rankle the feelings of the so-called loyal citizens against the poor people of the South and against the Democratic Party. But this cry of secessionist has lost its potency and only comes from those whose corrupt and morbid natures makes them delight in seeing a people deprived of their rights, robbed of their property, or murdered in cold blood by Negro mobs, and their houses burned by the incendiary torch to furnish a funeral pyre to their immolated victims. Still, when it is raised against our community, we feel impelled, from a sense of duty, to denounce such expressions as false and in every sense a malignant slander.

The word “secessionist” means, “one who withdraws, or favors withdrawing from” any body, government, or the like. The people of this county have not withdrawn from the United States Government nor from that of California, nor has such a question ever been mooted, therefore, we cannot discover its applicability. The doctrine of Constitutional secession is acknowledged by all to be a dead issue; dead and buried so deeply beneath the debris of war, that it cannot be resurrected. Wherefore, then, this senseless gibberish over its name?

It is true that our county is strongly Democratic, and as Democrats, we oppose the financial policy of the Radical party, and in this we are seconded by leading members of that party; we are opposed to the high tariff imposed by them upon imported goods, which tariff is always in favor of the money monopolies, and against the consumers, in this, also, we find backers among the Republicans; the proscriptive policy pursued by the Administration against the white people of the South is strongly condemned by many of its warmest supporters, as it is by our party; the corrupt manner adopted by Grant in dealing out public patronage denounced by Democrats and by many Republicans. We might go on and on and enumerate a hundred parallel instances of concurrence in opinion on different leading topics, but we have

instanced a sufficient number to show that the Democrats are called outlaws for opposing in toto what members of the opposite party separately object to.

If, however, we are to be called secessionists for this, then we accept the title as one honor, and one which every true American who respects and loves his country and its noble founders might well be proud to bear. We are not in favor of "Union" if it means that we must unite with a party composed of scalawags, political demagogues of the meanest and most corrupt order, Negroes, thieves, and every other class of nondescript, such as are found mingled together in the ranks of the so-called Union party.

We believe that the aim of every true American should be higher; that we should strive to make our nation more prosperous; that we should elevate the moral tone of our people; that the corrupt demagogues should be expelled from the public offices, that we should labor for the social and intellectual improvement of our people, and that we owe to them and to our own race a consideration second only to that due our Maker.

The War of the Rebellion has been fought. The Rebels have been conquered. They had laid aside their swords and accepted the situation: then why this persistent effort to drive them back to the sword to seek redress for their grievances? Is more blood needed to cement together the crumbling atoms of Radicalism?

But to the next point: This deluctable paragraph says: A short time ago a Union man was murdered by a secessionist during an dispute on politics, and the murderer was discharged after a farce of an examination." The evidence adduced at the examination of Dr. Davidson, in Justice Booker's court at Centerville, was to the effect that Lane assailed the Doctor first, knocking him down and then got on top of him and continued beating him; the Doctor, being unable to cope with his assailant, drew his derringer and shot him. We do not think that any court in the world would have held Mr. Davidson under such evidence Even Mr. S. John upon whose letter the remarks of the News is evidently based, says that Mr. Lane assaulted Mr. Davidson first and that the former fell on top when they clinched.

The residents of this county are gentlemen of honor, and the political sentiment of a man would have no weight in a question of justice, and the intimation to the contrary is baseless.

Now, as regards our “unreconstructed County Clerk,” and his refusal to register a Negro voter, and our support of him in the action: Mr. Dixon refused to register a Negro who applied because he believed that he had no right so to do. We sustained him in this course for these reasons:

1. That according to the provisions of the Registry Act, Negroes were not entitled to registration.
2. That the Constitution of the State of California bestows the right of suffrage only upon white male citizens.
3. That the Clerk took an oath to obey the Constitution and laws of the State, and therefore, had but one course to pursue.
4. That, while the United States’ laws are paramount to those of a state, the passage of a law with conflicts with an existing State statute does not repeal the same, but only makes it obligatory on the State so to do, or in other words, the power which creates the laws alone can alter and amend them. In this latter opinion we are sustained by Governor English of Connecticut, who last year, in his message to the Legislature of that State, requested the calling of a convention to amend the constitution to prevent its conflicting with that of the United States.
5. We do not think that the so-called Fifteenth Amendment was legally made a portion of the Federal Constitution, it being forced upon many of the States at the point of bayonet, and made a prerequisite to their being allowed a representation in the National Congress. Thus, succinctly, we have given our reasons for the course we have pursued. We may be wrong in our views, for we do not put ourselves up for a jurist, and if we are, when the question has been decided by a competent court, we will willingly acknowledge our error.

April 6, 1879 — Fresno Republican

“Homicide at Centerville;
Gabe Moore Shoots and Kills Wm. Cruse”

A one-armed Negro named William Cruse, who has been confined in the county jail for some time for an assault, was discharged from confinement last Tuesday, and immediately started for Centerville. He enquired for and said he was going to kill another Negro known as Uncle Gabe Moore. Finding him at his farm, a short distance above the town, he approached him with a large knife, when Gabe told him to stop—that he had heard that he threatened his life and if he came any nearer, he would certainly shoot him. Cruse replied, “Shoot and be d—d!”

When Gabe snapped on barrel of a shot-gun, which missed fire, and the man being almost upon him he fired the other charge of buckshot. As the muzzle of the gun was almost him, it tore an immense hole out of his left side at the lower border of the ribs and filled the flesh with powder. The man died in about half an hour. Although the shooting seems to have been in self-defense, we have not heard the result of the coroner’s inquest.

Later ...

Just as we were going to press, we learn that the body was taken to Centerville where Justice Ayers, summoned a jury and held an inquest. A verdict of justifiable homicide was speedily rendered. It seems that the man Cruse has worked for Moore and there was a dispute about wages. Some time ago, Cruse threw a stone at Moore for which he was arrested and sent to jail for twenty days, and he had just served out the sentence. The killing grew out of a second dispute about the wages claimed by the deceased.

May 28, 1880 — Fresno Republican

“Drowned in the King’s River”

On Wednesday last, Gabriel B. Moore, or as he was more familiarly known, “Old Gabe,” was drowned while attempting to cross Moody’s Slough, a branch of the King’s River, near Centerville. Gabe and another darkey had crossed to the south side of the slough for the purpose of driving over some cattle. The stock divided, and his companion crossed with one portion of the band, while Gabe followed the rest down the river and drove them in the water. They crossed all right, but Gabe did not follow them.

His family felt no alarm at his not coming home, thinking that he had stopped over night with some friend across the river. As he did not return next morning, search was made for him, a number of Indians being employed. He was found floating in the river clutching a bush with one hand. He had evidently been thrown from his horse and while being swept along by the current, caught the bush to save himself.

Moore was born in Arkansas and was sixty-eight years old. He leaves a wife and a grown son. An inquest was held on his body on Thursday by Justice Ayers. Moore was a slave in the Glenn family and was brought to this country by them in early days, and through their assistance and his own exertions, he accumulated quite a property—worth at this time probably \$15,000. He was in Fresno last week and started in to make his will, but left without completing it. He was buried on Friday evening and was followed to his last resting place by a large number of his old friends.





Gabriel Bibbard Moore was born a slave and worked hard in the Arkansas cotton fields of his master. In 1853 he was brought to Fresno County and thereby became a free man, but not completely.

Gabe began to till the soil along the King's River near Centerville. He knew what he was doing, and soon became a very prosperous farmer, but one thing was lacking—the suffrage—Gabe could not vote. That right was reserved for white males over 21.

Then came Appomattox and the 15th Amendment. Black men were enfranchised, and in April of 1871, Gabe journeyed to Millerton to register to vote for the first time. Much to his chagrin, however, he found the Great Register still closed to him. The county clerk, Harry St. John Dixon, a former plantation owner from Mississippi, refused to register Gabe on the grounds that the state Constitution prohibited it. The same document that had granted him freedom in California also ensured that Gabe would remain a second class citizen.

Gabe trudged back home, and eight years later, Californians scrapped their defective Constitution. They substituted one that recognized the provisions of the 15th Amendment. Now nothing stood in Gabe's way, not even the unreconstructed Rebel Clerk of Fresno County.

Sadly, Gabe never realized the full benefits of the new constitution. Shortly after its passage, he was drowned while trying to cross cattle in the Kings River. They laid him to rest in the Akers Cemetery on Trimmer Springs Road—the only African-American interred there.

Gabe had traveled a long road from that slave row in Arkansas to freedom in California, but it was for future generations to secure all of the blessings of liberty. Gabe Moore could only pave the way.

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS A Free Man

**The Journal of
Gabriel Bibbard Moore**