

**William H. Garman**, one of the unique historical figures of Monterey county, may well be called one of the veritable "Path Finders," having come to the State when it was but little known. He was one of the members of the Joe Walker expedition that piloted General Frémont over the mountains to California.

Mr. Garman is a native of Berks county, Pennsylvania, and was born within twelve miles of Daniel Boone's birthplace. His father, Philip Garman, was of German descent, a breeder by occupation, which calling he pursued in Harrisburg, in addition to carrying on a brewery and tannery on a large scale. The maiden name of the mother of our subject was Elizabeth Hirsch, also a native of Berks county.

Our subject was educated in Harrisburg, and there learned the trade of a printer, which he followed for about eight years, a portion of the time in St. Louis, Missouri. He also was engaged with Lieutenant (now General) W. B. Franklin, in the survey of the breakwater at Michigan City, Indiana, and later at St. Joseph, Michigan. His next move was to Chicago, and from there He entered the service of the Government and fought in the Seminole war in Florida. The next account we have of him is in the Mex. jean war, where he served as Courier from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe, New Mexico. After the close of the war he joined Walker's expedition bound for California, and was one of the twelve men that explored the country and directed General Frémont's course through the Rocky mountains, westward.

It was this party that first invaded the quiet precincts of Priest Valley, in 1850, although their stay was but a brief one at that time and the party pushed on, over the mountains into the valleys of the Tulare and Kern rivers. They found the valleys uninhabited, save by a priest and a small band of Indians, camped near the center. They failed to get the name of the good priest, but named the valley in which he resided, "Priest Valley," a name that has clung to it ever since. So impressed were Captain Walker and Mr. Garman with the beauty of the valley that they returned to it in 1854, and Mr. Garman made a location, where he has since resided, but Captain Walker did not remain for any length of time. These old-time explorers built the first house in the valley, in 1854, under a large oak tree near the present Palmer residence and but a short distance from Mr. Garman's present home.

Ever since his residence in this valley Mr. Garman has led a quiet, inoffensive life, and is well known for his kindness of heart and other sterling traits of character. He never married, but a host of friends unite to prevent his feeling lonely in his declining years. His is a happy old age, for he has the consciousness of having led a good life and spent wisely the goods bestowed upon him by the all-wise Creator.

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