

"Tokens of History"

By

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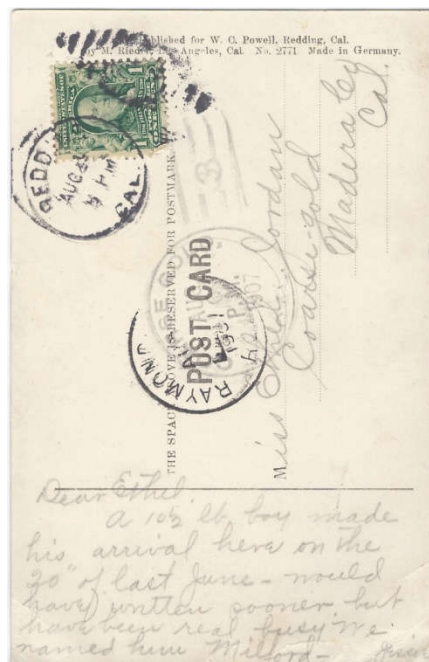
“In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley...”

--Robert Burns, *To A Mouse*, 1785

This month I thought I would do something a little different and, rather than write about one of my tokens, I would instead write about an old postcard which I recently obtained off the net (vain foresight). But, as Burns put it so well, my plans went “a-gley” and this old postcard led me right to one of the tokens in my collection (a pleasant surprise).

I enjoy collecting anything Shasta County history related, and postcards often are our only source for some of the early pictures that we have of the area. I prefer used postcards for a number of reasons: 1) just like a worn token, you know it was used and thus is a connection to people from the past; 2) you can usually make out the date, either from the post mark or as written by the sender (though not always on either account); and, 3) if you are lucky, you will be able to identify the sender and/or receiver and thus make a more direct and personal link to local history. In the case of the postcard pictured below, I was lucky.

The Postcard



The front of this card depicts a “Boating Place” along the Sacramento River long before Shasta and Whiskeytown lakes. On the back we find that it was postmarked in August of 1907, sent from someone named Jesse to Ethel Jordan in Coarse-Gold, Madera County, California. The message reads:

Dear Ethel,

A 10½ lb boy made his arrival here on the 20th of last June – would have written sooner but have been real busy. We named him Milford – Jessie

My first impression was that this was a proud father writing to a friend of theirs on behalf of his wife, because she certainly must still be too worn out from delivering such a huge baby! Unfortunately, it looked like the only person I would be able to research was this Ethel Jordan, because “Jessie” didn’t write his last name. This is usually the case with postcards as the receiver knows who sent it, which makes sense but is frustrating to the researcher. So I searched and found an Ethel Jordan living in Township 7 of Madera in the 1910 census. She was single, 26 years old, a farmer, living with her parents Fredrick and Sarah, and little brother Charles.

But what about this guy Jessie and his son Milford, and his poor nameless wife? Well, there were some clues. The card was sent in August 1907, and Milford was born on “the 20th of last June” which I hoped meant that same year and not 1906, otherwise Jesse’s wife must really be in bad shape from “little” Milford. Armed with a first name and date of birth, it didn’t take too long to track little Milford down, he was Milford M. Brouillard, born to Gustave and Jessie Brouillard. It turns out Jessie is the mom, and she is doing well after all, and went on to give Milford a little sister named Bernice in 1909 and a little brother named Ronald in 1915.

By 1910, this branch of the Brouillard family had moved to Red Bluff where they operated a steam laundry business. Gustave passed away in 1959, Ronald in 1966, Milford in 1968, Jessie in 1969, and Bernice in 1984. I say “this branch” of the Brouillard family because there have been many Brouillard’s who have been (and continue to be) a part of Shasta County’s history, operating numerous early businesses in Redding, including at least one that issued a “lucky” token which I happened to have in my possession (maybe that’s how I got lucky with the postcard).

The Token



BIG MARKET LIQUOR STORE / C. F. BROUILLARD / 1614 CALIFORNIA / REDDING CALIF.
KEEP ME AND NEVER GO BROKE / I BRING / GOOD LUCK
(with 1947 Lincoln wheat cent)

Camille Francis Brouillard was born in France on May 17, 1881, and died August 26, 1952. He was brother to Gustave, and thus uncle of (not so) little Milford mentioned on the postcard. The 1910 census has Camille president of the steam laundry, and his wife Stella is secretary. The 1920 has him married to a Caroline G. and they have four children: Evon D. age 7, Eleanor J. age 4, and 11-month old twins Robert N. and Barbara L. Camille was involved with several businesses over the years:



The Redding Steam Laundry at the corner of Placer Street and Railroad Avenue

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| SERIAL NUMBER U 511 | | NAME (First) Camille | | NAME (Last) Francis Brouillard | | ORDER NUMBER |
| PLACE OF RESIDENCE (First) Weed Hotel - | | DUNSMUIR | | SISKIYOU CAL. | | |
| (THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL) | | | | | | |
| CALLING ADDRESS Weed Hotel - | | | | | | |
| TELEPHONE 46 | AGE IN YEARS 61 | | DATE OF BIRTH May 17 1881 | | PLACE OF BIRTH France | |
| NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS CAROLINE BROUILLARD, Weed Hotel Dunsmuir | | | | | | |
| EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS Owns Weed Hotel | | | | | | |
| PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS Dunsmuir Calif. | | | | | | |
| I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THIS IS TRUE C. F. Brouillard (Employer's signature) | | | | | | |

D. S. S. Form 1 (Revised 4-1-42) (6987) 16-21630-2



Hotel Weed in Dunsmuir
(World War II draft card, add from 1942 Siskiyou High yearbook)



The Big Market sat behind the Golden Eagle Hotel

Obituary

Camille Brouillard, 71, mayor of Redding in the twenties and manager of Redding Laundries, Inc. for 23 years, died yesterday at Mercy Hospital. Now retired, he founded the laundry, managed the Weed Hotel in Dunsmuir four years, and returned to Redding to purchase the Big Market liquor store before retiring in 1950. He was a member and past exalted ruler of the local Elks lodge, a member of all branches of Masonic bodies, including Ben Ali Shrine, and he was a former member of the Redding Rotary club.

Brouillard was born near Bourdeaux, France May 17, 1881. He leaves his wife, Mrs. Carolyn Brouillard, two daughters Mrs. Harlan Carter and Mrs. Orville Criss, and Robert, a son. A third daughter, Mrs. Jane Shadwell, predeceased her father. He also leaves two brothers, Gus of Red Bluff and Medrick of Chico, one nephew, Henry Brouillard of Redding, and the following grandchildren: Kent, Scott, and Ross Carter; Diane, Joan, and John Shadwell; Ann and Kenneth Brouillard, and Patricia and Ronald Criss. A third brother, George, predeceased Camille.



Finally, I came across this early history on the family posted by Diane Brouillard:

Charles Joseph Brouillard left France for Northern California to be a wine maker for Leland Stanford sometime in the 1880s. He returned to France several times and brought his

family back with him in 1891. His wife is Mathilda Belle. There were 9 children. The oldest son Oliver returned to France and visited California during the 1930. The names of the children are Oliver, George, Gus, Medric Frances (my grandfather born June 16, 1879) Camile, Edward, Marie, Angele and Aurelia Julia. Charles and Matilda were born in LaRoche France. The children were born in Bouhet France. The only information we have comes from Ernest Peninou's book "Leland Stanford's Great Vina Ranch 1881-1919" (1991) page 53. Under the year 1887 there is this information:

"Among this group of French colonists was Charles Brouillard, of La Rochelle in southwestern France. In 1891 he was joined by his family, likewise brought over by Jenssen. The latter (the proper spelling was probably Jousson) lived about 25 miles from the Brouillard farm in France and he too farmed and specialized in growing dandelions for the Paris market, used principally by the better restaurants for salads. He was also a labor contractor on the side and would average a trip a year to the United States escorting French workers and their families to jobs he had arranged for them. When the Brouillard family, mother, sons and daughters, left France with Jenssen to join their father in California, the party first travelled to New Orleans where some of the the members and their families were left to work, usually in sugar plantations. From New Orleans the group continued on to California.... a son-in-law of Brouillard's, J. Emile Michaud, was in charge of the kitchen at the dormitory and received an allowance of 33 and a third cents per day per worker to feed the help."

If the reader has any additional information about any of the people or businesses mentioned in this article, please contact me at: chetsunde@gmail.com, or (530) 244-4436. Happy Saint Patrick's Day, and good luck to you!

Addendum:

Another card obtained from Jessie to Ethel, postmarked December 10, 1909. This one may be referring to Milford's new baby sister, Bernice. It reads:

Dear Ethel,

Let me know if you still live in the same place – Will send you the baby's photo.

Yours -- Jessie B.





Email received from Ken Brouillard:
Dear Chet,

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Ken Brouillard, the grandson of Camille Brouillard, about whom you wrote an article for the Shasta Historical Society Magazine (or so I was told).

I was very pleased to read about the postcard mystery and the connection to Gustave and Jessie Brouillard.

My grandfather, Camille, was one of nine children (according to my research) of Charles and Genevieve Brouillard.

Camille was a co-owner of the Redding Steam Laundry along with one of his brothers (I don't have the info at hand as to which one it was), and two DeForest brothers (whose first names I don't have at this moment). I do know that Camille married a DeForest girl, who also is listed as his secretary at the Redding Steam Laundry. His first wife was Stella M. DeForest, with whom they had a daughter, Yvonne D. Brouillard. Yvonne was born on October 5, 1912, and Stella died from childbirth complications on October 13, 1912.

Camille then married Caroline Nielsen on August 10, 1914, in San Francisco, and they had a daughter, Elinore Jane in 1915. On January 13, 1919, Caroline gave birth (at home according to Stanley DeForest) to twins Robert Nielsen and Barbara Lousie.

The lineage of Camille and his wives and children are linked with lots of names in Shasta County history. For instance, Caroline Nielsen, of Nielsen Motors, was a Diestelhorst on her mother's side. Barbara married well known Shasta Union High School coach, Harlan Carter - part of the Carter clan of lawyers and judges. Jane (whom my father Robert said was a wonderful person) was married to Ira Shadwell, with whom she had three children - Diann, Joann and John. Joann married Arlie Lockwood of Lockwood Tires on the Miracle Mile in Redding.

Camille was mayor of Redding at one time, as was his grandson, Scott Carter. I currently serve on the city council in Myrtle Creek, Oregon, and have considered running for mayor just to keep the tradition going.

Yvonne married Orvie Criss and they had a dry-cleaning business in Redding. I suspect that Camille may have helped set them up in the dry-cleaning business, although I do not know that for certain.

My father, Robert, spent the early part of his years working for his father and went wherever he was, which is how it came to be that he was in Dunsmuir - working for his father at the Hotel Weed. It was at the Hotel Weed (which is sometimes called the Weed Hotel by mistake) that my father met his soon to be bride Dorothy Creason, of Southern Pacific Creason fame. Her father, Floyd Creason was one of four, five or six Creasons that worked for the SP.

When Camille purchased the Big Market Liquor store (I would guess this happened as a result of the big fire in the Hotel Weed), the family moved back to Redding. After my father got married to Dorothy they settled in at an apartment around the corner from the Redding Memorial Hospital - the hospital where I was born on March 23, 1946.

I do not believe that the person in the picture of the Redding Steam Laundry vehicle is my grandfather. I have lots of pictures of him over time and this does not match what I know of him - perhaps it is his brother or one of the De Forest brothers.

My father (who passed in 1994) recalled how the family did not suffer during the depression, but that they did well since everyone needed laundry services. He also mentioned that not only did they do well, they helped employ quite a few people during the depression. Dad also mentioned that Camille was always looking for ways to improve the business, always trying out the latest ways to run the business. I do have several pictures of my grandfather taken at laundry conventions held in California locations which seems to support that idea.

When Camille sold the Big Market Liquor store and retired, it left my father hanging high-and-dry, according to my mother. It seems that Dad never did learn a trade as he was always working for his father and was not vested in any particular vocation. Dad got an entry level job working for the Clair Hill company as a draftsman - or so I remember. I think he may have also worked for the county in a similar capacity. Fortunately for our family, Dad got a job working as a draftsman for the California Department of Transportation (now called Cal-Trans), from which he retired.

I could tell you lots of Carter stories, especially involving the three boys, Kent, Scott, and Ross, and the experiences at the big cabin up at Big Flat, in the Trinity Alps. Big Flat was a Carter property that was owned by Jesse Carter, father of boys Oliver and Harlan, and daughter Marian (who married Silvio Bui - another Redding name to check on). By the way, it was Oliver Carter who was the Judge during the Patty Hearst trial. He died, some say as a result of the trial, before the end of the proceedings. Harlan, being a teacher, had all summer off so the clan spent every summer at Big Flat. I was taken there, sent there, went there for a good many years and loved every minute of it. I learned to fish at the lake which was located on the property - a private, stocked lake! Josephine Lake had a row boat on it and the fish never saw anyone except during summer time, so they were not at all wary, but they were hungry.

On many occasion, I would tie a second line to my fishing line and cast out and reel back with two fish on each line! I thought that was the way fishing was supposed to be - wrong! Spoiled me for life.

A few attached pictures for your enjoyment. My father, Bob at a doorway of the Hotel Weed. Camille with the four children, circa 1921. Redding Steam Laundry stock showing names of interest. The twins, Bob and Barbara, on a car circa 1932. If I can find a few more pictures of interest to you, I will send them in another email.

Let me know if I can be of further help to you.

Sincerely,

Ken Brouillard
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Myrtle Creek OR 97457-9511
541-863-6465
marehare@frontiernet.net



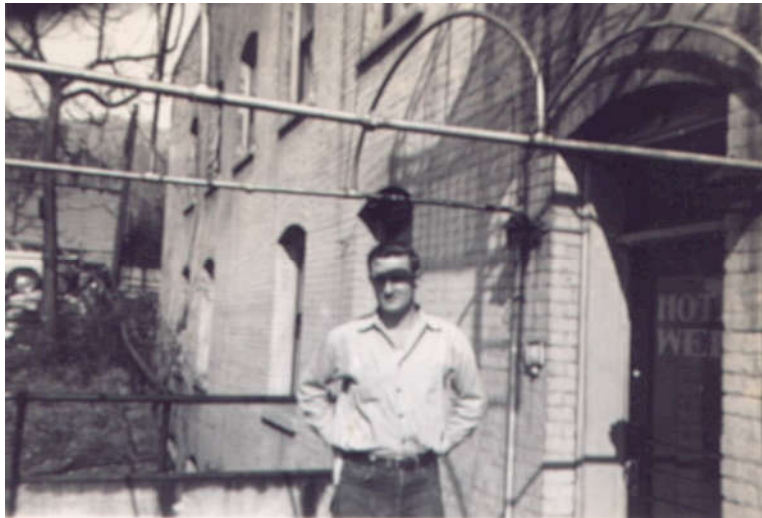
Brouillard Kids with Dad.jpg



BobandBarbara.jpg



Redding Steam Laundry stock certificate.jpg



BobatHotelWeed.jpg

Dear Chet,

Many, many thanks for the great stuff you sent to me! I knew Silvio Bui was a part of the Carter side of things, just had no idea about all the rest. Great reading.

I thought you might get a kick out of the attached pictures that show my Lucky tokens, which was a real surprise when I saw the picture of yours. Funny thing is, all three of them have the year 1947 penny in them. This leads me to believe that they were ordered as we see them, not given out and you install your own penny. I also have a few pencils from the Hotel Weed, as well as some wooden clothes hangers from the Redding Steam Laundry (which I did not do a picture of), as well as the token that Dad had showing his address in 1937, and his winning medal from the City of Redding golf championship in 1939. And how about the barrel for the Dunsmuir Steam Laundry? I have no idea if Grandpa Brouillard had a laundry or laundry connection in Dunsmuir, just know that my mother had it and she got it from her father.

Enjoy,

Ken





Found on Japanese auction site:

