

The Story of Charley Parkhurst

Updated: June 2018



Charley Parkhurst



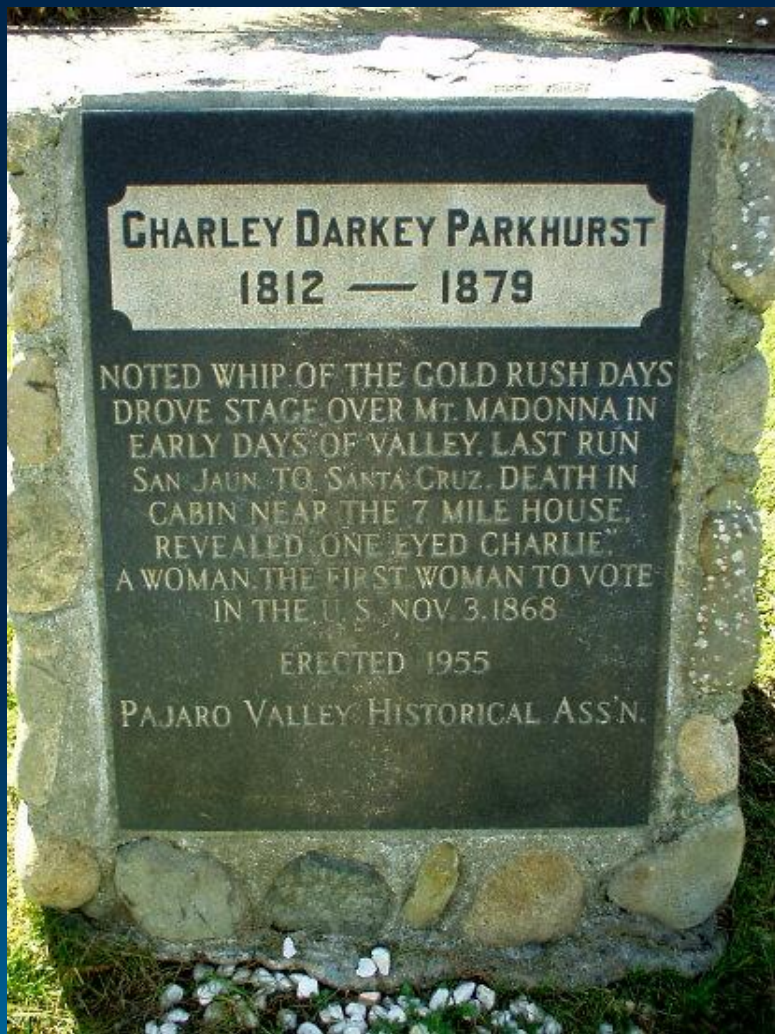
- 1812 - Born in New Hampshire
- Age 12: Mother dies – becomes an orphan
- Takes a job as a stable hand on a farm.
- Loves horses. Becomes an accomplished coachmen living in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.



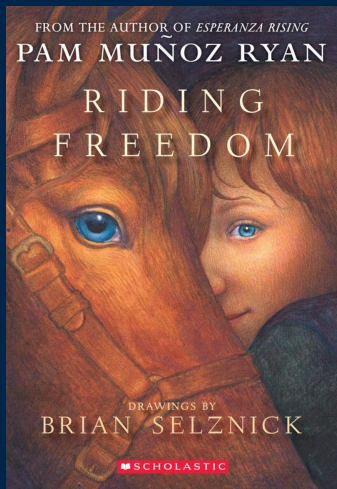
Charley Parkhurst

- 1851 – Moves to California. *“I aim to be the best damn driver in the West.”*
- @1855 – While shoe-ing a horse got kicked and lost his eye – called: “One Eyed Charley”
- 1850-1870: Stage driver Sacramento to Mariposa; San Jose to Watsonville. *“One of the best stage drivers in California.”*
- 1870 – Retires in Santa Cruz Mountains, CA.

Charley Parkhurst



- 1879 – Dies.
- While preparing the body, the doctors learn that Charley is a female.
- Registered to vote – may have been first woman to vote (prior to 1910).
- Lived most of life as a male.
- Buried in Watsonville, California.
- **Question: If Charley were living today, would he identify as transgender?**



Charley Parkhurst PS

- Charley was born: Charlotte Parkhurst and lived that way until around age 12 when her mother died. She figured it would be easier to get work as a boy so got her first job as a stable hand and introduced himself and “Charley”
- For what historians have learned, there was no photo ever taken of Charley. Any photos you see are images created by others of what they think he may have looked like.
- Some books you may like:
 - Ryan, Pam Munoz. *Riding Freedom*. New York: Scholastic Press, 1998.
 - Hill, Fern J. *Charley's Choice: The Life and Times of Charley Parkhurst*. Infinity Publishing, 2008.

