



**ARTIST: C. W. BOWLES**

**SITTER: ALBION PARIS WHITNEY (1825 - 1884)**

**DATE: 1881**

**FORMAT: oil on canvas, possibly an embellished photograph**

**PETALUMA HISTORICAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM**



**PHOTOGRAPHER: GEORGE ROSS (1832 - 1893)**

**SITTER: ALBION PARIS WHITNEY (1825 - 1884)**

**DATE: late 1870's to 1884**

**FORMAT: enlarged reprint of original cabinet card**

**PETALUMA HISTORICAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM**

The exhibit's exceptionally lovely pair of oil on canvas portraits depicting Albion Paris Whitney and his wife Susan was donated to the Petaluma Historical Library & Museum by a Whitney family descendant. This portrait of Albion was taken just years before his death. Hanging to the right of this portrait is a photograph of Albion taken by Petaluma photographer George Ross.

Albion was a hard-working, driven pioneer. Even his obituary stated, "...mind and body, when overworked often react upon themselves, and present the sad spectacle of a star falling from the sky before it has attained its zenith." (*Petaluma Weekly Argus*, March 29, 1884) As a young man Albion sought his fortune journeying further and further west. He eventually took the trail to California from Colorado and in 1860 settled in Petaluma. He started in the grocery business and expanded into freighting grain and produce. He quickly became a wealthy man and served in many civic capacities. He was chairman of the Petaluma City Board of Trustees, a member of the Petaluma School Board, and President of the Sonoma and Marin District Agricultural Society. In 1874 he turned to politics and was elected on the Republican ticket to the California State Senate. Albion was also an active member of Petaluma's Masonic Lodge, and his Masonic Lodge sword is displayed in the exhibit's centrally placed display case.

According to the Petaluman historian, Ed Mannion, the Whitney Falls on Sonoma Mountain were named after Albion Whitney, and according to Sonoma County environmentalist, Bill Kortum, "The hike to Whitney Falls was an early Petaluma tradition. An early morning start from the city put you at the falls for a picnic lunch, with enough time to return before dark."



"View of Whitney Falls on Sonoma Mountain," Sonoma County Library Heritage Collection