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Sierra County  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
QUARTERLY

APRIL 25, 1969



A MAN TO MATCH OUR MOUNTAINS  
"GOLD IN THEM THAR HILLS!"

LAST OF THE GOLDEN WEST  
HOT OFF THE PRESS



THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 25, 1969    Vol. I, No. 1

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In October of 1968 a group of interested Sierra County residents met in Sierra City for the purpose of revitalizing the Sierra County Historical Society. Members of the new organization felt that there was a need for both preservation of the county's history and the development of an awareness of Sierra County's heritage.

This publication is just the first visible sign of the activity for which the members hope the Historical Society will be known. Besides the work Milt Gottardi of Loyalton is doing with the publications committee, there are many others at work. Mary Hope of Alleghany is chairing the Historic Markings Committee; Arlene Amoedi of Sierraville is taking charge of the Building Restoration Committee. Those interested in museum development are Earl Withycombe and Jeanne McMahon of Sierra City, Ruth Drury and Margaret Lambert of Downieville, and Milt Gottardi of Loyalton. Those interested in archives, program or fund raising committees should contact Moreland Stevens of Loyalton. Persons interested in membership should send their names and \$10.00 membership fee (which includes the quarterly bulletin) to Mrs. Georgene Copren, Box 97, Sierraville, Calif.

The success of the new organization depends on the constructive action taken by those interested in preserving Sierra County's past. We look forward to a lively future for the organization.

#### NOTE FROM THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE:

Because this is our first quarterly we hope that all our interested readers will be patient with us and bear some of the rather obvious mistakes that have managed to creep into our endeavor. With experience and practice we hope our quarterly will be among the very best in





our nation.

We must remind our readers that the publication staff of the quarterly makes no effort to verify the accuracy of articles in our quarterly. We do hope, however, that should any of our readers notice incorrect information they will contact us so that we make corrections in future editions.

The publication staff is interested in any type of article dealing with the history of Sierra County. If any of you, our readers, wishes to submit articles for publication, please do so. If you are aware of others who might wish to publish in our quarterly, please inform them and us.

IF I CAN STOP ONE HEART FROM BREAKING

Emily Dickinson

If I can stop one heart from breaking,  
I shall not live in vain;  
If I can ease one life the aching,  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Unto his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain

(Copyrighted by Little,  
Brown and Company.)



## MILES GOODYEAR

Miles Goodyear is famous as the founder of Ogden, Utah, as well as the founder of the mining town of Goodyear Bar, Sierra County, California.

Goodyear was born and raised in the state of Connecticut, but spent a greater portion of his active life traveling the mountain area from Kansas to California. He was a red headed fellow, rather slight as to frame but lithe and active, possessed of the penetrating eye that was the hallmark of the mountain man, yet amiable of disposition and winning of manner.

History says it was probably sometime in September, 1846, that Miles Goodyear reached the site of Ogden and began building his Fort Buenaventura. By late fall the new post must have been sufficiently completed for the red-headed mountain man felt justified in leaving Captain Wells to finish the job. Leaving his Ute wife, his children, his flocks and herds, and some of his Indian retainers in the Captain's care, Goodyear set out for southern California, hoping to find a market for the considerable stock of dressed deer and elk skins he had acquired in trade with the Indians.

A campaign down through California had brought Fremont's California Battalion to Los Angeles on January 14, 1847, sorely in need of new clothing and footgear. Edwin Bryant, a member of the battalion, picks up Goodyear's story at this point, and incidentally confirms the recency of the founding of Fort Buenaventura: "A Rocky Mountain trapper and trader (Mr. Goodyear), who had established himself near the Salt Lake since I passed there last year, fortunately arrived at Los Angeles (about this time), bringing with him a quantity of dressed deer and elk skins, which were purchased for the nearly naked soldiers."

Records of Goodyear's transactions with Fremont's command have been preserved in the archives of the General Accounting Office in Washington-- and the original of voucher 137 provides the only specimen of Miles Goodyear's signature yet found.

Goodyear was not born a Yankee for nothing. He forthwith put his capital to work. Horses in California were plentiful and cheap. Since 1840 mountain men and Utes had periodically raided Southern California ranches, making a nuisance of themselves. If you were not a bankrupt to begin with, the better policy was to buy your horses and move along the trails at a pace befitting an honest man. This Goodyear proceeded to do. The exact number of horses he bought is not known; several hundred, perhaps.

It was late spring and not a good season to trail livestock across the southern deserts, and Goodyear chose to return to Utah by another route. He took his horses up through California to Sutter's Fort. John A. Sutter's post diary mentions his arrival on May 22, 1847.

Early in June he launched upon his journey across the Sierra accompanied by John Craig of Ray County, Mo., one (Samuel) Truitt or Truete of Shelby County, Ill., and two other California immigrants. To help him with his horse herd, the mountain man also had along three Indians or half-breeds, who perhaps had gone with him to California the previous fall. He went



down the Truckee River and via the Humboldt Trail.

During the spring of 1847, while Miles Goodyear was bringing his horses up through California, then east across the Sierra Nevadas and on up the Humboldt, reports about him were a source of disquiet to the westward-moving Mormon Pioneers.

John Brown writes that on August 9, he, "started north with a little exploring company; also in company with Captain Jas. Brown and others who were on their way to California. At Weber River we found the fort of Mr. Goodyear, which consisted of some log buildings and corrals stockaded in with pickets. This man had a herd of cattle, horses and goats. He had a small garden of vegetables, also a few stalks of corn, and, although it had been neglected, it looked well."

The state of the Goodyear garden was a matter of the greatest interest to the Mormon Pioneers, and it is hardly surprising that their journals should be full of information about it. One of the diaries reports, "the garden included corn in tassel which had been planted June 9, beans were ripe, carrots a foot long, cabbages, radishes, etc., looking fine (and for good measure, the sheep in need of shearing)." Another journal records that the American corn was shoulder high and the Spanish corn tasseling out, yet another notes that the garden was some 15 yards square.

All this was the work of Captain Wells, of whom it is unfortunate that so little is known, for he was Utah's first white agriculturist, and the buckets of water he poured upon his garden made him the first white man in Utah to practice irrigation.

Jim Baker, in association with Goodyear, was on his way south to trade with the Utes on the headwaters of the Sevier. It is said that, "in September, 1847, he camped with the pioneers at Salt Lake, being on his way home from a trading trip to the San Pete valley Indians, and that according to the account of Joseph Wood of Trenton, he bought from one of the Mormon emigrants the first house cat brought to Utah, paying \$10.00 for it."

Andrew Goodyear joined his brother in the Salt Lake area in the latter part of 1847, and they went on to Southern California in January 1848 to acquire another herd of horses. Trading horse was somethin Miles Goodyear liked and did well.

So on April 23, 1848 a detachment of the first United States Dragoons stationed in Cajon Pass to see that no stolen animals passed eastward experienced a break in the monotony of their duty. As Lieut. Geo. Stoneman, the officer in command of the detail, reported on April 31st, "On the 23rd an American by the name of Goodyear arrived, with 231 animals and four men--the animals I inspected and by my authority gave him a passport--to pass out."

It is singular that Miles should have driven his horses all the way from southern California to the Missouri River, but the Mormons in the valley of the Great Salt Lake were too poor to provide much of a market, and he





GOODYEARS BAR



was too late to trade with the immigrants of 1848 along the California-Oregon trail. It is much more curious that instead of disposing of his horses to the immigrants gathering on the frontier, Miles undertook to drive them back across the continent. He may have reasoned that prices would be better farther along the trail or in the gold fields than in Missouri, where he had to compete with every farmer for 50 miles around. The upshot was however, that he made an unprecedented 4,000 mile journey from California to the Missouri River and back.

Late in March 1849 Miles visited St. Louis, and an interview with him was printed in the Missouri Republican, March 30, 1849:

MR. MILES M. GOODYEAR, A Rocky Mountain trader and traveler, arrived in this city yesterday, from St. Joseph. He says that the people along the whole line of our frontier, are making preparations for an early start across the Plains. Mr. Goodyear has traversed all the different routes to California, and is familiar with the several roads. He reached the Rocky Mountains in June last, remained there until the last of August, when he returned to the States by the South Pass, arriving in October last. He intends starting, we learn, as soon as the weather and grass will permit, for the Rocky Mountains and California, by the way of Fort Kearny, which he thinks the best and most practicable route."

Like everyone else Miles and his brother Andrew were headed for the gold fields of California, and in the late summer of 1849 they arrived on the bar of the North Yuba which was later to bear his name.

The history book says, "This celebrated old mining camp, one of the first located within the present confines of Sierra County, is picturesquely situated on the North Yuba, four miles below Downieville. Beautiful pine-clad hills surround the place, conspicuous among which is the noble crest of Grizzly peak. In the distance may be seen Saddle Back, Fir Cap, Monte Cristo, and many other points of interest alike to the practical miner and the lover of nature.

The first inhabitants of Goodyear's Bar were Miles Goodyear, Andrew Goodyear, Dr. Vaughan and a Mr. Morrison who settled here in the late summer of 1849. Discoveries of rich gold deposits caused others to settle in the neighborhood, who had left the lower diggings and followed up stream in search of a more rapid road to wealth. Philo Haven, Frank Anderson, and the Downie party passed here during the fall at different times, seeking the North Fork.

Miles Goodyear was taken sick shortly after his arrival, and lingered along for several months, finally, on the twelfth of November, 1849, yielding up his life. He was buried on a point opposite Goodyear's Bar, since named Slaughter Bar. The remains were deposited in an old rocker, with a buffalo robe for a shroud. A rough head-board, carved by Dr. Vaughan, told the stranger that Miles Goodyear was no more, giving the date



of his departure from earth. The body was afterwards removed below by his brother Andrew.

Great hardships were experienced at Goodyear's Bar during the succeeding winter. Food was terribly scarce, and the prospect of famine drove nearly all the pioneers to the lower country to obtain the necessities of existence. Flour was the most needed and most difficult food to procure. Even the nutritious bean, the pioneer's loadstar in all new countries, was not to be had.

With the return of spring came a great horde of eager miners, and long ere the snows had vanished from the ridges, thousands were delving every foot of ground that showed promise of returns. Andrew Goodyear was located on a point, with several Indians who were working for him, and had very rich pay ground. At a meeting of the miners the size of the claims was fixed at thirty feet square. Daniel Cowley, who arrived that spring, was forced to content himself with half a claim, not another spot being vacant. James (1890) Golden, now a well preserved old gentleman of 82 years, arrived at the camp on the thirty-first of March. The buildings were nearly all of canvas. Many of them were called hotels, where a fare, rude and plain enough for an anchorite, was charged for at the fancy prices which prevailed. A man named Woodruff opened the first regular store, in a log building; other stores were soon run by James Golden and a Mr. Vinyard. Among the early business men of Goodyear's, in addition to these, may be mentioned Hughes and Davis, Scott and Arnold, Hook & Co., Hickok & Johnson, and George & Scellen.

In 1852 Mr. J.C. Stewart arrived at Goodyears. At that time the whole flat was covered with houses. The presidential vote of that year was nearly 600 from Goodyear's alone, the outside camps forming other election precincts. An effort was made at the organization of the county, in the early part of the year, to get Goodyear's Bar named in the organizing act as the county seat, but it proved unsuccessful. It is believed that had the miners paid more attention to this matter, the seat of justice might have been fixed in Goodyear's Bar instead of at Downieville; but the people were far more interested in making money from their diggings than in the prosperity of the town, considering themselves only temporary sojourners in California soil. In this way Goodyear's lost the only opportunity she ever had of becoming the permanent metropolis of Sierra County.

A post office was established at Goodyear's in 1852, and Woodruff became the first postmaster. He was succeeded by Robinson, who was followed in succession by the Meyers brothers and Julius Meinhart. Mr. O.F. Ackerly has had the office about ten years. Langton's express started through this place in 1850. Wells Fargo and Co. established an office here in 1858, with John D. Scellen as their first agent. Some years ago the office was discontinued, without ever being re-established.

A private school was first taught at Goodyear's in 1856 by Mrs. Massey. She had but few pupils, the boy-and-girl crop of the mountains being, at that time, very small. Afterwards school was held near the present site of the school-house. Mrs. Delaney became the next instructress of youth. The schoolhouse now used was erected in 1862, for church and public uses, and was built by subscription. It was finally converted into a temple of



pg.6 Goodyear

learning, where at the present time (1880), Mr. Albion Miley presides, giving universal satisfaction.

This is just the story of the beginnings of Goodyear Bar. Today it is a sleepy little village with a few permanent residents and quite a few vacation homes. The schoolhouse, now the Goodyears District Community Clubhouse, is the one built in 1862. The hotel building dates back a long ways. It is still owned by descendents of the Bachels family who ran it as a hotel for a couple of generations. It is a far cry from the bustling mining camp of the 1850's and 1860's,--even the Post Office has been moved over to the highway. It makes it much handier for the stage driver. (A list of the Post Offices in California in a newspaper of 1852 indicates there were only two in Sierra County, Downieville and Goodyear's Bar.)

A picture of Mary Goodyear, daughter of Miles Goodyear, hangs in the Downieville Museum. It was brought here by Mrs. Marian Pepper of Bolinas, California,--a descendent of the Goodyears.

Notes on the Author:

When asked to submit some facts for a paragraph about herself, Mrs. Drury replied, "Well, that is a tough one." Following is her brief account of herself, which hardly covers the many interests and talents of this woman:

"I came to this county first back in 1919 as a school teacher at Goodyears Bar. My name was Ruth Turner (no relation to any of the local Turners). And as the story goes, I married one of the local boys, Wm. Arthur Drury. He belonged to two pioneer families of the area; mother to the David Owens family of Goodyears Creek, and father to the Drurys who lived at one time around Greenville and Crescent Mills, Plumas County.

Presently I am a widow and live on the Owens homestead on the Goodyear Creek Road. I report for the local papers, Messenger and Booster, and try to keep active in local affairs. I am a member of the local P.T.A. and Naomi Parlor #36 N.D.G.W.

Ref: Ruth Drury got her information for the article from an article in the Utah Historical Quarterly (Oct. ,1953): "Miles Goodyear and the Founding of Ogden" by Dale L. Morgan.



## MINES IN SIERRA CITY AREA

Despite deliberate tall tales, in the 1800's, regarding fabulous gold finds, fabricated for gain by prospecting outfit- ters, stories which ran from fabulous discoveries exposed on the surface of the ground to a lake surrounded by beaches whose sands consisted of gold nuggets ranging in size from marbles to walnuts, there were enough large nuggets actually found to keep the stories rife. Even today, after a rain- storm, many small nuggets are found along the streams. As recent as 1964, a local man walking with his dogs along a stream bank found a nugget, which he said was as large as his thumbnail.

After the stories of the Laguan del Oro opened up northern Sierra County, there were discoveries that made the Gold Lake stories seem like pocket change. In 1858, two pros- pectors, "Mexican Frank" and Joe Tierney, took a nugget from the bottom of a shaft at the Monumental Mine. In removing it, the nugget was broken; but, the largest piece weighed 104 pounds. After cleaning and exhibiting it for a brief period in San Francisco, the gold was minted and yielded the owners more than \$23,000 in gold pieces. During the same period, other nuggets were taken from the Monumental area which weighed from 20 to 50 pounds.

The more valuable mines; however, were not these most spec- tacular ones, but the mines which paid regularly. The placer mines along the river and the tributary streams were worked for many years and are still producing gold. The quartz mines have gone into a decline in recent years, but, in the past, were producers of staggering fortunes.

The largest quartz veins are thought to be in the Sierra Buttes, the Young America, the Mountain Mine, and the Phoe- nix Mines. Some of the older mines that are still being worked to some degree include the Hilda Mines, consisting of eleven unpatented claims; the Mayday-Undine Mine, dis- covered in 1901 and worked for eight seasons; the New York Gravel Mines, consisting of the Yuba, New York, and New Year Mines, where 300 patented acres are still being worked; and the 4 Hills Mine, consisting of 887 patented acres. These mines covered the outlets to the Spencer Lakes and the out- let of the Middle Fork of the Yuba. In the early days,



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\$250,000 to \$500,000 was taken from one pocket in a hole fifteen feet below the surface. Later pockets were discovered near the surface, containing from \$1500 to \$6000. There are many fissure with veins running from one foot to twenty feet in width, the average being four to five feet. A few years ago, this property was involved in a land exchange and has reverted to federal ownership. The Kentucky Mine consists of two claims, the Kentucky and the Grandma. It was originally located before 1896 and was re-located by E. A. Loeffler in 1910. The lode line is 3,000 feet. There is no work being done on this mine at present.



The Keystone Mine was averaging ore worth \$10 per ton in 1916. The Monarch mines consists of 27 claims, covering a length along the lode of 12,000 feet. It is located on the west rim of the Sierra Buttes. There is some good timber on the property.

The Phoenix Mines consists of 124 acres of patented claims and five unpatented claims. The lode is covered for a



distance of 9,600 feet and is situated on the south slope of the Sierra Buttes. It was discovered in 1862 and lightly worked. Near the year 1880, \$112,000 was taken out; \$44,000 from the West Ext. # 2. In 1889, it was sold for \$27,000. Between that date and 1891, \$48,000 was taken out of the mine.

The Sacred Mount Mine was discovered in 1900 by Sam Langdon, who later sold it to Richard Phelan. In 1916, work was being done to get under ore assaying at \$8 per ton on the surface. The tailings, when operated on by a cyanide plant, assayed at over \$9 per ton. The Sierra Buttes Mines consists of fifteen claims, six of which are not patented. There is a total of 660 acres on the steep side of Sierra Buttes and is a mile and one-half in length. Work at this mine was first begun in 1850. The English company which owned it between 1870 and 1904 produced in the neighborhood of \$17,000,000. There are still many producing veins on the property.

The Sovereign Mine consists of 200 acres along the lode of 4,500 feet. There is much free gold in the veins. The tailings of this mine, when treated with cyanide, yield a \$5 average per ton.

The Swastika Mine, later re-named the Chipps, consists of 158.5 patented acres. Many pockets and rich bunches of ore were taken out in the early days and it was stated that there was enough ore exposed to keep the mine running indefinitely.

The Willoby Mine consists of 100 acres. Both lode and free gold finds were made at this mine. Ore averaging \$40 per ton was being removed in 1915.

The Young America mine, though idle for the most part, at present has recently been worked, looking for ore which could be produced economically. The Young America was one of the richest in the early days.

The Sierra Iron Mine consists of almost 300 acres of patented property and was one of the few iron mines in the area. This property takes in most of Hawley Lake and extends on both sides of the lake. In recent time, this lake property has been sold for recreational purposes, with the remainder of the property being retained, but not worked



as a mine. Some copper and asbestos mines were worked in this area. The best known being Bassett's Pride. This is on the property now known as Bassett's Station.

Notes on the author:

Mrs. Jeanne McMahan was born in Florida on October 8, 1925. She married Forrest McMahan in 1943, in Tampa, Florida. She moved to Santa Cruz, California, when her husband was discharged from the Air Force, in 1945. The McMahans lived in Santa Cruz until 1958, when they moved to the Holly House in Sierra City. Mrs. McMahan was named acting Postmaster of Sierra City, upon the retirement of the previous Postmaster. She became Postmaster on July 23, 1968, and now holds that position. She is active in the Sierra County Historical Society and has a lively interest in the colorful history of the Sierra City Region. Her address is Sierra City, California.



## THE HISTORY OF THE GOLDEN WEST HOTEL

### LOYALTON, CALIFORNIA

The main part of Loyalton, California, about 1897, was located along what was then called Summit Street. This street has since been renamed West First Street and runs from Highway 49 (Main Street) north to the High School. In 1897 the street was the principal business street and the center of town. Along it were several business houses, a few boarding houses and a few rooming houses.

With the arrival of the Boca and Loyalton Railroad in Loyalton in 1901, and the building of the B.&L. station in the east section of town (close to the present Western Pacific Railroad Line) the business section of town shifted from Summit Street to this newer area.

In the summer of 1903, M.R. Olsen and A.O. Matson built a hotel in the newly developing business section of Loyalton and called it the Golden West Hotel. It contained a large kitchen, a dining room, a lobby and four bedrooms on the first floor, and sixteen bedrooms on the second floor. In 1905 a third story was added to the hotel. Mr. Leo Jellison, a retired saw filer living in Loyalton, remembers staying at the Golden West in 1909. At that time he paid 25¢ for each meal and 25¢ for his lodging for the night.

At this time, from 1903 to 1909, according to available records, there were five lumber mills operating in Loyalton, and there were about three thousand people living in or near the town.

In 1910 Mr. A. I. Medearis bought the hotel and removed the third story. It is surmised from a picture taken in 1905 that he detached the lobby, turned it east and west and made it into the Owl Pool Hall. Mr. Medearis rented the second floor rooms and used the kitchen and dining room for a grain storage. He also operated the store to the right of the hotel. (See picture, this article.)

By 1915 Loyalton had fallen on bad times. Most of the mills had closed. People had moved away and many of the dwellings in the town were moved to nearby ranches in the area or even to other towns. The two remaining hotels in the town at the time were closed.

At this time there lived in Loyalton one Mr. Alfred Jones



and his wife, Leona Jones. The Joneses had been visiting Loyalton for several years because of Mr. Jones' health. People in the town prevailed upon Mrs. Jones to reopen the Sierra Hotel when they learned that she had previously operated hotels. In the summer of 1915, Mrs. Jones and her sister, Miss Lucy Wear, opened the hotel.

Mrs. Jones stated that their best and only customers when they first opened the hotel were an occasional drummer who wandered into Loyalton and a large group of Indians who came down into Loyalton from Indian Camp (located southwest of Loyalton behind the present Feather River Lumber Company) every noon for a plate of food. The Indians wanted their meal served in a pie tin, and they wanted to sit outside and visit among themselves as they ate. The lack of customers did not last long, however; within two years Jones and Wear, as they were known in the Loyalton Business community, (or Aunt None and Aunt Lucy as they were affectionately called by three generations of Loyaltonians) built a thriving business.

The Clover Valley Lumber Company opened at this time and many people returned to Loyalton. In the summer of 1917 Mrs. Jones and Miss Wear moved from the Sierra Hotel and reopened the Golden West Hotel, renting it from Mr. Medearis. He renovated the hotel and restored the lobby to its original place and built a parlor on the east end of the lobby.

In 1922 business was booming. The Sierra Hotel had burned and the Golden West Hotel was the only hotel in Loyalton. All available rooms in the upper stories of four surrounding business buildings were rented by Jones and Wear for their borders. In 1923 the two sisters (Mrs. Jones having been widowed in the 1918 Influenza Epidemic) built rooms over the lobby, for by this time they owned the hotel.

Mrs. Jones and Miss Wear are remembered fondly by many as Aunt None and Aunt Lucy. They were honest, upright people, and many are the people of Loyalton who remember their kindness to all, particularly to people who were down and out. Their slogan was "Good Meals and Good Beds" and many a salesman stated that he attempted to organize his trip so he could stay overnight at the Golden West.

Sunday dinner at the Golden West was a rule for many of the families of Loyalton during these years. In those days there were few automobiles and the roads into or out of Loyalton were practically impassable for five months out of the year, due to snow and Sierra Valley mud. Some still remember the starched white tablecloths, the linnen napkins



and the huge quantities of food served at the Sunday night dinners at the Golden West. Thanksgiving Dinner was especially important. Home made mince meat pies were one of



A PICTURE OF THE GOLDEN WEST HOTEL TAKEN CIRCA 1905.

the great specialties of that meal, as Mrs. Jones was noted for her pastries. The rolls and other pastries of Bing Foo Gee, the Chinese cook, were always a favorite with the local people. Miss Wear took pride and delight in the gardens and lawns that surrounded the hotel, and many of her fresh vegetables appeared on the tables. During the summer months one could always find people on the large lawn playing cards, visiting, having a party or just enjoying the flowers grown by Miss Wear.



In 1936 Lucy Wear died, and in 1937, Mrs. Jones sold the hotel to Axel and Lucy Nasholm. Mrs. Nasholm was a neice of Mrs. Jones. The Nasholms carried on the same traditions of good food and clean lodgings as had the previous owners. A bar was added to the east end of the hotel, and an additional dining room was added to the north end of the building for the Loyalton Rotary Club. One of the highlights of the year during this time was the Christmas Eve Sweedish Smorgasboard served by Mr. and Mrs. Nasholm for their patrons. The Nasholms ran the hotel during the hectic years of World War II, and her dining room was always packed with people, many of whom couldn't quite make their own ration stamps for food stretch quite far enough at home. Axel's Place (bar), as well as other bars in the community, became the social centers of the so called war years. On weekends large crowds would gather to have a sociable drink and forget about the war, only to spend most of evening discussing the war. It was reported that the Mountain people of Loyalton and surrounding areas knew how to discuss and argue the course of the war, and even more knew how to forget their troubles, in the finest traditions of the Wild West.

In November of 1955, the Nasholms sold the hotel to Messers Sidney and Adrian Westall, brothers of Mrs. Nasholm. They operated the hotel until March 1947, when Mr. Adrian Westall bought his brother's interest in the hotel.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Westall continued to operate the hotel, but in June 1963 they closed the dining room. The Ladies Aid Society of the Community Church continued to use the Rotary Room to serve dinners for the Rotary Club until 1968. In the Fall of '68 the decision was made to demolish the hotel, except for the bar. The few remaining roomers reluctantly moved away. One such roomer had lived in the hotel for 43 years and it was his only home in Loyalton.

A public auction was held in August of 1968 of the contents of the hotel. Many people came from far and wide to attend the auction. A holiday mood seemed to prevade the auction as people vied with their friends to run the price of articles as high as possible. The Loyalton Volunteer Fire Department was to receive one half of the proceeds of the auction for its help in organizing the sale. Said one bewildered antique dealer from Reno, "These people have gone wild. Look at some of the worthless articles they are bidding up." Little did he understand the spirit of small town people. Said one lady, who paid a considerable sum for an old obsolete book, "This book has Jones' and Wear's names in it. My daughter used to wait on



table for them. There were no finer people ever in Loyalton. I'm glad to have this as a sourenir."

And so the old hotel was stripped of its belongings, belongings which were, in the words of the antique dealer, mostly worthless, and yet, rich in memories and traditions to many of the people of Loyalton; traditions of hard work, honesty and hospitality that one would hope will never disappear from Sierra Valley.



THE GOLDEN WEST AS IT APPEARED JUST BEFORE IT WAS TORN DOWN.

Notes on the Author:

Mrs. E. Gottardi, a descendant of an old pioneer family (Westall) which arrived in Sierra County in 1858, writes with a feeling of nostalgia about the old Golden West. The Jones and Wear referred to in the article were aunts of hers, and she, herself, lived at the hotel during her Senior Year at Loyalton High School. Mrs. Gottardi, after teaching, and being principal at Loyalton Elementary School for some thirty years, is retired and lives with her husband in Loyalton, California.



## BING FOO GEE

Nothing can be written about the Golden West Hotel without some reference being made to Bing Foo Gee, the colorful Chinese cook, who was chef at the hotel for almost 35 years.

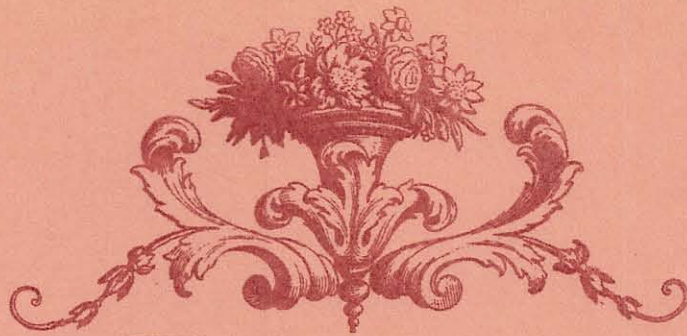
Fortunate indeed was the Golden West when Gee answered the ad for a cook in a San Francisco paper. He arrived in Loyalton in June of 1922 on the mail sled in the midst of a wild snow storm. Little did he realize that he was to remain in the town of Loyalton for the next thirty five years, and that he was to become a valued member of the Jones and Wear family and a personage of renown in the town.

Gee was a happy, gregarious individual. Every morning, come rain or shine, as soon as breakfast was over and dinner well on its way, he would don a clean white apron and make his way down the north side of Main Street as far as the business houses extended, and then back up the south side of Main Street. He would stop at all the business houses, which included stores, other eating establishments, the hardware, the garage, the bank, the post office, the pool halls and the barber shop. At every establishment he would stop a while to visit. He was "getting scoop", so he said, and he really got it from his conversations and his keen observations. By noon Gee was reported to know everything that had transpired in Loyalton during the previous twenty four hours.

Since his retirement he has lived in San Francisco.



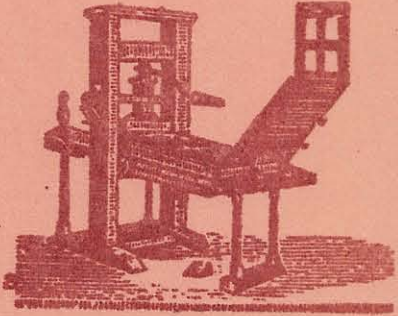




NEWS ITEMS FROM THE SIERRA DEMOCRAT  
(Picked at random by contributing author, Ruth Drury)

SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----DECEMBER 25, 1858

TERRITORIAL ENTERPRISE: The first number of this newspaper published at Genoa, Carson Valley by our friends Jernegan and James, has reached us. It is a neat little sheet, well printed and ably edited---and in every way creditable to the energetic conductors, as well as to the community which advanced the encouragement necessary to start the paper. It is independent of party and politicians for which blessing we trust the boys are truly thankful--and its chief aim is to make a living for the publishers and secure a territorial government for Genoa "and the country adjacent". We wish it much success.



SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----JANUARY 7, 1860

J.C. Williams, editor of the TERRITORIAL ENTERPRISE has been spending some days in Downieville being on his way home after a visit to the down country cities of the state. He fares well at home or has well improved his time this side of the mountains--for he's very sleek.

SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----DECEMBER 25, 1858



NEW FASHIONS FOR LADIES--The correspondents of the press have heard on excellent authority that the Empress and some of her ladies have been engaged in making all manner of experiments on dress as regards form and development and color; and that the result is, "That they have determined before long to inaugurate a violent reaction to the present style; that is to say, to have dresses short enough to display the foot and ankle, instead of trailing on the ground; to diminish immensely their prejudice and in place of colors more or less staid to have the brightest and gayest hues imaginable."



SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----DECEMBER 18, 1858

IN LUCK On Sunday morning last we succeeded in getting our new printing material to town, after having it delayed some three weeks on the road. We expect to bring the paper out on new type the first of January, if possible. MOUNTAIN MESSENGER, LAPORTE.

SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----MARCH 12, 1859

LADIES ON SNOW SHOES To those individuals residing in the lower country, it may appear rather strange that a great deal of the traveling here at this season of the year, by females, is done on snow-shoes; though somewhat novel means considered a short time since, it is now becoming so common as to scarcely attract attention. We are informed that during the late snow storm nearly all the ladies of Gibsonville attended the parties with snow shoes. We mean they used them for underpinning in going to the place where the twinkling footed muse was to preside. Picture to yourself a number of ladies with wooden appendages, twelve to fourteen foot in length, buckled on after the manner of skates, coming down the hill at a 2:40 rate with crinoline and merino floating in the breeze, and you will imagine a sight to which we have been lately treated. Occasionally the seraphs lose their equilibrium the balance pole takes an aerial flight, and after it goes the performer, and then follows ground lofty tumbling, in which ease and nature predominate over elegance. (MOUNTAIN MESSENGER FROM LAPORTE) Note: The MOUNTAIN MESSENGER WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN



SIERRA DEMOCRAT-----NOVEMBER 27, 1858

CITY OF SIX;;Persons cutting saw-logs on the upper side of the trail to the "City" seriously incommode travelers by allowing trees to lie across in places where it is difficult to get around obstructions, and in the night, dangerous as well as difficult.

ARTIFICIAL ICE A process is in successful operation in London for the manufacture of ice by the evaporation of ether. The article produced is of good quality and costs less than \$2.50 a ton.