

Vol. 1, No. 2

#2 00

Sierra County HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

JUNE 10, 1969

ROUND-UP TIME
IN SIERRA VALLEY!

WHEN THE CROSS
FOLLOWED THE GOLDPAN!

"NEITHER RAIN, NOR SLEET,
NOR GRIZZLY BEAR!.."

HOT OFF THE SIERRAVILLE PRESS

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JUNE 10, 1969 Vol. I, No. 2

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

CONTENTS:

- I. A HISTORY OF THE CATTLE BUSINESS IN SIERRA VALLEY
by Mr. A. Strang Page 1.
- II. A HISTORY OF THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE IM-
MACULATE CONCEPTION AND OF ITS PASTORS
by Mr. Dave Lonergan Page 9.
- III. A HISTORY OF ALL THE POST OFFICES THAT HAVE EX-
ISTED OR STILL EXIST IN SIERRA COUNTY
by Mrs. Gladys M. Skinner Page 14.
- IV. NEWS ITEMS FROM THE SIERRA VALLEY RECORD
by Mrs. Norma White Page 20.

Editor: Milt Gottardi, Loyalton, California

Cover and Art Work: Greg Cross, Loyalton, California

Printer: Marilyn Nessler, Sierra Reproduction, Sattley,
California

OFFICERS:

President Mr. M. Stevens,
 Loyalton
Vice-Pres. Mrs. A. Nelson,
 Sierra City
Secretary Mrs. J. McMahan,
 Sierra City
Treasurer Mrs. G. Copren,
 Sierraville



A HISTORY OF THE CATTLE BUSINESS
IN SIERRA VALLEY!

1945

(THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS FIRST PRESENTED TO THE ROTARY CLUB AS AN ADDRESS BY MR. A. STRANG OF SIERRAVILLE.)



Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have been asked to give a short history of the cattle business in Sierra Valley. I'd suggest some one to hold a stop watch on me as when I get to talking cows I forget I'm a human being. You might be like the little boy who sat through a long-winded talk. At the close the speaker said, "I hope I've not talked too long but I haven't a watch and there isn't a clock in the room." Whereupon the little fellow piped up, "Yes, but you might have looked at the calendar." I'll try to do better than that at least.

In 1858 my grandfather, Jered Strang, came into Sierra Valley from Downieville with a pack train and a crew of men with scythes to cut and bale hay from the meadows around Sierra-ville and Sattley. They packed it muleback into the mining camps around Downieville. The old pack trail started in at Calpine and went up under Haskell's Peak and past the Buttes into Downieville.

As I recall hearing him relate, it must have been about 1860 when they ran out of hay in the early spring. The pack trail was still closed with snow and a man by the name of Bailey, who had a herd of dairy cows, decided to bring them into Sierra Valley to feed. They had to find a new and lower trail. My grandfather helped him bring them in. They left Downieville, came in past what is now Sierra City and up the Yuba River to the summit and into the valley over the approximate route of the present Yuba Highway. This trail was later made into a freighting road by the County and eventually improved and rebuilt as the Yuba Highway.

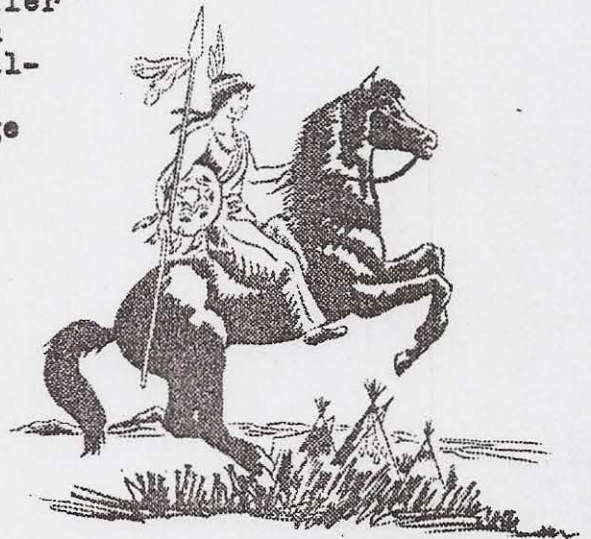
These were the first cattle to ever be brought into Sierra Valley. And there started a series of changes in the methods of handling cattle through the years. It is these changes I shall endeavor to record in as nearly a chronological order as I can gather my thoughts.

My grandfather took up a homestead and a preemption claim at the upper end of the valley--the same Strang Ranch of today.

Now, especially in the lower end of the valley, production has been cut greatly by the encroachment of the sagebrush. When the Indians had sole use of the valley, they used to round up the antelope every fall and kill their winter's meat supply. As an aid in the round-up they burned off all the tall dry feed. This kept the sage down. Even today on fields where sage has been removed, good crops can be grown; either grain or some of the more draught resistant forage crops which have been perfected to such a large extent within the last few years.

During the years of the big rodeos, more homesteaders arrived and settled in the valley--it was broken up into smaller ranches and fences began to put in their appearance. This automatically put a stop to the old method of handling cattle, and the next change appeared.

Each man commenced cutting hay and feeding his own stock through the winters at home. This limited the size of the herds that could be handled and gradually the dairy cow replaced the beef. The dairy cow will require more work on the part of the rancher, but brings in a higher return per cow-financially. You notice whenever a cattle man goes broke he goes back to his dairy and starts over.



The south end of the valley was settled largely by a group from the state of Maine, and from some other New England communities. These included the Strangs, Hamlins and Millers. The central valley was taken up by a colony of old country Irish--the Sarkeys, the O'Haras, the Biblins, the Marbles (of the Hot Springs and tennis fame), the Caseys and the McCauleys--all names which are still familiar to residents of our surrounding communities even today. These brought their dairying practices with them.

Each ranch had its own creamery and made its own butter. This was sold largely to the mining camps around Virginia City, Downieville and Johnstown. The butter was not in the neatly packaged one pound cartons with which our housewives are so familiar today (or are they?) but in fifty pound tubs or firkins kits, as the buttermen used to call them.

These kits were made in Sierraville by an old gentleman by the name of Leichter and by his son, George, who still owns the old home (Note: this home is now owned by Curley Wright). They were made in a little copper shop on the creek. They selected white fir from the nearby woods and completed the kits there. The dairymen stacked these kits of butter in sawdust cellars and every week or so a brine (strong enough to float an egg) would be poured in through a hole in the lid left there for that purpose.

After the haying season in the fall when the horses were not busy, these tubs of brined butter were freighted into the mining camp markets where each miner bought up his year's supply and stored it in the mine tunnels.

With the dairying industry came a change in the type of cattle in the valley. The first cattle were largely Texas longhorn and were crossed with Shorthorn or Durham. But when you are milking a cow the first requisite is that she give some milk--at least enough to make it pay to milk her--and it became almost obligatory to improve the breed.

A man by the name of Stiner (living on the ranch now occupied by Charley Laffranchini) pioneered the improvement of the breed in his work. He went back to Kentucky and brought in five cows and a bull. These were from registered Durham herds. One of these cows averaged 85 pounds (or approximately 10 gal.) of milk every day for a week--a good cow at any time, but almost unheard of in these parts at that time. This strain spread through the whole valley and really produced some good herds of milking Shorthorns. By selecting a bull and maintaining a good strain, the herds remained as very good herds. But soon a demand for a dual purpose animal came along, and the beef type Durham or Shorthorn was imported and crossed with the milkies. This ruined the dairy herds of that breed, and to this day there is not a decent herd of milking Shorthorns in Sierra Valley.



With the deterioration of the Shorthorn herds, the advent of the Holstein was inevitable. In the early 1890s Albert S. Nichols of Sierraville (on the present Bony ranch), and Bill Arm of Beckworth (on the present Weltch place) brought in Holsteins. Nichols

brought in three cows and a bull from New York as a foundation herd, and the late Bert Miller gave the Holsteins a big boost when he brought in a carload lot from Wisconsin. One of the Nichol's bulls was sold into Texas. From there it went to the Chicago World's fair as the largest bull in the world, weighing in excess of 3300 pounds--close to a ton of dressed beef, and that's a lot of bull!

About the same time Ed Hamlin (living on the present Henry Dotta ranch) raised a Durham steer which was sold into the corn belt and exhibited at the same fair in Chicago. It weighed more than 1½ tons--and this was not baloney! What wouldn't some of our little meat markets do for a couple of animals like them today!

At about the same time Line Dolley tried importing Jerseys (on the present Torri ranch), but Jerseys never proved very successful in this climate. Around 1900, the Hereford appeared to replace the Shorthorn as a beef animal. A.S. Nichols brought in the first purebred herd. They gained rapidly in favor here, as they did elsewhere in the range countries.

For years the closest railroad connection available to the valley was Nevada City. Later a connection was available at Truckee. The beef were driven to these points for shipment to the packing centers. The construction of the Western Pacific Railroad was a great boon to the ranchers of Sierra Valley. The loading yards at Hawley were right in our front doorway.

The soil of Sierra Valley is shallow and not too good a quality. With no better care that it received, crops became smaller, and a man could no longer make a living on the little ranches of former times. This resulted in considerable selling out, and the Swiss started coming in and replacing the Irish families who had originally homesteaded the country. The first Swiss were brought into the valley as milkers when dairying began on a large scale--late in the 80's and throughout the 90's--the Del-leras, Guidicis, Dottas, and a number of others still prominent in Valley business coming here in that manner.

The Brown Swiss cow was brought in to the country and tried out, but it never proved too successful, being tops neither as a dairy nor a beef animal. A few of this breed still persist among the Swiss-Italian ranchers, but they are so largely cross-bred as to be indistinguishable as a breed.



A couple of herds of Aberdeen-Angus were prominent, the McNeir brothers having one of the largest herds of registered Angus in the U.S. Somehow, however, they cannot compete with the Hereford. However, in the last year or two, a crossing of the Aberdeen with the Hereford is beginning to creep into the valley--the idea being to increase the size of the Hereford.

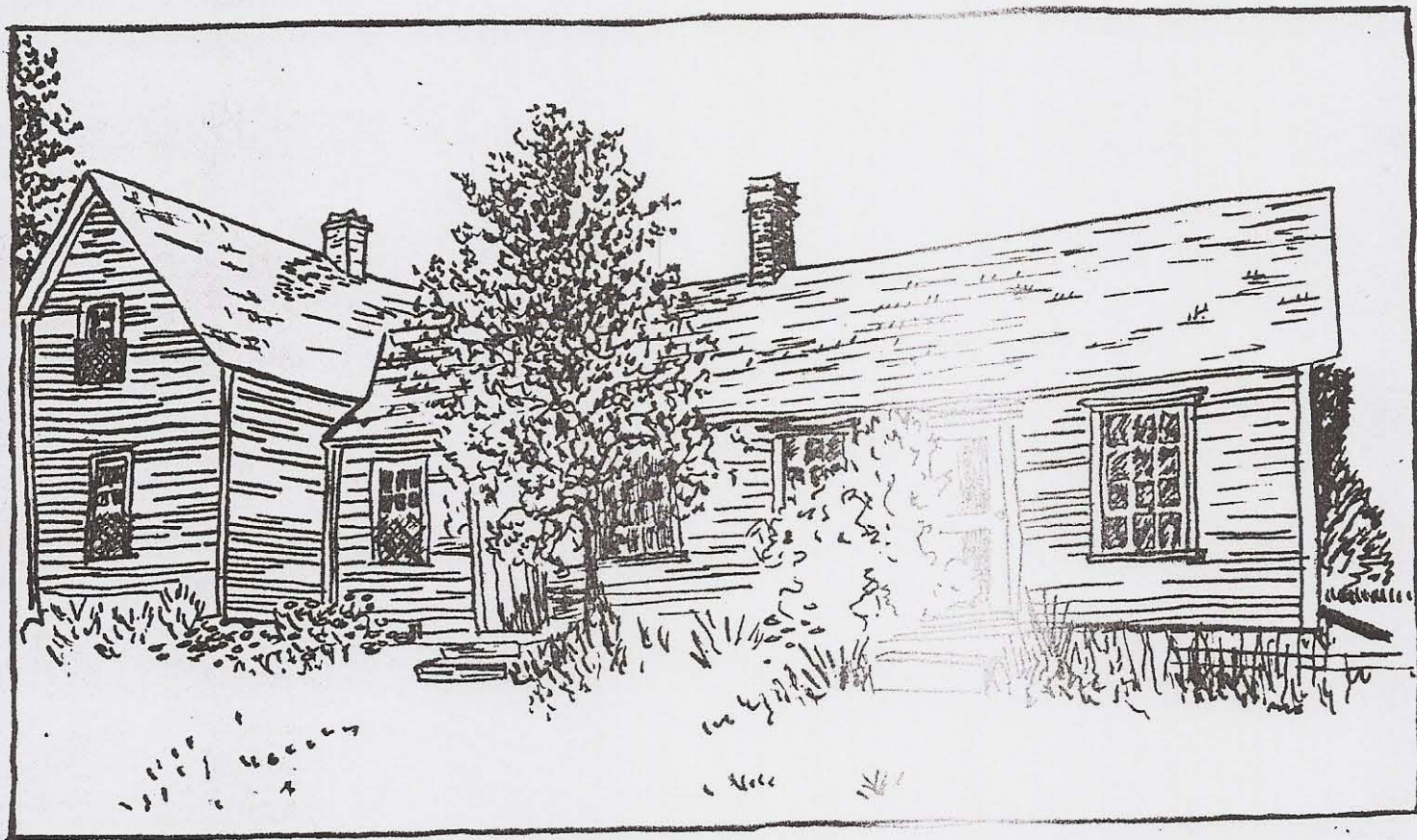
You know styles in animals change with changing ways of living. With small families and apartment living, a demand for smaller cuts of meat was made, and any butcher knows the lady of the house likes her meat with "no bone". Ever anxious to please the ladies, a smaller, more compact animal was bred. But when raising an animal on pasturage and hay, a large ranch is essential to give it capacity for enough of this rougher feed. No silage and little grain (as compared to feeding in the grain belts) is fed in Sierra Valley and the larger animal is much more economical to raise. This was recognized during the war years, and the packer was encouraged to use the larger animal again as a conservation measure. It was found that these animals gave a higher amount of dressed meat--resulting in more profit to them, and it is the consensus of opinion that these larger animals are here to stay. So styles change again.

Starting about the time of World War I, a few of the ranchers began finishing beef steers. It became quite a wide-spread practice to grain feed steers. With the advent of prohibition, a surplus of grain was available and was profitably used in this way, barley being the common grain fed. Then they began using cottonseed meal. This proved an excellent source of concentrates for the dairy cow, too, and is still in favor for that purpose, but at present the cost prohibits the use of it for fattening beef. Of late years, soy bean has been introduced in the wake of a dwindling supply of cottonseed. It has proved very effective.

The practice of finishing beef has fallen off lately due to the increase in cost of both the feeder animal and the grain and the distance from the centers of supply of the concentrates. It leaves too small a margin of profit from the producer to the packer.

With the continued decrease in land production, consolidation of ranches began--it being cheaper to buy more land than to improve the quality of what was had. The Humphrey ranch finally reached a size of 12,000 acres. With these larger ranges again, and the new easy transportation methods, cattle are being wintered out of the valley again, as they were in olden days, but this time, instead of going to the desert they are being sent into the foothills and valleys west of the divide, and large numbers of lower country cattle are being brought into Sierra Valley and the surrounding country for summer pasture. The labor situation was re-

sponsible in a large measure for this. Milkers became so scarce and help so hard to get that many dairies were sold, and the beef herds were shipped below for wintering to get away from having to put up hay. A larger volume of business was also possible in this way-to say nothing of the ease to the rancher in not having to fight the heavy snows in caring for his herds. It is not uncommon now for an entire trainload of cattle to be unloaded here for a single feeder. A trainload would run from 1,000 to 1,5000 head.



THE STRANG HOME IN 1862

The home shown here was originally built by a creek below the present Strang residence. In 1880 it was moved to its present location. The middle third of the house was made from lumber brought around the Horn and packed up to Sierra Valley on mule-back via Marysville and Sierra City. Part of the home is still standing today as part of the Strang home, some three miles north west of Sierraville.

Of course there still are a few dairies in the valley, but it is a dairy herd or a beef herd-the dual purpose herd has about passed out of the picture, being really profitable as neither.

This is about as far as the history of the cattle business in Sierra Valley goes-it bringing it up to the present day. Any more would be prophecy, and I don't claim to be a prophet. Of course, the lumberman and the logger will claim their share in the development and progress of Sierra Valley. We grant them their phase in the spotlight, but at the same time, we contend that Sierra Valley was, from the first, and will be to the last, a cattleman's stamping grounds.

Thank you gentlemen.

Notes on the author-

The Strang family is one of the oldest in the Sierra Valley area-Nathaniel Strang having come to the Sierra Valley in 1856. He was followed in 1858 by his son, Jared, who bought out his father. Arthur Mays Strang, Jared's grandson, was born in the same house as was his father (see illustration) on June 3, 1903. He lived on the family ranch until going to Sacramento where he attended Heald's Business College, and worked for a short time as a book-keeper. In 1930 he returned to Sierra Valley, working as a ranch hand and a butcher until 1930, when he took over running the family ranch. At present he has 150 head of cattle. The article on the history of the Sierra Valley cattle business was first a talk delivered to the Portola Rotary in 1945. The same address was later given to the Truckee Rotary in the 1950s.

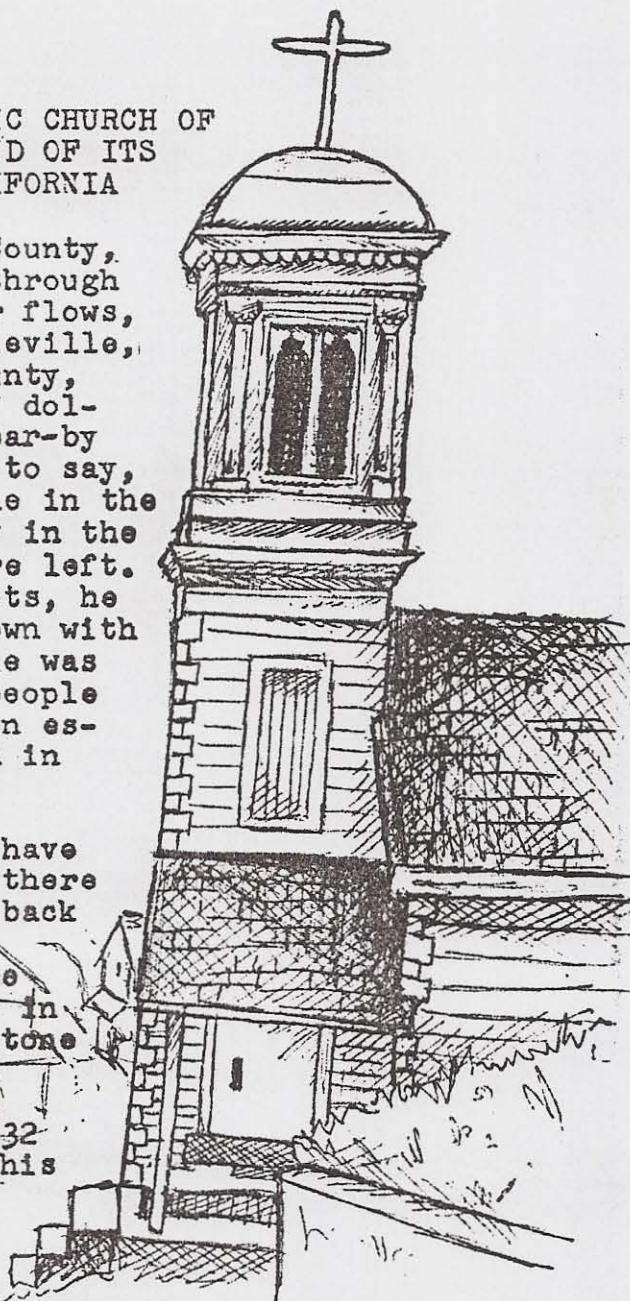


A HISTORY OF THE OLD CATHOLIC CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND OF ITS PASTORS IN DOWNIEVILLE, CALIFORNIA

High in the mountains of Sierra County, nestled in a narrow and steep canyon through which the North Fork of the Yuba River flows, is the quaint old mining town of Downieville, which is the county seat of Sierra County, California. Just how many millions of dollars worth of gold was taken out of near-by diggings during the boom days is hard to say, but today practically no mining is done in the area, and fabulous strikes remain only in the memories of the few old timers that are left. As one drives through the narrow streets, he would never suspect that this small town with a population of some two hundred people was once inhabited by over five thousand people during the gold rush days. It has been estimated that many thousands more lived in nearby diggings.

During the course of years, there have been many changes in Downieville, but there are still several buildings that date back to the very early days of the town. On the main street the visitor will see a small stone building which was built in 1852. The fact that it was built of stone is the reason that it was able to survive the two great fires which the town suffered in 1852 and 1858. In 1932 the Native Sons and Daughters burned this building into a museum. Another old building is the old Methodist Church which dates back to 1853. However, the building to which we will direct our attention is the old Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception. It is perched on the north side of the canyon above the town, and one would expect that at any moment it would come tumbling down the steep hill side. What is the story behind this little church and its pastors?

In 1849 a party led by Goodyear and Anderson found their way to a point near the present town of Downieville, and today there is a small town a few miles south of Downieville called Goodyears Bar. (See Vol. 1, No.1, April 25, 1969 for a detailed history of Miles Goodyear and the town of Goodyears Bar.) But it took a



determined man named to blaze a trail into high mountains, deep ests. The party was prosecting. The covery brought the April, 1850, the town habited by more than five thousand people. On April 16, 1852, the town was made the County Seat of the newly organized Sierra County. It was at this time that missionaries began to appear on the scene. As yet there was no wagon road, so in the summer of that year a certain Father Acker made his way in on a mule. There are no records of what he did, but in 1853, Father Shanahan came up from Nevada City where he was pastor, with the intention of organizing the Church in Downieville.



The town had been destroyed by a fire on February 19, 1852. Of course the inhabitants were very busy at the time rebuilding homes, business places, etc., but Father Shanahan managed to get a committee together which promised to do what they could about building a church. Soon a piece of land was purchased. It was bought from the Baptists. Their church had been destroyed in the late fire, and they had no intention of rebuilding. It is not known when the building was started, and if one examines the building closely, it appears to have been added on to several different times.

Father Peter Deyaert, who replaced the aging Father Shanahan on December 19, 1853, made regular visits to Downieville from Nevada City until March 1855. Father Thomas Dalton took over the mining camps then and replaced Father Deyaert at Nevada City on May 7th of that same year. Father Dalton (1826-1891) was an extremely vigorous man and toured over many miles of the mining country. He built churches at many of the mining camps, including one at St. Louis and one at Goodyear's Bar in Sierra County, and several in Nevada and Placer counties. Tradition has it that he completed the building of the Church at Downieville in 1855.

In 1856 Downieville got its first pastor who was to remain there any length of time. He was Father Cornelius Delahunty. He established residence in Downieville and visited the mining camps in Sierra and Plumas Counties. The Church in Downieville narrowly escaped being destroyed by a New Years Day fire in 1858; this fire destroyed a large part of the business district.

In 1860 Sierra County became part of a Vicariate Apostolic with its seat at Marysville, and with Eugene O'Connell as its first Bishop. Father Delahunty was called to Virginia City,

Nevada, in October 1861, one to replace him. given the task of taking Nevada City. Father assistant, wished to and was finally able May of 1862, when in Marysville. But, Francisco, and from return.



and the new Bishop had no Father Dalton was again care of the mining area from Bernard Morris, the Bishop's have the Downieville parish, to establish himself there in several new priests arrived in 1864 he departed for San there to Ireland, never to

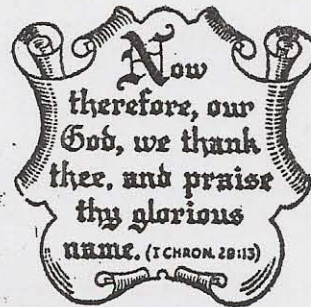
The next pastor to come to Downieville was Father Charles Lynch. He had come from Ireland in 1864, at the request of Father Dalton, who was visiting Ireland at the time, recruiting priests and sisters for the Bishop. He was a robust young man of twenty three, but the combination of hard, long traveling and the cold winters broke down his health. In 1869, Fathers Edward Kelly and James Callan from Marysville, and Father Lawrence Kennedy from Grass Valley had to assist him. Father William Maloney finally had to take his place temporarily while he went to the hospital. Father Lynch came back in 1870 and remained until 1877, at which time he was sent to Eureka. This ended the pastorate of one of the most beloved priests ever stationed at Downieville. He was a man who truly loved and understood the rough and ready miners.

The population in Downieville had dropped to around fifteen hundred by this time. The mining boom was over for the most part, and the whole mining area began a slow decline, hastened by the passing of a law which prohibited hydraulic and placer mining. These types of mining were cutting deep scars into the terrain, scars which can still be seen today, and they were clogging the rivers with silt.

Downieville continued to have a resident pastor most of the time until 1928. In May of 1877 Father G. Meiler came and remained only until August of that year. Father T. Sheridan came for a short time in January 1878, when Father Andrew O'Donald took over until August 1879. Father P. Kirley made his stay a little longer. He stayed until November 1882. Father M. Dill was the pastor until July 1884. It was in this year that Father Patrick J. Monogue became the Bishop of Grass Valley. Later, in 1886, the See was moved to Sacramento and the Diocese of Sacramento was established. Father J. Claire came in August 1884, and remained for almost ten years, departing in July 1893. Father Patrick J. O'Kane was the pastor of this now declined mining town



until the fall of 1897, at which time Fr. John Dermity took over until the fall of 1903. In the fall of 1903 Father G. Laffran arrived and remained for four years. In 1907 Father Patrick O'Reilly arrived. He was a man who was to spend many years working in the gold country. Father James Flanagan came in 1911 and stayed until 1915 at which time Father John McGarry arrived on Christmas Day and remained until 1926.



The next pastor, Father William J. Donovan was the last pastor that Downieville was to have for some time, for on October 3, 1928, the parish was again turned over to Nevada City as a mission, where Father Patrick O'Reilly was now pastor. He visited Downieville occasionally until 1939, when Father Michael became his assistant, and as such, served the Downieville parish. Father Edward Williams, another assistant, also attended Downieville during 1940. Father James Enright was made administrator in September of that year and served as such until Easter Sunday, April 5, 1942. He had a stroke while saying Mass that morning, and was never well after that, and died on August 5, 1947.

In 1942, Father Virgil Gabrielli took over as an assistant, and on July 8, 1948, he was made pastor of the reestablished Downieville parish. New boundries were established at this time. The North San Juan ridge country was now to be included. North San Juan, Camptonville, Cherokee, Challenge, and Birchville are all within the area of the Downieville parish. The territory around Johnsville and La Porte was excluded because there were practically no people living in that area. Living quarters were maintained in both Downieville and North San Juan. Father Gabrielli certainly followed in the foot steps of some of his early predecessors. He built St. Anthony's Church in Challenge, which was dedicated on September 28, 1949. He also built St. Francis Church in Camptonville, which was dedicated on December 9, 1949. He finished the church in North San Juan, the Church of St. John Basco, which was dedicated on June 29, 1947. Restoration work was done on the old St. Patrick's Church at Forrest City. No work that amounted to anything had been done on the church in Downieville for many years. In 1944 Father Gabrielli decided to make some changes and repairs on the interior. The confessional was moved from the front near the altar rail to the back near the door. The old wood burning stove which was up in front was removed and a new gas heater was installed over the door in the rear. Within the sanctuary new green carpeting was put down, and two small side altars were erected. The Church had no sacristy, but a door near the gospel side of the altar opened into



the living room of the in the rear. This door new one was put in the opens into what was at bedrooms and is now one



priest's quarters was closed, and a epistle side. It one time two small large sacristy.

In the fall of 1950 done on the church. The ing its years, and its loose rock foundation was in danger of giving away. The building had settled about one half foot on the down hill side. The belfry became detached from the main part of the church and was listing in the opposite direction. The Building was blocked up and a concrete foundation was poured under it. The belfry was secured to the main part of the building with heavy bolts. New siding was placed on the outside of the building, and the belfry was roofed with aluminum. The old wooden cross was replaced with a stainless steel one. For the most part, the lines of the church were kept the same, but there were several definite changes. Old St. Patrick's Church in Grass Valley was being torn down and a new church was being built. There were three large stained glass windows that were not going to be reused. Father Patrick O'Rielly, pastor at Grass Valley and one time pastor at Downieville, was more than happy to give the windows to Father Gabrielli. Nine windows were cut from the three large ones. Before the church had four windows on each side of the main part of the church; now it has only three on each side. Two new small windows were put in the sanctuary. The other major change was the position of the front door. Formerly it was on the left side of the belfry, facing the town. It was moved to the right side (opposite from where it was) to eliminate the stairs which were formerly necessary.

Today, as one looks at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, shining in the sun with a new coat of white paint, one sees almost the same picture that residents of the one time boisterous boom town saw about one hundred years ago. The gold rush days may be more and more forgotten, but after nearly a century of service, this church will always stand as a monument to those stalwart priests who underwent so much hardship to serve the Catholic people of the Downieville area.

Notes on the Author: David Lonergan was born in Arizona and moved to Loyalton, California, while in the fifth grade. He completed both elementary and high school in Loyalton. After a three year tour of duty in the U.S. Army, he attended and graduated from the University of San Francisco. He presently works for the State of California and resides in Los Angeles.



A HISTORY OF ALL THE POST OFFICES
THAT HAVE EXISTED OR STILL EXIST IN
SIERRA COUNTY!



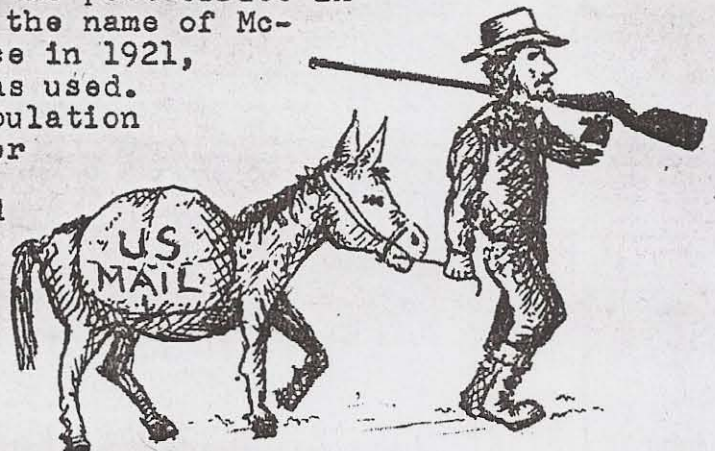
The information concerning post offices in Sierra County is taken from a more inclusive study of post offices in the Mother Lode area done by Mrs. Gladys M. Skinner.

ALLEGHANY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on March 18, 1857, and was called Chip's Flat. The name was changed to Alleghany on November 19, 1857, and the post office has been in constant operation ever since. Alleghany was named for the Alleghany Tunnel, a gold mining facility, said to have been built by miners from Alleghany, Pennsylvania, in 1855. Here is the home also of the famous Sixteen-to-One Mine, no longer in operation.

BEVERLY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 30, 1900, and was discontinued on November 30, 1901. After it was discontinued, the mail was handled through the post office at Johnsville. It is not known how the post office got its name.

BRANDY CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 26, 1909, and was discontinued on June 30, 1926; after which the mail was handled through the post office at Camptonville.

CALPINE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 29, 1921, and was discontinued on December 31, 1942. Mail was handled through the post office at Sattley. The post office was reopened as a Rural Post Office out of the Sattley Post Office on June 17, 1963, and it is still in operation. There was a large lumber mill in Calpine and most of the people living in Calpine were employees of the mill. The community developed in 1919 around the mill and yards of the Davies-Johnson Lumber Company, and it was first known as McAlpine. When the post office in Washington D.C. rejected the name of McAlpine for the post office in 1921, the new name, Calpine, was used. In 1939 Calpine had a population of some 600 people. After the mill closed the population dropped to around 100 people.



CHIP'S FLAT POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on March 18, 1857, and was known as Chip's Flat. The name was changed to Alleghany on November 19, 1857. Just below the present town of Alleghany, following the line of the ancient Blue Lead River channel across Kanaka Creek Canyon, auriferous gravel deposits are found on the opposite slopes of Chip's Flat, and again at what was once the mining camp of Minnesota Flat on the other side of the ridge. An outcropping of blue gravel at the latter location was discovered in July of 1852, by an old English sailor, known to his fellow friends as "Chips" because he had previously been employed as a ship's carpenter. Later "Chips" located even richer diggings on the northern slope of the same ridge and they called the camp Chip's Flat. (For some reason the official spelling was Chip's and not Chips'.)



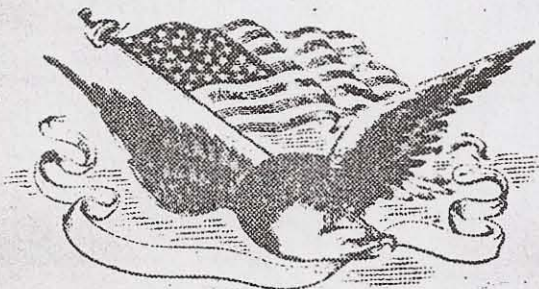
DOWNIEVILLE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on October 7, 1851, and has been in continuous operation since that time. At first it was established in Yuba County, and then into Sierra County when that county was created in 1852 from the eastern part of Yuba County. The earliest official spelling in the cancel of mail was "Downerville", but the present form was soon adopted without formal change of name. This post office was named for Major Downie.

ETTA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April 16, 1883, and was discontinued on September 5, 1895, and the mail was then handled through the post office at Sierra Valley (now known as Sierraville). It is not known how the post office got its name, as the community in which it was located was called Randolph. Often, when a post office was first established, the new postmaster would take the name of his wife or of a friend, because when making application for a post office some name had to be given.

EUREKA NORTH POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 19, 1857, and it was discontinued on December 20, 1861. There are no records as to where mail was forwarded. The Greek expression for "I have Found It" was Eureka, and is associated with the great geometrician, Archimedes. As a geographical term, it apparently originated in California. The motto became popular after the Calif. Constitutional Convention, on October 7, 1849, approved it for use in the great seal of the State. There was a Eureka South, later known as Graniteville, but it never had a post office called Eureka South.

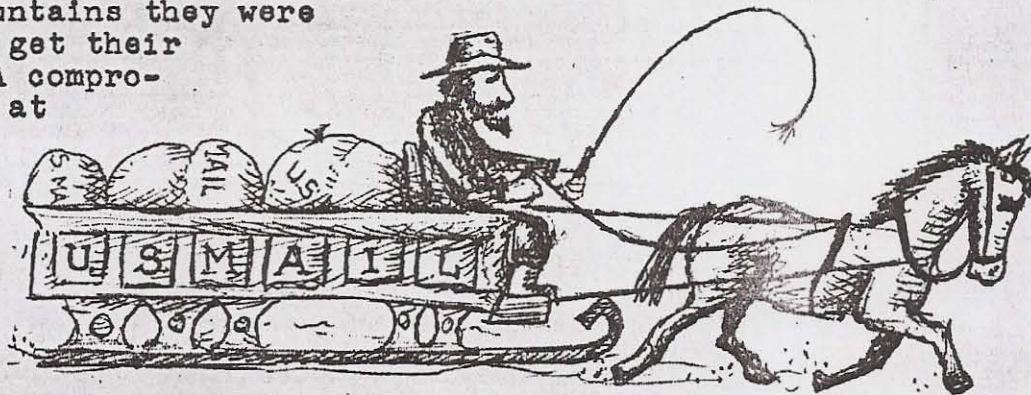


FIR CAP POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 17, 1869, and was discontinued on November 3, 1886, and the mail was then handled through the post office at Downieville.

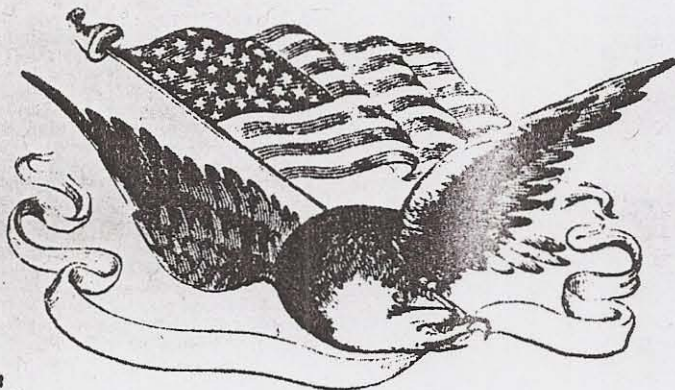


FOREST CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on November 16, 1854. The name was changed from Forest City to Forest on January 17, 1895. The post office was discontinued on March 15, 1947, and the mail was handled through the post office at Alleghany. Forest City was at one time called "Brownsville" but there was no post office then. The present name may have no connection with the pine trees that surround the community. There are some who hold that a busy newspaper-woman was the source of the name. She was Mrs. Forest Monney, who reportedly signed her stories "Forest City". When the miners established the town, it bore the Indian name "Yomana", said to describe a high bluff or holy ground nearby. It was also called "Forks of Oregon Creek" at one time, but there was no post office at that time.

GIBSONVILLE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 18, 1855, and was discontinued on October 25, 1869. It was reopened on December 16, 1869, and was discontinued for good on July 30, 1910, after which the mail was handled through the post office at La Porte. This remote section of Sierra County was first prospected in the spring of 1850, when gold was found along the ridge between the North Fork of the Yuba and the South Fork of the Feather River by an old sea captain named Sears, whose name was later given to the ridge. Returning to the Yuba, Sears prepared to lead a company of prospectors to the scene of his discovery. But the news that Sears had "struck it rich" spread, and before proceeding very far, his party found that they were being followed by a group under the leadership of a man by the name of Gibson. When ordered to turn back, Gibson's men refused, saying that the mountains of California were as free to them as to any man, and that if there was gold beyond those mountains they were going to get their share. A compromise was at length reached and the two parties



proceeded to Sear's Ridge, where operations began at a place afterward known as "Sear's Diggings". There never was a settlement or a post office by the name of Sears. Very rich deposits were found nearby, and this site developed into the large thriving camp of "Gibsonville".



GOODYEAR'S BAR POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on October 7, 1851. It was discontinued for lack of revenue on April 11, 1888, but was reopened on August 10, 1888, and has remained open ever since. Goodyear's Bar, settled in the summer of 1849 by Andrew and Miles Goodyear and two companions, was one of the first mining camps on the North Fork of the Yuba River. Nearby were the Ranse Doddler and the Hoodoo Bars, with St. Joe's Bar two miles below, and Woodville (t first known as Cutthroat Bar) farther up the river. The diggings in the vicinity yielded rich returns. Goodyear's Bar prospered through the 1850's, but in the early '60's, with the gradual exhaustion of ore deposits along the river, its decline set in.

LA PORTE POST OFFICE: This post office was first called Rabbit-town, and the post office was first opened as Rabbit Town on September 13, 1855. The name was changed to La Porte on November 19, 1857. La Porte was first in Sierra County, but became part of Plumas County in an 1868 boundary adjustment. The post office has been open continuously.

LOYALTON POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on January 8, 1864, and has been open continuously. Loyalton was named during the Civil War by mountaineers who were loyal to the Union Cause. An ordinance unusual in an early Western town forbade the sale of liquor within the "city limits", with the result that Loyalton became California's second largest city; its incorporators spread the town as widely as possible to discourage lumberjacks from walking beyond the city limits for a drink.

MOUNTAIN HOUSE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 24, 1874, and was discontinued on September 15, 1911. The mail was then handled through the post office at Goodyear's Bar. There was also a Mountain House community in Butte County and one in Contra Costa County; however, only the settlement by that name in Sierra County ever had a post office.

ONEIDA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened in June of 1882 and was discontinued on February 17, 1885; the mail being handled through the post office at Loyalton.

PIKE CITY POST OFFICE: This post office was first called Plum Valley, and was first opened on July 31, 1855. It was changed to "Pike City" on December 13, 1877, and then on January 17, 1895, the name was changed to just Pike. The post office was discontinued on March 31, 1954, and mail is now handled through the post office at Camptonville. It is not known how it got the name of Pike. Mrs. Mary Edith Godfrey, a native and lifetime resident of Pike, passed away on March 31, 1968. She had served as the Postmaster of Pike for almost thirty years.



PORT WINE POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on August 19, 1861, and was discontinued on April 5, 1865, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on May 18, 1870, and was discontinued for good on January 15, 1918. Mail was then handled through the post office at La Porte.

PURDYS POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on June 6, 1889, and on March 4, 1911, it was put into Washoe County, Nevada.

RABBIT TOWN POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on September 13, 1855, and the name was changed to La Porte on November 19, 1857.

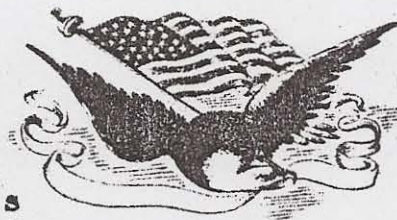
ROCKY POINT POST OFFICE (Rockypoint): This post office was first opened on May 9, 1876, and the cancel was one word. It was later changed to two words, but the records do not give the date of the change of wording. It was discontinued on September 9, 1897, and the mail was handled through the post office at Sattley.

SAINT LOUIS POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on January 15, 1855 and it was discontinued on July 11, 1895, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on May 4, 1898, and again discontinued for good on January 15, 1915. The mail was at first handled through the post office at Port Wine.

SATTLEY POST OFFICE: This post office first opened on May 5, 1884, and was discontinued on December 31, 1918, for lack of revenue. It was reopened on April 29, 1919, and has been open contin-



uously since. The town was named in 1884 for Mrs. Harriet Sattley Church, the oldest lady in the town at that time. Sattley, before 1884, was called "Church's Corners", but it never had a post office during that time.



SCALES POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on February 12, 1880, and was discontinued on May 31, 1923; the mail was then handled through the post office at Strawberry Valley.

SCALES DIGGINGS POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on June 15, 1871, and was discontinued on January 26, 1875. No further information is available.

SIERRA POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April, 18, 1855, and was discontinued on January 4, 1856.

SIERRA CITY POST OFFICE: The post office was first opened on June 23, 1864, and then closed on September 20, 1865. It was reopened on March 19, 1867, and has remained open continuously.

SIERRA VALLEY POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on July 25, 1862, as Sierra Valley. The name was changed to Sierraville on April 6, 1899.

SIERRAVILLE POST OFFICE: The name (above) was changed to Sierraville on April 6, 1899, and this post office has been open continuously ever since.

TABLE ROCK POST OFFICE: This post office was first opened on April 17, 1857, and was discontinued on September 30, 1922. The mail was then handled through the post office at La Porte.

NOTES ON THE AUTHOR: Mrs. Gladys M. Skinner is a noted authority on the post offices of the Mother Lode Country. She began her historical research as a hobby. Looking for something to do while her husband was busy at work, she decided on California historical research. Mrs. Skinner lives in Los Angeles with her husband, but she loves to travel through the Mother Lode Country, gathering information for her history research and just enjoying the countryside. She has had articles by and about her work in the Los Angeles Times and other publications.

NEWS ITEMS FROM THE SIERRA
VALLEY RECORD, PUBLISHED IN SIERRAVILLE
(Picked at random by contributing
author, Norma White of Loyalton)

SIERRA VALLEY RECORD-----March 10, 1900

The time is coming when a boy will have to choose between a cigarette and a job. The boy who smokes cigarettes will not be fit for anything else. The fumes of the cigarette will sooner or later clog the machinery of his thinking works and render him the intellectual inferior of the fishworm. In this land of hustle and hump, you can't afford, young fellow, to trade your chance for a job for a little bit of tobacco wrapped in ricepaper. You can't afford to take the chances of beclouding your intellect until you can cut no more figure in the world than a grasshopper in an ice factory.



The worst storm of the season came up early Saturday morning, when it began snowing. The "beautiful" continued to pile up until the total fall here measured about 3 feet, when it turned to rain. Five and one half feet of new snow fell at Dorsey's, two and one half feet at Sattley and about three feet on the ridge between here and Truckee. It rained heavily here Tuesday and Wednesday and the wind blew a perfect gale. Wednesday night about three inches of new snow fell. Mud and slush now reign supreme. As a consequence of the storm the Truckee stage was about three hours late, likewise the Vinton stage, Monday. The Sierra City stage failed to arrive at all, but came in Tuesday about noon. It also failed to come in Wednesday, but made the trip Friday, two days late. The roads are in a horrible condition. While Geo. King was changing the stage horses at the station at the crossing of the Little Truckee River, Monday, two of the horses ran away with the harness on and were out all that night in the snow. They were found and brought to town the next day.



Up to the hour of our going to press the Sierra City stage has failed to arrive. This accounts for the absence of the Sattley and Downieville news from our columns this week.

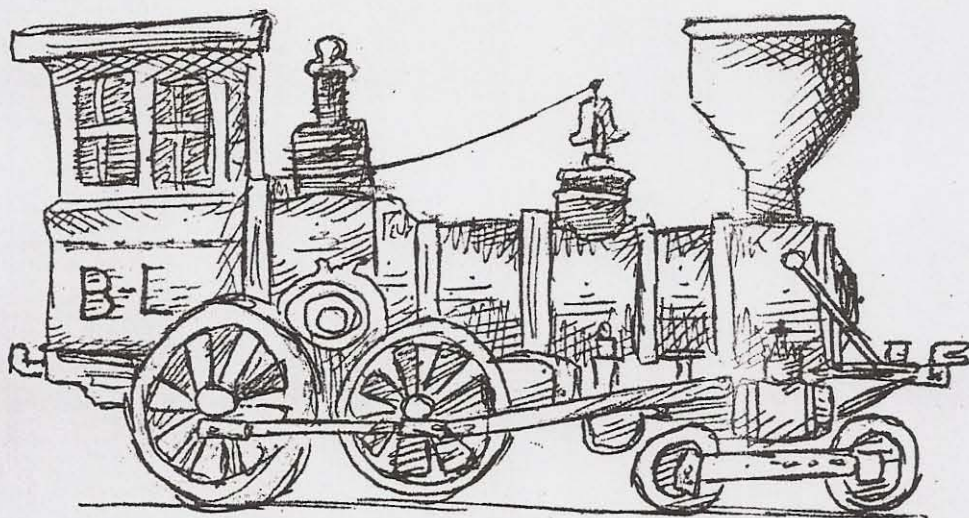
Later--We learn that 15 inches of more snow fell at Corry's station Wednesday night, and about twice as much more at Dorseys.

SIERRA VALLEY
RECORD--May 9,
1903

Everett Thomas was here from Beckwith over last night. He reports that the Boca and Loyalt-ton Railway people have pitched several tents above the Mapes place and in a few days will have about 100

men at work grading, etc., for the Clover Valley extension. It is understood that the extension will not go over the hill into Clover Valley this summer.

Horton Bros. are building a long chute to deliver logs at the terminus of the extension. They intend to cut from their track of timber on the Beckwith side of the divide between Clover and Sierra Valleys.



SIERRA VALLEY RECORD----August 14, 1897

DOWNIEVILLE NOTES: We had a kind of "hobo" that filled up with whiskey and tried to run the town last Tuesday, but he ran up against a little man who knocked him flat. He tried it again and they turned the water on him, that had the same affect as it had on the convicts of San Quentin. The last seen of him he was on his way to Forest City, cursing Downieville and drying his clothes on his back.

The county is being invaded from both sides, on the east side is a railroad coming in and on the west a telephone line is being constructed. If this goes on, some man or company will bring telephones or roads to the County seat and may by accidentally touching a button wake up the people to the resources laying at their doors.

Gold Lake, so far this season, has had more visitors and camping parties than for many years past. It was reported there were one hundred and fifty people there at one time with quite a minority of ladies. If we had a wagon road up the river and through to the lake, it would be one of the great resorts in the mountains, for there is plenty of opportunity for fishing, regaining



SIERRA VALLEY RECORD-----June 13, 1903

Fresh testimony is being received in great quantity,, declaring Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption Coughs and Colds to be unequalled. A recent expression from T.J. McFarland of Bentorville, Va., serves as example. He writes: "I had Bronchitis for three years and doctored all the time without being benefited. Then I began taking Dr. King's New Discovery, and a few bottles wholly cured me." Equally effective in curing all Lung and Throat troubles, Consumption, Pneumonia and Grip. Guaranteed by C.D. Johnson, Druggist. Trial bottles free. Reg. sizes 50 cents and one dollar.

The Mystic Circle will be entertained next Tuesday evening, June 16th., by McKenzie. The subject for the evening will be "The Life and Works of Robert Burns."



Note to our readers:

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, wish 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 of us.