

### THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 20, 1970 Vol. II, No. 3

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Several different accounts compiled by Mrs. Ruth Drury and the Staff

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### Meet Sierra County's Own--Lee Cross!

The staff of the Sierra County Historical Society Bulletin feels fortunate indeed to have had all our art work done in this issue of the Bulletin by Lee Cross of Loyalton, California. The drawings you readers will see throughout the Bulletin came from the talented head and hands of Lee.

Lee was born in Wilmington, Vermont, where he attended school. Several members of his family still reside in Vermont. In 1951 he moved to California and settled in Loyalton. He and his wife, Phillis, have raised a family of four children, two of whom are still at home. Their son, Greg, attends Sacramento State and is following his father's lead by majoring in art.

Lee works mostly in oil and water-color land scapes. His favorite subjects are scenes of the beautiful Sierras. While his works hang in the homes of many people of Loyalton and surrounding towns, his fame is not limited just to Sierra County. He has had showings in Reno, San Jose, Sacramento, and Lake Tahoe, among other places. He is a favorite in the local art shows in Sierra County and Plumas County.

Should any of our readers wish to view Lee's works while they are in the Loyalton area, they can call his home, 916 993 4346, and arrange to view his many splendid and interesting canvases.









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## EARLY ANNALS OF DOWNIEVILLE AND VICINITY

By one of the Earliest Settlers

#### Number Four

In the last Chapter, the Annalist told of the early events in Onion Valley, Poor Man's Creek, and other localities in that region. He fills us in, now, on what went on in the Slate Creek and Canyon Creek areas, also north of the North Yuba. The next two chapters will recount in detail the opening up of the mines on Pliocene Ridge, south of Downieville.

After reading these first four installments of the Annals, I am sure you will agree that our "Earliest Settler" created a remarkable historical document of gold

rush days in the Downieville area.

-Wm. Pickiepocke

### Sear's Ridge

During the spring of 1850, when every person was on the "qui vive" to find new and rich diggings, an old sea captain of the name of Sears, started out prospecting on his own account. Getting belated one night on one of the spurs on the north side of the North Yuba, leading up to the dividing ridge between the waters of the Yuba and Feather rivers, he concluded to stop and camp on a kind of a flat, through which ran a ravine. On noticing, next morning, that where he had staked his mule, what appeared to be a few speks of gold, he filled his pan and tried it; the result was so satisfactory, he

concluded to stop and prospect further. Accordingly, he sunk quite a number of shallow holes, in all of which he

got good prospects. After prospecting a few days and obtaining quite a large amount of gold, he returned to his camp on the Yuba and told his partners of his success. He and his party then packed up, about the last of May, or beginning of June, 1850; but not so secretly, but what word got out that

struck diggings. tent which was to the very rotten leaves, Rumor, which of a story, had found pay a pound diem. His him depart. follow him. ingly did; his party and forbid progress. being willing thwarted. hills were as prospect in, as and there was

dispute of some

"old Cap. Sears had the amount or exnot known, yet up grass roots and gold was found !" ever makes the most reported that he diggings that would to the man per neighbors seeing determined to This they accordwhen Sears and turned on them their further The others not to be thus answered that the free for them to

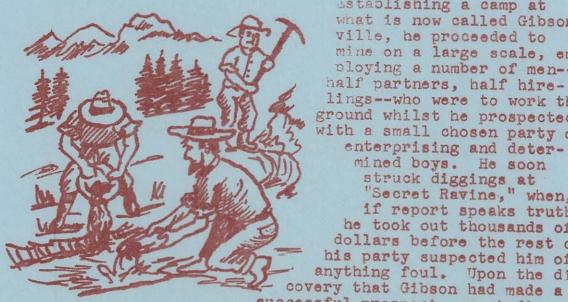
they were for him; every appearance of a consequence; when Sears! to strive against such

party, finding that it was useless to strive against such numbers, came to the compromise, that the others were not to divulge what they saw, and

they, on the other hand, would show them the diggings; only bargaining that the Sears! party should be paid \$100 per head, and be entitled to a double claim, in virtue of the discovery. The other party was headed by a man of the

name of Gibson. A spirit
of rivalry grew up between these two leaders, as to prospecting, which caused some of the most important discoveries of this section of country.

Sears' diggings being mostly of the order denominated surface, Gibson took his clue from this, and having crossed the Slate Creek--then only commenced to be worked--at, or nearly where St. Louis is now situated, soon found that his ridge was as rich, if not richer than Sears!



Establishing a camp at what is now called Gibsonville, he proceeded to mine on a large scale, employing a number of men-half partners, half hirelings -- who were to work the ground whilst he prospected with a small chosen party of enterprising and determined boys. He soon struck diggings at "Secret Ravine," when, if report speaks truth, he took out thousands of dollars before the rest of his party suspected him of anything foul. Upon the dis-

successful prospect, great dissatisfaction was manifested by those left behind in Gibson's camp, and his claims were immediately jumped. This brought about a row, when Gibson returned; but they told him pretty plainly that as he had played them false, they intended to work the claims, and if he did not like their proceedings to help himself. Gibson talked of shooting and using force, but they told him that if he killed but

the smallest boy in the crowd, they would certainly hang him. Gibson finding them resolute, abandoned his claims at once, and contented himself with reserving his rich claims in "Secret Diggings." He had the tact, for quite a long time, to deceive them as to their locality; and although they were but a short distance from his camp, to make them believe that they were located several days journey off. Accordingly whilst men were out in search of him toward the head waters

of Feather river, he was quietly, with his party making a large fortune.

Sears, in the meantime, was not idle. Setting his

party to work, he drew up the rules and regulations of a grand joint stock company, the great features of which were, that the company would divide equally, both miners and prospectors. Unity of feeling, however, as in all very large companies, did not long last, and a division took place in a short time; but not before the foundation was laid of quite a large number of camps. "Pine Grove." "St. Louis." "Chandler-ville," "Port Wine," "Poverty

Hill," "Brandy City," etc., were successfully struck, in the space of three or four years. This split in the company took place in the summer of 1850; and although it materially lessened the profits of Sears, was of some consequence to the public; for as fast as each party separated, they spread out through the different divides, striking diggings in all directions. Indeed I am not sure that any section of country, in the same scope, has ever been so rich as this has proved. "Port Wine" was, however,

struck unexpectedly by some packers accidently leaving a keg of port wine in the bushes. Some prospectors coming after, found it, after having broached it. went in search of water. As they found the ravine to have good gravel, they washed a few pans, and finding a good prospect located there, named the diggings "Port Wine." All these diggings were first called surface diggings; but as time grew on, they were worked down lower, the hills were tried, and after repeated failures, found to be rich.



In the years 1854 and 1855 I believe the first tunnel was run into the Saddle Mountain; but at first too high,

and they had to return three several times, in the basin was struck. soon after in the same as in the Fir Cap nita Hill, American in almost all the Pilot Peak and first at the Creek, and over Hopkins 1856, that was run last peaks. year also, rich quartz

by a French-

and commence again until the deposit Others followed mountain, as well Mountain, Manza-Hill, and, indeed, hills as far as Blue Nose; the head of Poormans the other beetling Creek. It was in the first tunnel in these two In the same an excessively vein was struck man and a Spaniard

in a very curious way. Being out hunting, the Frenchman fired at a bird on the divide, directly above the Slate Creek House, and missed it; but struck a piece of quartz,

which rolled down the hill. The Spaniard picked it up and found it to be richly studded with gold. This made them both hunt about, until a vein was found dividing the Slate Creek, immediately on the creek of the divide, which showed on the out-cropping, extremely rich. One piece about as big as an ordinary bar-room pitcher was broken off and carried to Pine Grove, which was about twothirds gold. A company of twelve was soon organized, and the Frenchman getting drunk, a Mr. Ship. of Pine Grove, induced him to sell his share to him for \$1600. As soon as he got sober he repented his bargain, and tried to induce



Ship to let him pay him his money back. -- Ship refused, and held on to his bargain, although many thought he ought not have traded whilst the Frenchman was drunk. Ship gave a Capt. Davis -- a hard charactor -- a share, to see after his own portion of the profits in the lead. Quite a large camp of Spaniards was soom collected on the flat at the head of Slate Creek, and, as usual when Spaniards congregate, much cutting and shooting began to take place. Davis, for some time, was very regular in his settlements



with Ship. However he managed his cards so well, that no one suspected him. Having collected some \$19,000 he suddenly one evening was among the missing, and as he had hitherto been very regular in his visits to Pine Grove, they began to fear that he had been waylaid and murdered; especially, as on enquiring at the Slate Creek House, Ship was told that he had started from there about 4 P.M. the day before. He was known to have a large sum with him, and was heard at the lead in loud altercation with the Spaniards. The neighbors were raised, and strict search made for him; but nothing was heard then of him. The miners now decided to break up the rest of the Spaniards at the camp on the flat. Accordingly, they were notified,

that no Spaniard, but those actually interested or at work on the quartz lead, would be suffered to remain there; and twenty-four hours was given for them to depart in. The Spaniards obeyed and left, and soon after the quartz gave out, and I believe is not now worked. It was months before anything was heard of Davis; but at last authentic news arrived that he had decamped with the gold, and made his way to Central America, where he was then settled.



Whilst I am speaking of this place, I will refer to a bloody murder which occurred at the Slate Creek House, in 1851. The story is that Mc-Donald, who then owned the house, one night got into a game of poker with his cook and three other men, miners in the neighborhood. Mc-Donald quarreled with the men and the cook struck him with a bar of iron, and the others finished him. They then buried him in a hole about three foot square, divided his money -- some \$400, only --

among themselves, and departed. The cook gave out that McDonald had gone below, to San Francisco; and he remained two weeks, keeping the house as usual. He however did two

things from which he was suspected. The first was he hired a man for \$3 to fell a tree in a particular direction which would have covered up the grave of McDonald, but the axe was dull, and the man desisted after a little, remarking he would be damned if he would cut a tree with such an axe. Whilst talking with him, the man saw some blood on the helve and remarked it was singular to have blood on the chopping axe. The cook



colored up, and stammered out something about chopping some meat with it. This incident led to inquiry about McDonald, and some of his friends wrote to the San Francisco papers to advertise for him. About this time the cook sent some money down to a lawyer, to send home for him. The lawyer having seen the advertisement, instead of sending home the money for him, came up to Pine Grove and made a statement. This roused the miners, and they determined to arrest the cook and the others who had been loafing around there. Accordingly, a crowd came over and arrested the cook, but found the others had gone home to their cabins on Canon Creek. They succeeded in arresting two others, but the fourth, resisting, and refusing to be taken alive, was shot in his tracks. A miner's court was then held on the principles of Judge Lynch, when it being proved, by the confession of two of them, that all were guilty, and having pointed out McDonald's grave, they were all sentenced, and hung inside half an hour. The bodies were left hanging in a ravine. about a hundred yards from the house, and next morning came near frightening to death a party of emigrants. who had arrived that night, and who were out hunting their mules.

### 1970 Membership News, Continued From Last Issue

The following people have become members of the Sierra County Historical Society since our last publication:

- 1. Ruth Drury, Goodyear's Bar, Ca.
- 2. Sierra Buttes Inn, Sierra City, Ca. 96125
- 3. Frances Guidici, 1322 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, Ca. 94709
- 4. Gwen Lynch Loyalton, Ca. 96118
- Clarence Bateman, Downieville, Ca.95936
- 6. Thelma Turner,
  Downieville, Ca. 95936
- 7. Sally Creviston, Downieville, Ca.95936
- 8. Attilio Lombardi Carnelian Bay, Ca.
- 9. Jan Cartwright, 182 Hillcrest Drive, Auburn, Ca. 95603
- 10. William J. Gott, Amos Alanzo Stagg High School, Stockton, Ca.
- 11. Norma M. Smith 743 Anderson Road, Davis, Ca. 95616
- 12. Phyllis Mitchell, Loyalton, Ca. 96118
- 13. June Barnum, 845 California St., San Francisco, Ca. 94108

- 14. Larry Fitzgerald, 1401 Jones St. #305 San Francisco, Ca.94109
- 15. Rev. M. Reed, Loyalton, Ca. 96118

Do you wish to purchase past issues of the Bulletin?
If you are one of the several members who have asked about the purchase of past issues of our Bulletin, you may purchase them from Mrs. Georgene Copren, Sierraville, California, 96126. Each Bulletin costs \$2.10. Following is a listing of Bulletins published thus far:

- Volume I, Number 1 " April 25, '69
  I. "Miles Goodyear-The History of
  Miles Goodyear" by Ruth Drury
  II. "Mines in the Sierra City Area"
- by Jeanne McMahan
  III. "Last of the Golden West-A
  History of the Golden West
  Hotel in Loyalton" by Edna Gottardi
  - IV. "News Items from the Sierra Democrat" by Ruth Drury
- Volume I, Number 2 June 10, 169
  I. "History of the Cattle Business in Sierra Valley" by Art
  Strang
- II. "History of Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception in Downieville" by Dave Lonergan
- III. "History of all the Post Offices in Sierra County" by Gladys Skinner
  - IV. "News Items from the Sierra Valley Record" by Norma White

Vol. I, Number 3 - Sept. 30 '69
I. Forest City Revisited by M. Stevens

II. Credo Quia Absurdum (The Clampers) by J. McMahan

III. Clamper Activities Related by Ross Taylor

Vm. Pickiepoche

Vol. I, Number 4 - Dec. 17, 169
I. History of Sierra Valley by
Joan Roth

II'. Catastrophy in Sierra City by J. McMahan

III. Early Annals of Downieville and Vicinity by Wm. Pickiepoche.

IV. Notes of Interest from the Sierra Valley News.

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All our members have Vol. II, numbers 1 and 2, so these are not listed.

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## REMEMBER REMEMBER REMEMBER

Your membership in the Sierra County Historical Society for 1971 will cost \$5.00. This fee is tax deductable. With your membership you receive three Bulletins during the year.

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The staff of the Sierra County Historical Bulletin wishes to remind our readers that the staff does not check on the historical acuracy of the articles submitted to us for publication. If any of our readers notice errors in our his-

torical facts, we would appreciate you letting us know so these errors can be corrected.

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The Staff of the Bulletin welcomes articles of interest on Sierra County or related areas.

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To be printed in the 1971 Bulletins will be the rest of the series by Wm. Pickiepoche, the hitherto unpublished accounts of the first Superintendent of Schools of Sierra County, a history of the Stampede Dam Area (now being covered by water from the dam), the hitherto unpublished notes of an authentic Sierra Valley hermit, and many more articles which we hope will be of interest to our readers.

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## NOTE NOTE NOTE NOTE

The Historical Society is now in the process of trying to get a museum in Sierra Valley--and remember, we have a museum in Downieville, so we beg our readers and any other interested people not to donate things of historical interest to Sierra County to other museums. Please:

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We wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas and we are sure all of you pray with us that 1971 will bring peace to our nation and to the world.

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## THE HANGING OF JUANITA

Editor's Note: The most horrifying and dramatic incident that happened during the short but turbulent history of Sierra Co. was the lynching of the Mexican woman, Juanita. Few accounts of the incident, whether present-day or contemporary with the incident, agree.

The Historical Society has collected several accounts of the incident, with all their intriguing differences, and presents them in the following article.

The only facts upon which all sources agree seem to be that a woman of Mexican or Latin American ancestory killed a man called Cannon in Downieville on July 4, 1851, that she was tried in a miner's court, that she was sentenced to be hanged, and that she was hanged from a gallows over or near the Yuba River, in the afternoon of July 5, 1851. From these facts, if even they be facts, has grown the legend of Juanita.

## THE LEGEND OF THE HANGING OF JUANITA

(The following account was told by Mrs. Amy Westall of Loganville. She first heard the story as a young girl in the 1870's, when she lived in the vicinity of Applegate, Ca. She subsequently moved to Sierra County and lived there for some sixty years. During this time she no doubt heard other accounts from "old timers" of the area, and putting them together, came up with her version of the legend, a version not necessarily historically correct, but a version repeated by many of the older residents of Sierra County during her lifetime.)

Downieville, California, was one of the wildest towns of the Mother Lode. All the towns of the gold rush era were wild, but Downie-ville had the reputation of being the wildest. The town itself, in 1851, was not too large, being a collection of tents, cabins, and a few buildings, all of which were clustered together on three separate flats, which were separated by the Downie and the Yuba Rivers.

There was a great celebration planned in Downieville for the 4th of July, 1851, and hundreds of miners from all the nearby mining camps poured into Downieville for the festivities. Some said that there were even thousands of miners from nearby camps who showed up on July 4, 1851, in Downieville. The celebration was to include an oration by a famous politican, who eventually became governor, other speeches by influential men of the community, and some type of a parade.

By noon of July 4, the hundreds of miners who had converged on Downieville had begun to drink in the many saloons in the town. The saloons were soon overcrowded and impromptu saloons were set up on the streets under any available shade. The whole town seemed to be one vast throng of men on a grand and glorious binge.

There lived in Downieville at this time a beautiful, young Spanish girl called Juanita. She lived with her husband or lover,

no one was ever sure which, in a cabin near the saloons. She was seen in the saloons with her Mexican sompanion, but was not a saloon girl, nor a prostitute. There were few women in Downieville at this time, and so Juanita was the object of lively interest on the part of the miners, but she was a good woman and was seen only in the company of one man, her Mexican companion.

As the evening of the 4th progressed, the miners became more drunk and disorderly. Some of them wandered in small groups, from place to place in Downieville playing practical jokes on people, practical jokes which often caused property damage. One such group was led by a popular miner of the region, a man called Cannon. He was reported to be one of the strongest men along the river, one of the most popular, and one of the best drinkers. During the late hours of July 4th, or the early hours of July 5th, Cannon and some others walked by the cabin of Juanita. Cannon yelled insults at Juanita and pounded on the door of her cabin. The terrifyed Juanita hid inside the cabin, expecting momentarily to be attacked, until Cannon

staggered away.

It is hard to realize the real terror of the poor woman, for she was a foreigner in a strange country, and she didn't speak English, the language of the local people. She was virtually alone, with only one other person of her race with her. There was a general animosity against any Mexican, because of the recent war, and anyone of Latin American heritage, whether he be an original Californian, a Mexican, or a person from Latin America, was considered Mexican. This alone would cause apprehension to any Mexican woman living in Downieville in 1851. The most frightening aspect of the evening must have been the lawlessness which prevailed as everyone celebrated the Fourth. There were those who said that Cannon had made advances toward Juanita previously in the day, advances which were repulsed by the proud and virtuous beauty, and that she feared Cannon more than any of the other drunken miners.

In the early morning of July 5, while most of Downieville was sleeping off the effects of one of the greatest binges in the history of the region, Cannon and some of his friends again visited the cabin of Juanita. Some say he went to appologize for his actions of the previous evening, and others said he went to further torment the poor, frightened woman. Whatever the reason, Cannon again pounded on the door of Juanita's cabin. The door flew open and Juanita leaped at Cannon, dagger in hand. She thrust the knife through his heart, killing him instantly, and he crumpled in a heap in front of

her door.

News of the deed spread like wildfire through the town and into the surrounding mining camps. In little time a gang of miners appeared at Juanita's door and took her and her companion into cus-The miners assembled in the area which had been the center of the Fourth of July celebration, and which had a platform. There was no thought of law in the minds of the miners that day. They hastily appointed a judge, a jury, and a prosecutor. Roaring for vengence, they dragged the helpless Juanita and her companion to the area of platform for her so called trial.

A few brave souls attempted to save the hapless Juanita from the grim and howling mob. A young lawyer pled to the mob to uphold law and not to bring dishonor on them all with the murder of Juanita. He was pulled from his speaking position, buffeted through the crowd, and chased out of town. A doctor Aiken told the mob that if they persisted in their foul doings, they would be taking two lives, not one, for Juanita was with child. The mob refused to believe the story of Aiken and insisted that Juanita be "examined" by other doctors. These men, whether doctors or not, retired to a nearby tent, and soon reported that Aiken had lied and that Juanita was not pregnant.

Their ghastly specticle stopped for a while, the mob now greedily demanded that Juanita should pay for her crime. The jury deliberated briefly and returned the verdict of "Guilty". The judge, acting with the same determination as the jury, sentenced Juanita to be hanged from the neck until dead at 4:00 p.m., that very day. Her companion

was acquitted and promptly run out of town.

Juanita was taken to her home to prepare for death. It was said that she asked for a priest to help her in her final agony, but even this she was denied. As she sat in her cabin awaiting her doom, members of the frenzied mob built a gallows from the bridge that crossed the nearby river. When all was ready, Juanita was led from her home. She dressed herself in her best finery, and wore a sombrero over her dark and lustrous hair. She walked through the mob proudly, showing no fear, but only contempt for these animals who would soon kill her. At the scaffold she was asked if she were sorry for what she had done. She replied that if she were treated as she had been treated, she would do the same again.

By this time hundreds of miners lined the banks of the river to watch the dreadful deed about to take place. Juanita mounted the gallows unaided. She saw someone in the throng who was an imagined friend, and to him she threw her sombrero. The hangman had not the nerve to place the dreaded noose around her lovely young neck, so Juanita, without hesitation, took the rope from his hands and placed it aroun her own neck. Then, looking straight shead, she said,

"Adios, Amigos," and plunged into eternity.

### And so, the legend of Juanita.

Historians, including people who actually saw the deed and wrote about it, have disagreed on exactly what happened, almost from the day of the incident. Many of the suppositions of the legend, under close historical scrutiny, are doubtlessly incorrect, and future historians, delving into hitherto unknown sources, will doubtlessly prove even more of the legend incorrect. But there will always be those who see a brave, frail, and beautiful girl, standing alone but proudly in front of her killers, who see a tragic but courageous woman mount the gallows and confront the silent mob, who see Juanita place the noose around her own neck and leap to her death—————for of such things, not history, but legends are made.

But what about history! What are the real facts? Who was Juanita,

if even Juanita was her correct name? What was done in Downieville, on July 5, 1851, at 4:00 in the afternoon? What about the points of controversy which have arisen over the years; such points as the place where Juanita was hanged, the real name of Juanita, the conduct of Cannon, the manner in which Juanita met her death? The reader can only read the several different accounts presented on the following pages and then draw his own conclusions.

THE HANGING OF JUANITA AS TOLD BY MAJOR WILLIAM DOWNIE, the man after whom the town of Downieville was named. This account, written by Major Downie, appeared in the book, "Hunting for Gold." It was published by the California Publishing Company, San Francisco, in 1893, under the title, "Reminiscenses of Personal Experiences and Research in the Early Days." This was subsequently printed in the Mountain Messenger, on April 20, 1961, and from this source is given to you,

#### LYNCHING A BEAUTY

It was the Fourth of July, 1851. The little town of Downieville was basking in the hot rays of the California midsummer sun; the atmosphere was oppressive and the only feature in the landscape that brought any relief to

brought any relief to the inhabitants of the beautiful valley of The Forks was the rippling of the waters of the rivers as they met on their way from the cool

The national holiday had arisen for the second time on the little settlement, to witness a great change brought about by the march of time. The community had become more settled



in regard to general organization and California had become a state of the Union. But for many years, even after that important event, the social conditions in these parts partock of the characteristics of border life. The population had increased and there were signs that many had come to stay, but the place was isolated, far from the center of law, order and protection, and so the people took the law into their own hands, when occasion demanded it.

On the Fourth of July, one year ago, a man had been flogged for wounding another with a knife. The offense, trial, and punishment had followed in quick succession, and the result had been that for many

months after the occurrence, all such lawlessness and violence had been in check.

It was therefore no wonder that the incident had impressed itself upon the community as a precedent worthy of note. It was not a spirit of revenge nor a craving for extreme punishment that prompted the community to adopt rigid measures on all occasions, it was simply a desire to enforce order and subdue any attempt to violence, as the only means of protection in a community where so many different elements had come together.

One year ago, most of the habitations were merely canvas tents. a few cabins forming the exception; now the latter had multiplied and in addition a few adobe houses had been built. These latter were introduced by the Mexican element which soon appeared on the California gold fields in all their different shades and mixtures

of blood, by which they are known.
In one of these adobe houses lived a Mexican whose name has long been forgotten, and who would personally never have been known save for his partner in the clay hut, a woman known as Juanita.

Whether she was his wife or not makes no difference in this story. She had come there with him and with him she shared the hardships of life in a mining camp. She cooked his meals, mended his clothes and otherwise added to his comforts, when he had an opportunity to indulge in any of the rough and ready life in the mountains only rarely allowing such luxuries. But most striking feature about Juanita was her personality. She was of the Spanish-Mexican mixture and the blood of her fathers flowed fast and warmly in her veins. She was proud and self-possessed and her bearing was grace-

ful. almost majestic.

She was, in the miner's parlance, "well put up." Her figure was richly developed and in strict proportions; her features delicate and her olive complexion lent them a pleasing softness. Her black hair was neatly done up on state occasions and the light in her eyes shone in various degrees, from soft, dove-like expression of a lovesick maiden to the fierce scowl of an infuriated lioness, according to her temper, which was the only thing not well balanced about her. Add to this that when dressed up, Juanita wore the picturesque costume of her native soil, in which rich laces and bright colors blended harmoniously, and it may be well understood that this women was known all through the settlement.

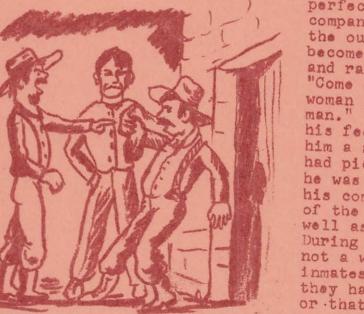
On this Fourth of July of which I am about to speak, the usual celebration took place throughout the mining camp of the Yuba. The pick and pan lay idle and the miners drank as usual on such occasions, until the air seemed hazy around them and numbers were hard to define. The row went on all day far into the night, and it was toward midnight when the last stragglers made for home to take a few hours sleep

before the rising sun should call them to labor again.

Among those returning at that late hour was a man named Cannon, who with a couple of companions had left the dram shop to go back to camp. They were all more or less under the influence of liquor, but Cannon was worst. He staggered along, every now and then stumbling over protruding rocks or knocking against the side of a cabin, and just as he came in front of the house in which the Mexican and the handsome woman lived, he again stumbled, and before his friends could stay him, had rolled through the rickety door of the adobe hut, into

and as one of the struck a light on perceived what had friend, he went in from the ground. said. "There's a house. Come along,

Cannon rose to doing so brought with kerchief, which he from the floor, but to throw it back by who hustled him out fixed the door as and made for home. of the proceedings, been spoken by the was supposed that slept through it all silenced them.



perfectly dark companions, who the outside, become of his and raised him "Come out," he woman in this his feet and in him a silk handhad picked up he was persuaded his companions, of the room, well as possible During the whole not a word had inmates and it they had either or that fear had

It was late the following morning when Cannon awakened after a heavy sleep. He had almost forgotten the incident of the previous evening, and when some of his friends, in the course of conversation, related to him the occurrence in which he had taken such a prominent part, he felt much concerned at having occasioned the scene described to him and at once resolved to offer a personal apology.

Cannon could speak Spanish and accompanied by one of his friends who had been with him on the previous eve, he went down to the adobe, but the man came to the open door and the two engaged in a conversation in Spanish, of which his companion could not understand much, but it seemed to him that the Mexican exhibited a good deal of anger. Presently, Juanita appeared by his side and the words grew louder and more excited. Seemingly, Cannon was attempting to smooth matters over and to pacify the two. The woman appeared more excited even

than her male companion, and Cannon evidently increased his exertions to arrange matters satisfactorily, speaking in a concilliatory tone,

but his words, whatever they were, proved of no avail, the woman giving vent to the most violent outburst of anger.

Suddenly she drew from the folds of her dress a knife, and quick as lightning, buried the blade to the hilt in the body of Cannon. It was the work of a moment and her victim fell, with one last groan, at the feet of the beautiful woman, who threw the knife dripping with blood, on the ground and withdrew with the Mexican into the house.

For a moment, Cannon's companion stood as if petrified. He had come for the purpose of witnessing a reconciliation and instead of that, a

hideous murder had been committed in his presence. The warm sunshine fell upon the prostrate body of his friend, whose blood was obzing out upon the sand, and it seemed for one moment, as if everything danced before the gaze of the bewildered miner. Then suddenly, realizing the situation, he turned away and made for the nearest camp to tell what had happened.

A short time sufficed to spread the report through the camps and claims. It seemed as if the very air had breathed the word "murder;" and soon the adobe house was surrounded by a mob of infuriated men. But somehow, during that brief interval, Juanita had found time to dress herself fit for a reception. Clad in her picturesque costumethe very best she had, with rings and armlets and spangles of precious metals, and above all, with her own personal loveliness, she met the men, who cried for vengeance, at the door, calm, deliberate, beautiful.

Under any other circumstances, no man could have resisted her exceeding beauty. The fierceness of anger had melted from her eyes; there was nothing left but an expression of perfect resignation and that haughty pride which was natural to her.

that haughty pride which was natural to her.

But the miners' law was "life for life." She was at once seized with her companion and the two were at once tried by a self-established court. One man only had the courage to take Juanita's part, a Mr. Thayer. He pleaded for the woman and denounced the mode of procedure in dealing with her, but he was quickly silenced by threats of violence

and even death.

"Hang the greaser devils."

"Give them a trial! "No. hang them now!"

Such were the shouts that filled the air. but the last suggestion of the companions was accepted and the trial began, then and there. Cannon's friend testified that there had been no intent to insult the woman, or in any way annoy her, and that the whole affair had been perfectly accidental and was merely the outcome of a drunken spree. He proved the regret the deceased had felt upon learning of the accident as demonstrated by his immediate step to make reparation.

The Mexican was found innocent and at once acquitted, and the unfortunate woman put up her defense that there was an intention of gross insult when Cannon broke into her house and that he used offensive language to her when he returned to the house, and that in the heat of passion she had committed an act, for which, under the circumstances, she was not to be convinced of innocence on her part. When the case closed they found her guilty of murder in the first degree and she was sentenced to death.

Never were the terrible words of such a sentence pronounced on anyone more composed than Juanita. She was apparently unmoved, her cheeks neither flushed nor turned pallid and she seemed quite satis-

fied to abide by the verdict.
Where now (1893) the suspension bridge crosses the river, an improvised gallows was hastily erected and thither Juanita was conducted, accompanied by a howling, blood-thirsty mob that cried for vengeance. She never broke down; nor even flinched.

Big Logan's services had been called into requisition -- it took a man like him to hang a woman -- but Juanita was of a different mind. was getting toward evening and sunshine fell upon the landscape; the Yuba ran its rushing course as usual; a little bird whistled in the wood; otherwise there was no sound save the humming of insects and the sound of the breeze. But on every claim the miner's tools lay idle, and the men had gone to feast upon the spectacle, the horrors of which they expected to surpass their own imaginations.

But Juanita seemed to be in perfect harmony with the surrounding Calm and dignified, she mounted the scaffold. Her hands were unbound, her loose, picturesque garment floating on the summer breeze, and her beautiful face looked into those of the vicious throng that

surged around her.

Then she spoke. Without a tremor, her soft, melodious voice told the story of the unfortunate incident that had brought her there in the light she viewed it. She declared that if she should live to be again provoked in the same manner, she would repeat her act, and when she finished, she turned to Big Logan and took from his hands the fatal rope.

There was a death-loke silence in the crowd, everybody wondering what she was about to do. Logan seemed involuntarily to surrender the rope he was supposed to place around her neck, and with her own

soft hands she placed the noose in position.

"Adios, Senors!" she said with a graceful wave of her hand, and ere the astonished spectators could realize what had happened, she had leaped from the scaffold into eternity. The sun set on Downieville.

The men, careless of siccumstances, assembled in the grogstores and spoke of the heroic woman, drank and then drifted into mining talk. But there was a blot on the fair name of Yuba which it took years to wash out. It was one of those blots that stained the early history of California, and especially the mining camps, until men and women grew up who were born and raised here during the crude age

of early days.

Then the dross and the gold became separated; then intelligence, industry and inguenity were allowed full sway, and this splendid generation, with the sterling qualities of their fathers running in their veins and the ennobling effect of more domestic conditions and educational facilities threw a veil over the past and raised California to the level of Christian civilization.

Note: Taken from the introduction in the book from which the above is quoted: It was only after repeated colicitations from his friends that Major Downie allowed his notes to be given out for publication. The material this provided was entrusted by the publishers to Mr. Chris M. Waage for compilation and revision. Mr. Waage is a journalist and literateur of some note and has spared no effort in order to present Major Downle's papers in most acceptable form, relating throughout the simple, modest way of retelling the story which characterizes the original manuscript. Editor's (of Mountain Messenger) Note:

In our personal opinion, the publishers were quite right in stating

that Waage was a literateur. Most writers, reporters, and newspapermen, given the fact that a woman was hanged, could "fluff it up with human interest and make it a good "story," and we think Waage did just that. We are inclined to believe his product is not totally that of Major Downie. It does not claim that Downie was an eye witness, nor even in Downieville at the time of the hanging; it gives no indication of location; it lacks names of participants or witnesses, which some others have mentioned, and seems without value in the quest to fix the spot at which Juanita met her end. In brief, we consider Waage's product a "story" concocted more than 40 years after, with the mellowing influences of time.

ANOTHER JUANITA ACCOUNT

The following account of the hanging of Juanita comes from the daughter of a man who had seen the hanging and had described it to his daughter. This was printed in the Mountain Messenger on May 4, 1961. Anyone interested in further information about this particular article can contact the Mountain Messenger office in Downieville.

#### "Downieville Tragedy Told by Woman"

There wasn't a prettier girl than Juanita, in rough little pioneer Downieville, but Downieville citizens hanged her just the same, one bright July afternoon in 1851 Annals of California's early roaring swashbuckling history tell conflicting tales of the beautiful Spanish girl's execution on the wooden bridge over the Yuba River.

Today, a Berkeley housewife, member of a pioneer Downieville family, retold the story as she had it from her father, an eyewitness. Mrs. Frank R. Wehe, 2421 Carleton Street, recalled that her father, the late Samuel Dana Hill, lived in the little gold rush town and saw the riotous celebration July 4, 1851, day before the double tragedy.

Saloons were jammed, her father told her, and all Downieville was swaggering and shouting. Big Jack Cannon, black-haired, laughing young miner, was as gay as his friends and decided to visit Juanita. Singing, the party of miners arrived at the girl's door. Cannon knocked; there was no answer. Before his friends could restrain him, he smashed his shoulder into the door. It burst open, and he stumbled and fell sprawling inside. The girl, suddenly awakened, screamed in terror, and big Jack's companions hurried him away.

The next morning, sober and ashamed, Cannon came back to the house, apparently to apologize. Juanita stood by the shattered door, her lover, a slender Mexican lad, by her side. Cannon approached. They talked amicably in Spanish for a moment. Then suddenly the girl drew a dagger from her dress and plunged it into Big Jack's breast, killing him.

Downieville, still groggy from the night's celebration, demanded revenge. A mob gathered, siezed the girl and her companion and led them before a makeshift court. The youth, in broken English, tried to defend her, but the mob threatened his life too. A young attorney tried to reason with the crowd, and was knocked down.

down.

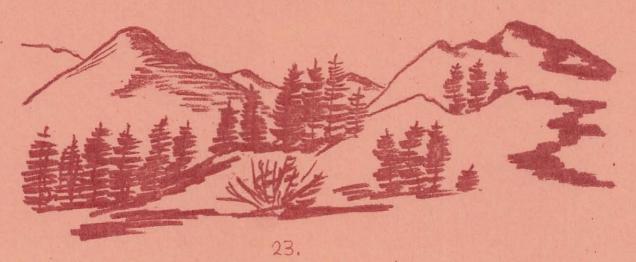
"In my country, girls are taught to defend their honor," she told her judges, "but if this is your law, I am not afraid to die." The mob laughed. A kindly physician, in a last desperate effort to save the girl's life, told the vigilantes that Juanita was an expectant mother, but the crowd was past reason. So the 22-year-old Spanish girl, tall, slender and proud, was led to a crude gallows on the old bridge. The hangman put the noose around her

Then, while thousands gazed curiously, so the story goes, she lifted her long, black hair over the noose and smoothed it down where the rope had tangled it. The platform was knocked away, and Juanita died.

Hill said the lynchers never learned whether or not they also had claimed the life of an unborn child. He was present when the doctor who had tried to save her began an autopsy.

Suddenly an earthquake shook the town. Lamps in the little room toppled over and the frightened witnesses ran. When they returned, the body was gone. Rumors said friends had buried her in a crude grave on the mountain, but no one ever really knew.

Note: The above account of the hanging of Juanita, while agreeing in many parts with other sources, seems more the child-hood imagination of a little girl than a factual account. No other sources mention an earthquake, and while that would be a wonderfully dramatic ending to the whole affair, it would seem that it never really happened, for others would have surely written about it. The report that the body of Juanita was spirited away to a secret burial seems highly suspect. Again, no other sources have mentioned this and it would be the type of dramatic incident that people would remember and comment upon.



PIONEER REPORT ON JUANITA

The following report is taken from the Mountain Messenger of March 23, 1961. The article was first published in The Pioneer, published in San Jose, California, on August 15, 1897. It is from an article written by one Captain Grippen, then in Lauderdale, Wisconsin, who was a witness to the hanging, and he titled the article, "Early Reminiscences of California Pioneers."

In looking over my life journal I find that 40 years ago I was located in Downieville, Sierra County, California, at the forks of the North Yuba River.

I was one of the first to arrive there in 1850, and with Major Downie, built the first cabin. The diggings proved very rich and soon a crowd consisting of miners, merchants, traders, saloonists, hotel men and gamblers erected a city, built mostly like early San Francisco, of cloth and pine shakes.

It did not turn out a mushroom city, but a stayer. Today it is one of the largest and most prosperous inland cities in the state. Here thrived many men and women who have since gained much notoriety. Joe McKibben, since senator and an active man in the famous Broderick deal, and Macay, now a bonanza king and millionaire, then worked in the Bluebank claim below the city.

Our first law-and-order organization was under the "Miners Code." We elected a man named Galloway as alcade or justice of civil cases, but crimes were attended to by Judge Lynch, as in the case of the Spanish woman who stabbed the miner on the Fourth of July. I have read many statements of this affair which were not quite correct, and some so entirely wrong that in this connection and as one of the vigilantes I will write the facts.

The woman was the mistress of a gambler. I was standing on the opposite side of the street and saw her strike the blow. The boys had come down early from the different diggings to celebrate. were hilarious, but not ruffianly and were all over the town. This man, a Chilean sailor, with others, came up the street singing, and as they were passing her door, he stopped and with a hand on each side of the door, saluted her in Spanish, "Buenos Dias," good morning. She quietly approached him and stabbed him through the heart. he fell backwards, and blood gushing over his naked breast; the weather being hot, his shirt was unfastened at the throat. Within 10 minutes the vigilantes had her before the inexorable Judge Lynch, who sentenced her to be hanged forthwith. A rope was thrown over the bent crossing the river bridge. A scaffold or platform placed on barres upon which she climbed unaided -- the noose was placed about her neck. She loosened the noose and pulling her hair outside of it, slipped the knot tight again under her ear. platform fell and she was hanged.

Another incident connected with this increased somewhat its importance. A young sprig of a lawyer who had just arrived presented himself before the vigilantes and offered his services to defend the girl. Misguided youth! The foreman kindly told him he had just 10 minutes to leave the town and never be seen again under pen-

alty of a hundred lashes.

He got out through the corwd as fast as he could, aided occasionally by heavy leather pushers on the feet of the miners, who began shouting, "Hang him, Hang him," He started to run and the excited crowd ran after him. A single log spanned the North Fork of the Yuba near Jack Craycroft's Saloon (now Fisher's Store) which was used occasionally in crossing the river to and from Jersey Flat. As he was close pressed, he undertook to cross on the log, but fell off, and was quickly carried down the rapids and was never seen again. Who he was or whence he came, no one seemed to know.

Note: Captain Grippen reports the murdered man as a Chilean sailor, not the Cannon reported in all other accounts. He, Grippen, is also the only account that actually admits to being part of an organized vigilante group, the group which evidently carried out the hanging.

# Earliest Known Newspaper Account of the Hanging:

From the Daily Alta Californian, San Francisco, July 9, 1851

"A Woman Hung at Downieville"

We are informed by Deputy Sheriff Gray that on Saturday afternoon a Spanish woman was hung for stabbing to the heart of a man by the name of Cannon, killing him insta antly. Mr. Gray informs us that the deceased, in company with some others had the night previously entered the house of the woman and created a riot and disturbance which so outraged her that when he presented himself the next morn ing to apologize for his behavior he was met at the door by the female, who had in her hand a large bowie knife, which she instantly drove into his heart. She was immediately arrested, tr-

ied, sentenced and hung at 4:00pm, of the same day. She did not exhibit the least fear, walking up a small ladder to the scaffold and placing the rope around her neck with her own hands, first grace—fully removing two plaits of raven black hair from her shoulders to make room for the fatal cord.



Some 500 or 600 witnessed the execution. On being asked if she had anything to say, she replied, "Nothing, but I would do the same thing again if I was so provoked."

On July 14, 1851, the  $\underline{\text{Daily}}$  Alta Californian had the following article:

"Hanging of a Woman"

The occurance which was published a few days ago, as having taken place at Downieville proves to be no fiction, as several papers supposed. John S. Fowler, Esq., who witnessed the frightful scene, describes the affair as reflecting infinite disgrace upon all engaged in it. The act for which the victim suffered, was one entirely justifiable under the provocation. She stabbed a man who persisted in making a distyphance at her house and had greatly outraged her rights.

The violent proceedings of an indignant and excited mob led on by the enemies of the unfortunate woman are a blot upon the history of the state. Had she committed a crime of really heinous character, a real American would have revolted at such a course as was pursued toward this friendless and unprotected foreigner. We had hoped the story was fabricated. As it is, the perpetrators of the deed have shamed themselves and their race. The Mexican woman is said to have borne herself with the utmost fortitude and composure through the fearful ordeal, meeting her fate without flinching.

The fact that Juanita met her death with honor is also borne out by the <u>Daily Pacific Star of San Francisco</u>, July 19, 1851:

"That same afternoon she walked out very quietly and amiable with hair neatly braided, stepped up to the improvised gallows and made a short speech in which she bade them all a cheerful farewell and said that she had no defense for her crime, save that she had been made angry by Cannon and would do the same thing again if she were to be spared. Then she adjusted her noose and cheerfully passed away."

# Eye Witness Account of the Hanging of Juanita

The following account of the hanging of Juanita was written by one George E. Tallman and was printed in the Oakland Daily Herald. The date of the article is obliterated, but it was probably written in 1874, as it was pasted in a scrapbook (belonging to Mrs. James Dugan) started in 1875. There seem to be only two copies of this newspaper (none dealing with Juanita) in the Bancroft Library. The account was previously printed in the Mountain Messenger on May 18, 1961.

## Lynching A Woman

"Episode of early California life. A Mexican woman hanged by an infuriated mob. A certain man with a white bandage on his head took an active part in the prosecution, aided by a young lawyer who thought to gain popularity with the miners. The trial lasted four hours; a rope was thrown around a small enclosure like a prize ring, and every now and then the crowd would make a surge, breaking down

the ropes and interrupting the proceedings.

Nobody found the courage to face the furious mob and speak for the woman, who sat with the stolidity and firmness of an Indian warrior in council. The Hon. John B. Weller, who was then making a canvass of the state, and looking out for his interests as a candidate for the United States Senate, was at the hotel overlooking the lynch court, and was besought to go out and speak to the people, but he was afraid. She was found guilty, sentenced to be hanged, and given four hours to prepare for death.

The prisoner had borne herself with the stolid fortitude belonging to her race. In the interval, the doomed Juanita made her

verbal will, gave away her little property for the use of various friends, and was ready for the awful moment when men tremble and pray; but so did not that little incarnation of humane heroism as she looked out at the preparation for , the scaffold.

The gallows were constructed on a bridge over the Yuba River, at the lower end of town. In the middle, the bridge had two uprights and a beam overhead -almost a ready-made scaffold--from one post to another, about four feet of flooring; the rope and the noose were in place; a stepladder was procured for the prisoner to ascend the scangling which answered the purpose of a rude trip. The prisoner and her few terrified friends came down the street in a melancholy little company, and upon the bridge up to the foot of the gallows. There Juanita shook hands with and took leave of her friends, and ascended the ladder with a firm and agile step.

Standing on the narrow scantling, while a dead silence prevailed with the vast crowd of spectators, she took off her hat which she had borrowed to wear

to the gallows, and deliberately and skillfully shied it over the heads of the crowd to its owner; the had was a straw, and sailed on the wind as pasteboard cards do when thrown. Then she twisted up and fixed her long hair, smoothed down her dress, placed the noose around her neck in a proper manner, and raising her hands, which she refused to have tied, said in a clear voice; "Adios, señors!"

The signal was the firing of a pistol. Two men stood with axes to cut the rope and let fall the scantling upon which the woman stood. In his trepidation, one of them missed his aim and failed to

creature lodged in her fall. There was a cry of horror from the crowd, with fierce oaths at the awkwardness of the accursed hangman; but another blow dropped the timber and the body swung. The rope was new and commenced untwisting, the body swirling around, until many spectators turned away, deathly sick at heart. But in a few minutes Juanita was dead.

This terrible scene was witnessed by most of the few women who had then come to the place, and two of them had their children in their arms; and it is not long since we read the marriage notice of one of these infant spectators, now a beautiful and accomplished

young lady.

The body of Juanita was at length taken down and carried to her poor abode, where it was hoped to revive her. A clapboard was torn off to give air; but when it was given out that she was not dead, the brutal crowd rushed in, surrounded the house, and swore that if not dead, she should be hanged again! But Juanita was beyond the reach of their vengence; darkness came on the still friends,

many of the wretches stayed around the house all night.

On the following day, Cannon and his slayer were buried near together on the hillside, and their half-obliterated and forgotten graves may still be found, if indeed the gold seekers have not disembowled and washed away that primitive cemetery. We saw the graves and their faded inscriptions as late as 1862.

Conclusion: About five years

Conclusion: About five years ago, when ascending the Feather River to Marysville, we heard that a man was dying on the lower deck, and on going to see, at once recognized the man with the white

handkerchief or bandage on his head, who had been a leader of the mob 15 years before, when the woman was hanged in Downieville. He was dying miserable and friendless, and his remains were left in Yuba City. We forgot his name; but he was the identical leader of the lynch court, so we afterward ascertained.

The young lawyer who led the prosecution, afterwards ran for the legislature, but was always beaten because of his participation in the shameful affair, and, about 10 years ago, he was killed by Indians in Nevada Territory. Nearly all the prominent actors in the tragedy are dead; some of the spectators are in San Francisco.

This, we believe, is the only accurate and circumstantial account of that tragic affair that has ever been given to the public by an eye witness. For many years it was regarded as a stigma on the character of Downieville; but the chief actors and many of the spectators have long since passed away from the scene.

Geroge E. Tallman.

The following poem was written by Mr. George Barton of Downieville, who reportedly witnessed the hanging. It was printed in History of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties, California by Fariss & Smith.



"They placed her high upon the stand, Calmly she sat, no tear, nor frown, Nor quivering lip, nor trembling hand Shook; but silent, looking down, She viewed the scene of hate and strife, Heard maddened voices cry aloud That she must die, and life for life Seemed the watchword of the crowd.

"With hurried forms they held a court, The judge elected, jury sworn; It seemed but as a mocking sport, For she would die before the morn. Was there no man dared to defend, And help a woman's life to save? A stranger tried, a humane friend—He sank beneath that angry wave.

"The sun had passed its noonday line,
The jury from the scene retired,
And thousands in that solemn time
Seemed calm, and yet their hearts were fired;
And pity dwelt in scarce an eyeBut silence! hear the verdict read:
The prisoner's GUILTY, and must dieHung by the neck till she is dead.

And still her face seemed more serene. Than all that sea of faces there; Before she left this earthly scene She begged for time to plead in prayer. 'Twas given--her bosom heaved no sighs, Nor fluttering pang, nor bated breath; No tear bedimmed her keen, black eyes, She knelt to pray, not fearing death.

"The sun sank low down in the west,
And tinged with gold each mountain ridge;
The crowd closed in and eager pressed
Onward towards the fatal bridge
That spanned the rapid mountain stream,
And thousands darkly lined each shore;
The noose was dangling from the beam,
Her dream of life would soon be o'er.

"Gayly she climbed the fatal pile;
To one she knew, with graceful bend,
Flung him her hat, and with a smile,
[Adois,] Amigo'--good by, friend;
And pressed the noose beneath her hair,
And smoothed it down with steady palms:
Like making up her toilet there,
Ere death embraced her in his arms.

"Her face enwrapped and limbs close tied, The handkerchief clasped in her hands To give the signal ere she died--A moment silent thus she stands; It dropped--a shot rang on the air, The plank fell from beneath her feet, A woman's lifeless form was there, Her soul had sought the mercy-seat.

"Stern winter brought its angry flood
That madly rushed towards the sea;
That bridge went down, and yet the blood
Stain lingers; it will ever be
A mark--no matter where the blame-To point the finger toward the spot,
When every witness, ay, each name,
Are unremembered, all forgot."



#### Editors Comment:

While we have attempted to give our readers several different accounts of the hanging of Juanita, we remind our readers that there are several more accounts of the incident in circulation. We would call attention to two of these as being of special interest.

Mr. William B. Secrest has published a fine pamphlet on the hanging. It is titled, Juanita, and published by the Saga-West Publishing Company, 752 Fulton Street, Fresno, California, Mr. Secrest's account, some 31 pages long, has excellent back-ground information, fine pictures of Downieville and the surrounding area, and raises several interesting points of information. Mr. Secrest's research indicates that the real name of the girl was Josefa, not Juanita, and that the name was changed through the years to Juanita. Mr. Secrest's sources also indicate that there was an attempt to save Juanita, on the part of gamblers in a saloon near her cabin. This attempt failed as the angry mob found Juanita and took her from her would be protectors. The Secrest account names the lawyer who tried to help Juanita as a Mr. Thayer. It also mentions a Mr. Fair who tried to help, so there were at least some brave souls in Downieville that dreadful day. Mr. Weller, later to be prominent in California and national politics, was not a brave soul-he refused to speak in behalf of Juanita or even attend her trial, according to Mr. Secrest's research.

Another account of the hanging appears in the History of Plumas, Lassen and Sierra Counties by Fariss and Smith. This account, published some thirty years after the hanging, is very interesting to read, although, unfortunatly to the historian, it gives no sources for its information.

A controversy has long existed in Downieville among history buffs as to the exact location of the bridge or gallows from which Juanita was hanged. Many contend that there was no bridge, but a log across one river and a footbridge across another, and that the gallows must have been erected near the river, but not on a bridge.

The location of Juanita's grave is unknown. She was reportedly interred in the cemetery, but the cemetery at that time was located roughly where the present high school is built. Some contend that bodies were moved to the new cemetery (now over a hundred years old) while others contend that the first graves are still under or near the present school house.

Special thanks is given to Mrs. Ruth Drury of Goodyear's Bar for having compiled much of the information in this story of Juanita. Mrs. Drury is a frequent contributor to our Bulletin and is manager of the Sierra County Museum in Downieville, California.