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SIERRA COUNTY

HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

HOW IT
REALLY WAS
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VOL. 4 - NO. 3

DEC. 19, 1972

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 19, 1972

VOL. IV, NO. 3

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Contents:

I. The Unpublished Diary of an Early Day Downieville Miner

The Historical Society has chosen to devote this entire issue to the diary. This was done because of the length of the Diary.

We wish to thank Mr. Leland Cross for the art work in this article. This is the third year that Mr. Cross has illustrated one of our bulletins, and we hope this is a tradition that continue in years to come.

Editor: Milt Gottardi, Loyalton, Calif.
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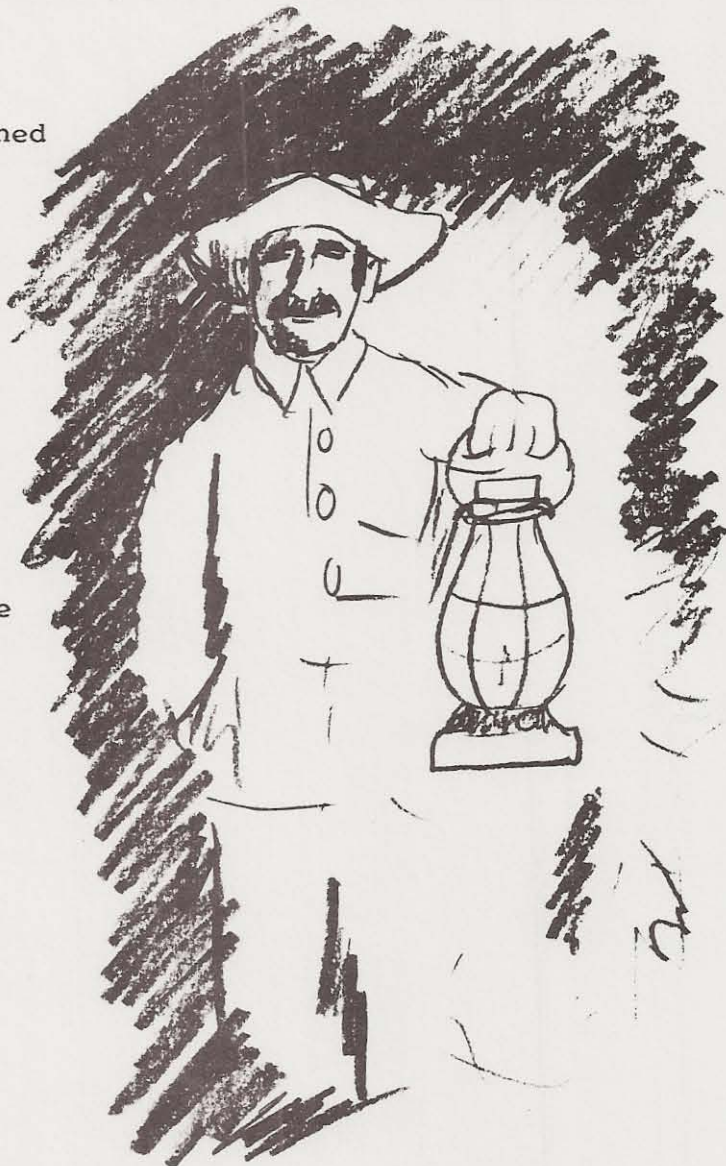
The Hitherto Unpublished Diary of an Early Day Downieville Miner

Part III

The Sierra County Historical is pleased to bring to its readers the third part of the diary of a miner of the 1850's. This Diary has never before been published. We again wish to thank Mrs. Marian Lavezzola, Sierra County Treasurer, for allowing us to print this diary; a diary found in an old family trunk. We would also like to again thank Mr. Harry Klein and his Sierra County History Class at Loyalton High School for doing the painstaking job of translating the diary from the original script into this typed form. Lastly, thanks to Mr. Klein himself for preparing this article for reproduction.

Tuesday Sept 30, 1856

Cleaned the riffle box & weighed the gold that I obtained from that with that which was creviced out yesterday & found as the result of the days labor thirty four dollars by weight I mention it because it was much better than I Expected. The rock was hard & smooth nearly all over but once in a while we would find a soft place where we would generally find pay. We found considerable to day mostly in crevices or in seamy rock It is all very hard & requires a sledge & bar to open it. Had no trouble with Either of the pumps during the day but I went out to the diggings just after Eating supper & found that the middle wheel was stopped & backing nearly all of the water out of the flume. The consequence was that the diggings were covered with water to the depth of six feet in some places. I got it to going right again & started for town leaving the pumps & C. in the care of the boys. I arrived in town just in time to hear the beginning of Scott's speech to the Democract at the Buck & Breck club. He is one of the candidated for congress. He was very hoarse and unable to speak loud but he made a veryable speech. He was followed by Bradford one of the Electors for Buchanan. He finished before nine oclock when a theatrical performance was to begin. I put a light in my lantern & started back.--When I got up found Peter & Frederick out at the wheel fixing it.



Wednesday October 1st 1856

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Was so weary when I lay down that I slept till daybreak without waking. Then I arose & went out to the diggings to see if the wheels had stopped again after I left them last night. Fortunately they were going properly & Had the water out Entirely. We washed a little dirt in the forenoon. Cleared off a place for a dam, about seventy five feet above the one we built last. Made nothing to day. Had two men digging dirt for the new foot dam. a track for wheeling & built part of the walls for the dam. The belt of the upper pump gave way in the afternoon. The belt was entirely worn out. fortunately we had new canvass and I went to work to remove the elevators from the old belt & place them on the new canvass. did not get it completed. "When it rains it pours." Shortly after the upper belt gave way the lower one broke. The diggings are filling up rapidly which I expect will trouble us in making the dam tomorrow. This middle pump will give out soon perhaps to night.

The weather continues warm yet. Our house is warmer now than I have felt it before this season-- reading Walter Scott's "Annex ? of Gusstien?". Had to bake & boil beans this afternoon.

Thursday October 2nd 1856

Got up a little earlier than usual. Went out immediately to see if the wheels were going properly--or wheel rather as there was only one running. A great part of the diggings were filled with water, had to build part of the wall for the dam under water. The water is getting to be cooler than it was one month ago. I finished the band for the upper pump & got the pump to working in the forenoon. Finished building the walls for the dams & wheeled most of the dirt for the same before noone. After dinner took all of the boxes down & carried them farther up. two of the men were in pretty deep water, Peter was nearly up to his neck. he was frightened & cried out for help. Set the Sluices again with the riffle box on the newfootdams & began washing before night. Worked till the sun was quite down & dusk was beginning.

Have now worked about one hundred & thirty feet of the river in a little over two months. Have three hundred feet left yet below the head dam & at this slow rate will not get through with it this year. The part which we have worked has barely paid Expenses. I hope that the part which we expect to work yet will do something more. my mind is constantly on home The longer I remain away the more anxious I am to return--

Friday October 3, 1856

The weather has changed, last night was cool & so was the day, the air is growing colder to night.

Peter requested leave of absense for two days, there is to be a Ball at Goodyears Bar to night & he engaged to form part of the band--he went off this morning. As soon as I had the fire built I went out and started the wheels. We found the bedrock close to the surface cleaned off a little of it, gold very fine and not much of that. We succeeded in getting a good dam for once. there is any leakage at all through it Our facilities for washing are more than twice as good as they were before we lowered the boxes, Expect to get along a little faster than we have before this. I would like to be thought now. We should be soon have rains & then cold weather. It will be unpleasant to work & but little will be accomplished in a day. Our fine weather must be over now. I couldnot help thinking of home. I want to leave here & go there if possible in the first month of the coming year.

Saturday October 4, 1856

Plenty of frost & some ice I believe at least the boys reported some in the boxes, nearly froze my hands panning out, had a tolerable fair yield for yesterdays labor. When I went to the diggings again after being in the house to weigh the gold found that the new dam had given way in my absence and as a consequence the pump had a good deal more than it could do so the hole was rapidly filling up. We took crow bars & punched holes from the top down to the bottom of the dam and by perserving for about two hours succeeded in stoppong the leakage. We found a hole near the dam which had been worked out pretty clearly for us. The bed rock looked well and from the appearance of the place I suppose that it must have paid the first explorers of it well. The rock is high on the side where we now are and generally soft, the gold is fine, -Quit work a little earlier than common I was to wash out to night, left the boys to get supper, It was quite dusk before I finished panning out, will be cool again tonight.

Sunday October 5, 1856

Was awakened at Early dawn by the arrival of Dunbor who had just come from his claims above here on his way to Downieville & from there Forest City & thence Grisly Fort in quest Tone Charles Houston whom he wanted to engage to work for his company up here on the river. He said that in the lower Company where Yarrington is at work they took out about four hundred dollars last week----I got out of bedsoon after he left and found it very cold. A heavy frost. Built a fire-I set by reading "Anne of Gierstion"-read two chapters before I called the boys to breadfast, got ready for town. Took three picks with me to get sharpened.

Arrived in town in time to recieve some papers from the P.O. in the forenoone, there were no letters for me. A. S. D. came up while I was at the P.O. & was very friendly or at least seemed to be so, but as I have discovered long since that his smiles are holow & his professions of regard were hypocritical, I do not place any confidence in anything that he says and does. he could smile while holding in his hand a dagger to stab the person he whished to injure to the least. Was home before night.-----

Monday October 6, 1856

It was so cold in our open house that I had Dennis fix it up yesterday by taking old canvas & stopping the holes making & in consequence the house is now much warmer than it was & we all slept warmer last night. I was out this morning and had the wheels running soon after daybreak. Peter came home in the night. When we went out to work after breakfast the pumps had the water nearly all out. Cleaned off some rock but did not see much gold- the rock is quite difficult to clean well, it is soft and brakes up easily to a great depth. The sky which looked so favorable for rain last night was clear today, a few clouds visible this Evening. The rain may probably hold off yet a good while- Have had a head ache since the middle of the afternoone will not read any to night. Have read a criticism in the N. Y. Tribune on Everson's "English Character"- In the description given of the Englishman as applied to the people generally I think I see my own character as it is known to me.

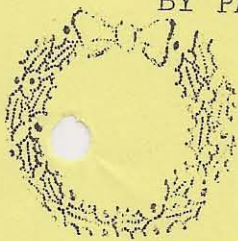
Have coffee to brown yet before going to roost- As I have often remarked previous to this, I can not help thinking of home and family- Sometimes I think that I ought to go there when I finish this claim money or no money. I can't tell yet. two months from this will better tell the story-

MERRY CHRISTMAS

MERRY CHRISTMAS

MERRY CHRISTMAS

THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY COMMENDS TO OUR READERS AND MEMBERS THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS WHO ARE HELPING THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY BY THEIR GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT---AND WE WOULD HOPE THAT MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY WOULD REPAY OUR SPONSORS BY PATRONIZING THEM WHEN THEY ARE IN SIERRA COUNTY:



THE SPONSORS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WISH ALL THEIR CUSTOMERS A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A WONDERFULLY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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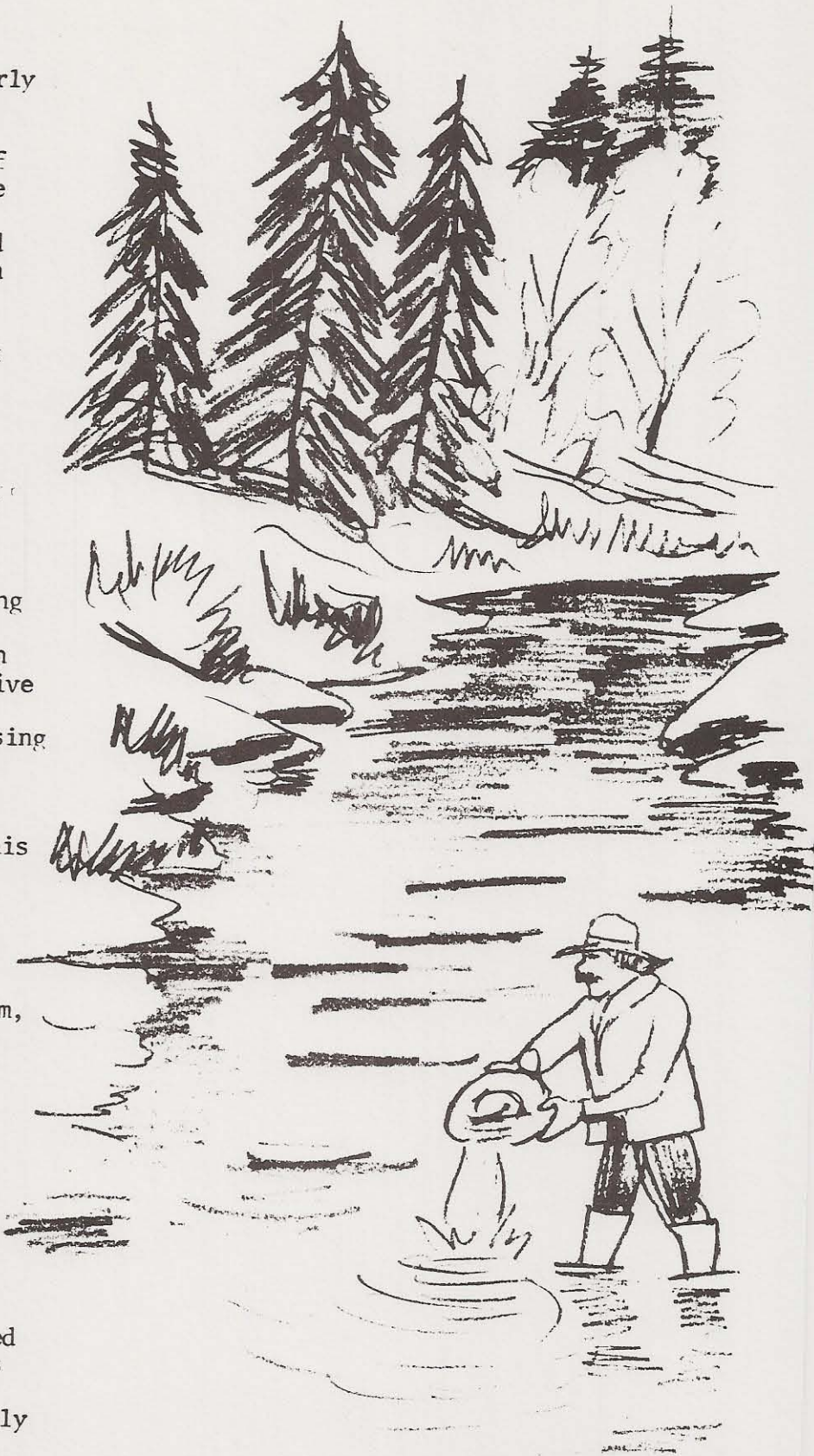
Tuesday Oct. 7 1856

Was very cold in the early morning. Ice in the boxes & bucket, found it very cold panning out. had two pans of dirt to wash and nearly froze my hand in the operation-- clouded up during the day and about middle of the afternoon began to sprinkle. George Macy called here in the afternoon. He is not at work on the Flat below here this week. I would have engaged him but have too many men already to permit me to engage more especially when those that I have can hardly work for want of room. He went off to the Middle Fork to see if he could do something there. The sun was entirely obscured in the afternoon & in fact nearly all day & about five o'clock it began to rain at first lightly but kept increasing until it fairly showered. We kept at work however thinking that possibly it might be the last we would be able to do this Fall. Did not clean up the riffle box to night nor did I see as much gold as yesterday as I am very loathe to quit the river now or before I have finished working the claim, but if the river rises & takes the flum away I must bow to the decrees of fate.

Wednesday October 8th, 1856

It was raining when we retired to rest & still raining when we arose from our slumbers--- The wind blew tremendously too during the night. My bed which is fastened to one side of the hut shook as if affected by an ague fit.

The wind raised considerably during the night, the wheels were going with great speed when I first saw them this morning. As it was raining then & threatened a rainy day I stopped the wheels to see the wear & tear on the belts.



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gave the boys directions to get breakfast and again went out to the diggings and panned out the upper Riffle which holds about two pans of dirt, the water seemed to be warmer than it was yesterday, did not get as much gold as yesterday--

The clouds dispersed in the forenoon & the day has been fair since with the Exception of an occasional shower. Frank took his boots to town to get them repaired. I sent the large crowbar with him to get sharpened. Frederick has also been down this afternoon, Its growing cool tonight--will freeze hard I expect.

Thursday October 9, 1856

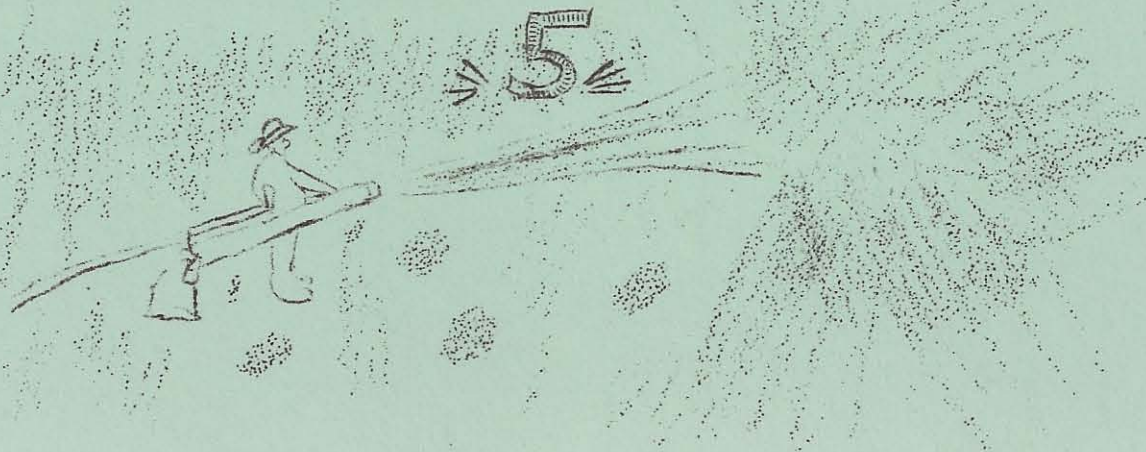
The night was clear and frosty, no sign of storm, snow on the tops of the mountains, Which makes the air cooler down here in the valley. I slept cold anyway notwithstanding an unusual quantity of coats pants & woolen shirts thrown over my blankets. I was up at break of day, was out at work in very good season which is now and at so early an hour as it would have been two months since---- had some trouble with the lower pump. When I made my first examination of the diggings after getting out of bed I saw that the band was slipping on the drum and the wheel going with great speed. I stopped the wheel and left it till after breakfast when I would have assistance to remedy the made several ineffe dual attempts to get the pump to work properly but finally succeeded. No gold of any consequence found today. Cleaned off considerable bedrock but the gold had never been ther or had been secured when the ground was first worked----

George Scholes came along in the afternoon with a double barrelled shotgun in search of squirrels & a mining claim. Shot at one squirrel and missed it. Of the result of his search for a good claim I am not advised----

Friday Evening October 10 1856---

The cold was so severe in the morning that I could hardly Endure it long enough to pan out & then my hands were nearly frozen when I finished. The cold is not really so severe but owing to the great change of temperature which has taken place within a few days so that the air which we call cold or freezing to day will in a few weeks if it continues be able to endure without any trouble. The pay is not so good as it ought to be considering the amount of labor already performed and the anxiety which any person would suffer while working a claim alone without a single person to rely upon for confidence or trust----

About middle of afternoon as I was engaged with the men cleaning up the rock I heard what I supposed to be the roar of manywaters butonlooking up saw only a small brook tumbling itself down into the diggings which it speedily filled to the depth of several feet despite the efforts of the lower pump to keep it out. The upper pump was fatigued I suppose for the wheel refused to turn & by stopping threw the water out of the flum thus causing the flood-- I soon had the wheel agoing again properly but the water was not out of the hole before night. the sun shone verywarm to day---



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Saturday October 11th 1856---

Discovered a leak in the head dam. it was an old leak sprung out afresh. the quantity of water was increased so much in the diggings that the lower pump which during all of the week had nothing hardly to do. was unable to keep the water low enough to permit us to work to advantage. after dinner we carried some boxes to the upper end and made a shoot to run dirt from the high bank above the river into the dam in order to stop the leakage if possible, succeeded in stopping a portion of it but could not stop all. Returned to our mining again. While we were at supper George Macy came up to have us accompany him to town. Peter & I went down each carrying a load of picks to get sharpened. George volunteered to carry the crowbar. After settling butchers bill for the week past & doing some little trading, went to the Theatre building and heard an excellent stump speech by Mr. W. W. Hawks of San Francisco his manner of speaking was not pleasing to some, but his argument was finely arranged & dressed in beautiful style Some of his periods were splendid. he was preceded by Col. Taylor who made a short speche. After the meeting I bought the October number of Hutchings Cal. Magazine & mailed it to my sister Catharine, have since ret'd home with a load of tools---

Sunday Oct. 12th 1856

Got out of bed as I supposed on rising at a late hour but on looking out discovered to my agreeable surprise that it was only a little after Sunrise. As I was in town last Evening and did all of the business necessary for this week. so to day I remains at home all day. There is hardly such a thing as rest on Sunday for there is always so many things to be attended to that one is kept busy nearly all of the time. To day after washing my shirt & myself & cooking pretty extensively managed to get a little time to begin to read Scotts novel entitled "Castle Dangerous" Dunbar came here in the Evening & stopt for supper.

Davis also came up as we were eating supper to have me write a letter for him to his wife in Virginia. He is unable to write or read writing but he seems to be intelligent enough otherwise.

I think that a man of ordinary intellect hardly deserves the breath he is permitted to draw There is no excuse save that of decrepitude for such a waste of natural gifts--

Monday October 13th, 1856

On Saturday last we were troubled with an unusual quantity of water which the pumps were unable to through out, for the greater part of the day we had no trouble but about four oclock the water began to come down by the upper pumps running in the lower pump in such quantity that it very soon raised to the height of one foot, thus driving us partly out as we were cleaning bed rock lower than the pump--

A heavy frost, but quite warm at noon, when the sun seemed to shine with unusual vigor--



Yesterday the sky was clouded & I thought was going to rain soon. to day there was no such appearance.

Have a head ache to night & feel sore in my side & back nearly as stiff as an old horse--Reading "Castle Dangerous" in which I have advanced nine chapters since yesterday. like all of those celebrated novels it is written in beautiful style, containing the most delicate and noble thoughts,--

Tuesday October 14th 1856

The river was very high in the forenoon, so that the water splashed over the flum in many places. it was occasioned by the Empire Ditch bringing water from the Middle Fork.

Our head dam leaks a good deal. the canvass which was spreadover the plank before the dirt wasputon has decayed & in some places lets the water through. I tried to stop some of the leakage there with old canvass but in the attempt wasbroughtomined of the old adage that "theremediyis worse than the disease." In the forenoon Perter rec'd a visit from an old acquaintance whom he hadnotseen in fifteen years. he promised his friend to go in town this Evening & has gone accordingly. The butcher of whom we have been getting our supply of meat during the season passed along the trail to day without stopping so that we will have to do without beef until Friday unless a supply can be procured somewhere else. Was warn at noon & not to cold to night. Verypleasant october weather. Baking bread & bioling beans.

Wednesday October 15th, 1856

Have been in the habit of reading in bed lately. after finishing myordinary labors I generally feel pretty well worn out therefore thind I can read while I am resting & do considerable of both before I am sleepy. last Evening I read the latter part of "Castle Dangerous" which is by far the most interesting part of the work, though some of it has the power to excite that breathless interest which makes us to forget the whole world beside while we are immersed as it were in its thrilling pages-but the descriptions that Scott give us we generally feel to be true while there Breathes an air of discourse of dignity & Even wisdom which makes us admire love & revere the illustrious author--

As our beef man did not come yesterday I supposed that his design was to have me go tothe trail for the beef & thus save him the trouble of walking down here but about ten oclock he cane along with the usual quantity of beef & informed me that he had changed his days for packing on the Fork-

Thomas D River & his brotherinlaw came up in the forenoon to look out for diggings. Thomas was here two years ago when he make a good deal of money. he has since then been in Los Angeles County living with hes brotherinlaw & farming- he was one of the first of my acquaintances on the East Fork- clouded up this afternoon will probably rain to night.



Thursday October 16th, 1856

Was very cloudy in the mornign, but became clear towards noone when the sun showed him self for a time but was consealed the remainder of the day, is quite warm to night. Expect rain soon perhaps it will come to night. I did more work today than usual. noperson came to hinder me & without seeing much gold I kept very busy cleaning off some rock. There is generally some fixing to be done somewhere, Either about the wheels, pumps, boxes, damorflume or Else cooking that in attending to those things I am obliged to neglect the pick & shovel. The season is far advanced. a heavey rain may come soo,

raise the river & drive me out I begin to fear it. I have not worked half of the ground yet & do not know if all will pay but want to try the whole of it if the weather will permit.

In the summer of 53 when Osborne & I were together in mining we had made considerable money before this time and a few days after this he left home for the Atlantic States. since then I have not advanced in the road to fortune, but what money I have made I have always been obliged to expend- Began to read the "Decline & Fall" read the 1st chap last night & the second this Evening--

Friday October 17th 1856

the rain was falling so quietly and gently in the morning that I was not aware of the Exlstence moisture of any storm until I had gone outofdoors. We worked about half of the forenoone by which time we were nearlywet through the skij, a large quantity of water fell in the forenoone In the afternoon it moderated a little & came down in showers, one was a veryhardone. the man that was here with Thomas D River a few days since called here afternoon to shelter themselves from the rain, we had been to dinner but offerd them bread and butter which was all that we had. they stayed until the sun came out when they went off to town the three that is Tom & his brotherinlaw & Alfred Weher have bought A. S. Dodson's house on the Flat below Miotts. They inted to move up their on Monday. they have located partoof the ground on which the house stands & will begin mining with a hydraulic pipe--

Wrote to Mr. Saml. H. Taylor in answer to his letter of the 5th inst-- About four oclock took three picks and a crowbar to the blacksmight shop this side of towne. Called at the P. O. no letter for me. read four Tribunes & Harper for October-- made a few purchases & arrived at home with my tools sometime after dark. found the Band in full blast. Peter with the Trombone & the rest singing.

Saturday 18 October 1856

Was still cloudy in the morning but quite ware We worked the whole day. it threatened rain nearly all day but did not- have been picking upbedrock it is very difficult to clear off. has to be broken or split up & sometimes the seams
sible



go down four or five feet. Want to build another back dam as soon as possible & then will take out part of the flum so that if a storm & flood does come afterwards & sweep off the dam and upper part of the flum we will have the lumber in the river secured & can build another flum with it if I wish to do so.

Been looking at the papers which I read last Evening. Have the latest N.Y. Herald & four N.Y. Tribunes. all filled with politics, speculations on the fate of the county if certain parties are successful or defeated. Will not have to read a chapter in "Decline & Fall" tonight-Sky all clouded up probably will rain tomorrow.

Sunday Eve October 19th 1856

It was cloudy but concluded to work not withstanding, there was some rain in the forenoon. Mr Bassett called here in the forenoon & stopt several hours. He is a man of considerable intelligence & better informed on general subjects than sic any other person on the East Fork. He is full of talk is good company-- borrowed a vol. of Scott's novels--

This is the first Sunday that I Ever worked the whole day in the diggings since I have been in Cal. I am afraid that the good weather is ended for this year. I Expect to lose the flume or a part of it, if we can build another foot dam before the storm comes we will cut off nearly half of the flum & pile up the lumber out of the way of floods---

It began to rain again pretty hard soon after we got through with our days work-- Been reading the Tribune Editorials criticisms & Comments?

Monday Eve Oct. 20 1856

Night was cold. in the morning there was the greatest frost I have seen this year- ice in the sluices. could hardly pan out, nearly froze my hands by so doing. A cold cutting wind all day my hands are chapping very rapidly & are becoming painful. We are working on high bedrock, but little gold to be seen. Want to make a dam this week & then take out the lower end of the flum- reading stories in the last Harper- baking bread and boiling beans- too cold too dull & sore to wish more extensively to night. wish I was anywhere else than here, would prefer home.

Tuesday October 21st 1856

This was decidedly the coldest morning of the season it was not only cool but cold, ice was forming all day in the shade. A great deal of ice on the shaft and on the wheel. the hose was not quite frozen up but I Expect will be by tomorrow morning as it is still growing colder. my hands are chapping badly and are very painful. the cold this morning was most too much for me my fingers were nearly done up when I got through panning out.

The bed rock is getting poorer for pay. the crevices run with the river and hereafter we may not find any pay - in that case I will soon wind up affairs in that claim. I wish myself out of it now the weather is growing so cold and a storm may come almost any day & wash the flum away-

Wednesday October 22nd 1856

The cold became so annoying to me with only one shirt on that I concluded to doff another woolen one which with drawers in addition to my usual clothing will keep me from freezing for a while at least. The weather last year was as cold as this year in the

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latter part of November but at this time it was quite pleasant. No year since I have been in the county has afforded so much cold weather as anything like the quantity of ice as maybe seen at this time---

Got one man to dig dirt for the foot dam which we intend to build in a few days---

Mr Gro. leachsane called at the diggings in the forenoone to request permission to move in the log house which was built by A.S.S.E. & myself on the southside of the river from Miotts Ranch. He was verytalkative and said he was going to vote for Buchanane; He was formerly a Know Nothing-- I gave him the permission which he desired--went up to Miotts in the afternoone & borrowed a bottle of ink--

Thursday Oct. 23d 1856-

Was colder than usual. was very cold panning out. moderated during the day. clearing off a space for another dame. have one man digging dirt. will have to wheel it near one hundred yards--The bed rock runs north & south generally. the river which we have to work yet lies in this directione & consequently I Expect the pay will not be so good as heretofore.

We quit work early in order to get to town--among other things to hear the political speeches which were advertised to be delivered by Messrs Latham & Henly. Peter started down a little before me. he carried two picks & left two forms. George Macy accompanied me to towne. we arrived in towne in season to hear the Exordium of Mr Latham's speche He is the same that served this state in congress during the 33rd sessione of that body. He is young, probably about thirty years of age, is an able debater, did not attempt any fine rhetorical flourishes but occasionally at the winding up of portion of his arguments would come out in dashing style which generallybroughtthe house down--as theysayhere-- Col. Henly indulged morefreely in anecdote than Latham. some were very apt--arrived at home about midnight--

Friday Eve October 24th 1856-

Awoke soon after daybreak form a deepsleep in whiche I had indulged since I lay down in the Evening- hurried to the door & had great difficulty in getting my eyes opened - it was raining, not hard but a light fine mist like sort of rain which wouldwet one through in a few minutes. afterbreakfast concluded to lay up during the forenoone at least, it rains a good deal in the forenoone. I tried the rubber gloves which I bought last night--to wear while panning and found them to be the verythings recommended to keep the hands warm while engaged in that otherwise rather cool operatione.



Three men called here in the forenoon to have me point out a locality for mining. they wanted to begin operations on the Flat above here which A.S.S.L. & myself worked two years ago this time. I went up with them & pointed out what I was supposed to be the best localities. they prospected some of the dirt & found a little gold. it was raining considerably all the time. The Empire Flum has reached the Flat at last. Dr Chase the contractor has a large number of men. George Cochsarm is living in the old log home on the Flat & has taken up the Flat for Ranching purposes--Dunbar came down at noon. George Macy was here this Evening & borrowed the last Harper.

Saturday October 25th 1856-

No clouds in sight but instead of rain or clouds I witnessed a very white frost. the change was sudden but there was ice in considerable thickness-- We washed until noon. cleaned the bed rock up the site of the new dam. the walks are built. Frank was foreman of that part of the work. he is a mason by trade-- Peter and Dennis wheeled part of the dirt. I washed out the small riffle & the large one.

The claim is a little more than half worked. Of course I can tell nothing of the quality of the ground yet to be worked--

Sunday Eve Oct. 26th 1856-

Have been at work all day. cleaned out the tail race, so that when I should take part of the flum out the water would run off freely & not back against the foot dam. finished the dam, had one man wheeling dirt about three fourths of the day. the rest of us were engaged in shoveling tailings--took out about two hundred feet of floom? & piled up the lumber. wheel we moved up & placed it in position for rinsing. Got the sluices ready for washing, this kept us busy till dark. The day has been beautiful, perfectly clear not a cloud to be seen or a single breeze to disturb the serenity of the heavens--put bread to rise before I sat down to supper. had it ready though for the boys & they ate as they generally do in such cases before me--

Have been down to Davis & Lo's cabin, they have been making money lately and feel considerably elated in consequence--

Monday October 27th 1856-

Another fair day, beautiful as any in September. As Everything was arranged for washing before we quit work last night, all we had to do this morning was to begin which we did in good earnest, found the bed rock about two feet below the surface in some in several places, but it looks to be very poor when found. I think that the little gold which I have taken out is about as that I shall get out of the claim. Have serious thoughts of discharging the men with the exception of one with whom I will try to finish the balance of the ground--

Started the pump - the wheel runs slowly but the leakage is small at present so that the pump has no difficulty in getting the water out of the way-- Was up to Miotts till forenoon-- Paperman came along after dinner & I bought two Cal papers which I have read through to night--- intended to go up the East Fork tomorrow to try to collect road tax--

Tuesday October, 28th 1856-

While breakfast was preparing I informed Peter that I would not need his services any longer & would pay him off immediately--I did so after breakfast. I



did that in order to relieve myself of the heavy tax which I have been paying by having so large a force for these diggings. The expense of the four men per month which I have to pay is not less than three hundred and twenty dollars. By taking off one man I reduced the Expense Eighty dollars from the total amt. Peter was the poorest of my hands. I intend to send Dennis away when his month is up which will be on the day after tomorrow. Miott was here in the forenoon, to borrow an auger. Bassett was here in the afternoone, has quit work in the flum where he has been connected with Williams & Bishop & Co-- borrowed the papers which I purchased yesterday--

In the Sierra Citizen had the Election Laws in & the proclamation of the County Supervisors appointing officers for the different Precincts in the County-- Bassett is appointed one of the Judges for East Fork Precincts-----

It has been growing warm since yesterday. Wore my gum boots for the first time, was uncomfortably warm with them on--- but my old leather boots leak so that if I shovel tailings my feet would get very cold.

Wednesday October 29th 1856-

The wind blew violently during the night, precursor of a storm I expect. It seems to be no trouble for it to rain or storm, the last few days have been so very fine that I dread to have a storm-- so soon againe, which would hinder us from mining & probably take away the balance of the flum--

Frank has been on the sick list to day-- did not work-- the bed rock keeps hard and smooth see no gold--believe that ground is not going to pay for work-- am sorry as any one else would be to quit now when a little more money would Satisfy me & enable me to go home and see my wife & child if they are still living. I have been absent longenough-- If on returning I am unable to make a living I can come back here again & bring my little family with me---

Thursday October 30th 1856-

Was troubled with the back ache nearly all night--that is that part of the night in which I was awake & which I believed was no inconsiderable part of it-- Washed out the riffle and had less pay than I have had in a long time before it was so small, and the ground which we are working has so poor an appearance that I concluded to discharge Dennis to day noone when his month would be up-- he has been here three months has not been in town for fear of getting drunk. He is the only Pennsylvanian that I have met with in the county who could neither read nor write. The poor fellow is unable to write his name.

The Empire Ditch is down nearly as far as my flum-- I saw Chase & observed to him that it would not be agreeable to have any water or any thing else from this Ditch quite rapidly. Chase, the contractor, Employs a large number of men.

Some canvass in the head dam gave way in the afternoon & let a great quantity of water throughe. I put a piece of new canvass over the old canvass & to fasten it was obliged to keep my left arm under water so long a time that it was nearly frozen & was quite numb-----

Friday October 31st 1856-

Was trouble a good deal with water to day.

The Empire Ditch brought a great quantity of water from the Middle Fork at noon while we were at dinner. The water brought a lot of sticks bark & c down the hill which got into the flume & caught under the wheel. I stopped the lower one when the diggings immediately filled up, preventing us from working on the lower grounds. The band on the lower wheel was wearing very rapidly--so fast that

I concluded to go to Downieville & get some new canvass--

Just before I was ready to start Marian Barrett came along from the upper part of the fork--He has been mining about two miles above this place in the river & has cleared for his part about four hundred dollars. He intends to start for home in a few weeks. His home is in Georgia, has been absent nearly seven years-- he went with me to town--

The mail boat arrived at the Berg yesterday. The mail will be in tomorrow, took two picks with me & had them sharpened---

Saturday Eve Nov. 1st 1856-

From the appearance of the pumpbelt yesterday Evening I Expected that it would be found broken this morning & as a consequence the diggings full of water. But such was not the case-it has stood the test of another days wear but I think it can hardly holdout till morning- I took the belt which was used in the other pump, separated the elevators from it & made an entirely new belt of part of the canvass which brought up last evening-doing this Employed me till noone. While I was getting dinner ready, the sluices at the upper End fell down & men injured badly. Have not washed much today, Frank saw some small pieces of gold- I was kept busy nearly all of the time cleaning out the tail race, the Empire Ditch brought a great deal of rubbish down the side hill & filled the river so that I was engaged several hours in cleaning a passage for the water- Weather still continues warm and pleasant- was cloudy awhile in the afternoon, but now-nine oclock-all is clear again-Our dishes & table had not been washed in nine days, so I did them to night. Browned coffee & washed two shirts & one pr. drawers- not much time left for reading, will not work tomorrow-

Sunday Eve Nov. 2nd 1856-

High winds during the night, much colder than yesterday, washed out the ~~mine~~ riffle, only a little gold-

Shaved & went to town. Fred, & Frank also went down- George Macy & Andrew Meinahane were here this morning, George Macy accompanied us to Downieville,- Dennis Mcclin one of the men whom I paid off lastweek has been drunk nearly ever since,- he had nearly one hundred dollars with him when he left here-& that is all gone for liquor-

Considerable Excitement in politics. Each of the parties appear to be full of confidence, the result of the coming Election will sicken the hopes of some of them I Expect- My preferrences are entirely with the Democratic Party I shall vote that ticket from James Buchanan at the head to the last name on the county ticket- also for Township officers-

Expected that the Atlantic Mail would have been in to day but was disappointed. it will not be in Downieville before Wednesday next- was home before night-

Monday Eve November 3rd 1856-

The Empire Ditch occasioned some difficulty to us by having the flum fill up with lumber when they were running water through- diggings, washing a great quantity of dirt, leaves & c around the pump. We were hindered from working much during the forenoone. When we went out to work after dinner, the same thing happened to me againe only that there was a much greater quantity of water than before which brought down a great deal more gravel & other rubbish. the diggings were soon filled with water, so that we men obliged to quit work in the afternoon.

Went up to Miotts. Saw Dunbar. he came down to assist Miott in preparing him for torches. A meeting is to be held in Downieville to night at the Theatre for the

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purpose of influencing those who maybe on the fence as they say- I have been down, heard M. Kirkpatrick, he is a young lawyer, has an active imagination with an abundant supply of words- joined to a highly cultivated intellect guided by excellent reasoning powers, he is in my opinion almost a model orator- arrived at home late-

Tuesday November 4th 1856

Did not awake until after sunrise. Was afraid that I would be too late to attend the polls in the East Fork Precinct when I had been appointed one of the Judges. a hurried breakfast & hastened up to Bassetts Cabine where it was directed that the election should be held. When I arrived there found that they had just been to breakfast and did not consider it to be near Eight oclock yet, which was an hour for organizing the Board of Election preparatory to receiving votes. I sat there nearly half an hour before Yarrington the (Inspector) arrived & then we had great difficulty in procuring clerks. we finally succeeded in getting one man to serve. We then as there on the question of removal to Miotts store. at first it was decided in the negative, then most of the people left for towne-we reconsidered the question and I moved that we adjourn to Miotts. the question was then decided in the affirmative and we all came down to Miotts. there were fortyfour votes presentwhovoted. I brought three men down with me for dinner. finished counting off in about one hour after we begane--

Wednesday November 5th 1856

The sky was clouded, the weather was warm when we began work--sprinkled a little before noone--saw a little gold, the tailings trouble us verymuch keeps one man busy nearly all of the time.

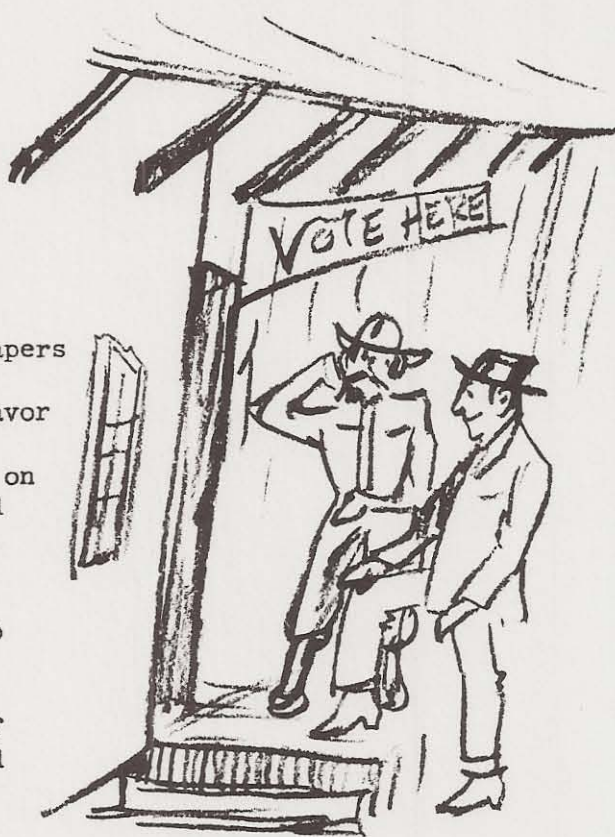
Fellows came along about noone with papers. he stopped and ate dinner with us--I boughtfourpapers of him--I learned from him that the election in the Downieville Precinct yesterday resulted in favor of the Democratic Party. there was some talk of throwing our returns from the East Fork Pricinct on the plea of illigality in conequence of the Board & Electors together deciding on moving the Polls from an uncomfortable place up the river down to Miotts Store.

I was at Miotts in the afternoone, they had no later news than I had hearde in the forenoon--

It began to rain about noon & poured down in torrents. the Paper Man went off in the midst of the storme. There was thunder lightning & a good deal of hail. has grown cold--intended to go to towne in the afternoone but night came on before I was ready to start so I concluded to stay at home--

Thursday Nov. 6th 1856

Was arroused from a deep sleep by the arrival of Mr Fred Dunbar who came at early dawn and was makeing a fire when I awoke, he had been on a spree for the last two days & a half & preferred to come here & stay till



such time as he would be sober to going up home where he would most likely be lectured by Yarmington or if not actually taken to ask (?????) be regarded with the same suspicion as a monster might be-- he slept in my bunk til dinner time, did not eat anything but drank one cup of coffee then started for Downieville with the intention of looking for letters for himself & papers & letters for me-- also to get the latest returns for the county & state Election--- He came home about sunset, brought two letters for me one from sister Mary and the other from my affectionate wife--- I had not heard from either in a long time. Expected one but not two, the disappointment had made me happier than I had been in a long while before-- Dunbar also brought four Tribunes but no "Unions"--there was no later election news--than I had heard. We were out early this morning and did a good days work--- it was very cold, a good deal of snow and ice-- a tub of water in the house froze over last night--

Friday November 7th 1856-

Dunbar slept with me last night. My bunk is quite large for one person but most too narrow for two however as I was tired and sleepy when I turned in I soon fell asleep & forgot the work with all its troubles--Still very cold, a great deal of ice, tools chill the hand immediately on taking hold of them, the crowbars were frosted so much that they stuck to the hand as if they had been glued-- Dunbar left here for his claim up the river soon after breakfast.

When we went out after dinner the wheels were stopped-- there was not enough water in the flum to turn them. the Empire Ditch was taking the water out of the East Forke. I went up to the other Flat & hoisted a gate which let the water into the river again-- It caused us some delay Chase (the builder of the Ditch) I could not find We managed to work the balance of the afternoon, Saw a little gold-- all very fine--

Saturday Nov 8th 1856-

The hands employed on the Empire Ditch were at work before we had breakfast eaten. they are generally out about sunrise. It is necessary to make an Early start in order to put in a full days work the days are getting so short-- Somehow or other the cold affects me greatly this Fall, it is either unusually cold or I have become more effeminent than I ever was before-- Our wheel stopped again at noone. I went up the Ditch & let the water out of the Ditch as it had no business to be in there--

Saw the Butcher in the forenoon and from him heard some more election news. it seems that the Know Nothings have failed to elect their County ticket having only elected their candidate for State Senator & he was elected I expect by democrats refusing to vote for their own nominee not yet heard how the State has gone but hope that it has gone Democratic.

Sunday Eve Nov. 9th 1856--

Frank got breakfast-- I got up-- shaved, donned a clean shirt--ate breakfast & started for town-- Overtook Alex. Miott on my way downe, he was one of the condidates on the Democratic Ticket for Constable of this Township. He learned a day or two since that he was elected, but to day heard a rumor that he was not elected and consiqently did not feel berywell about it-- was going to town to see the truth of the report-- I learned in town that the Democracy of this County and state have gained a large majority over their opponents-- The exact result is not yet ascertained Even in this county and of course not definite from the State-- Both parties appear to be well pleased at the result, one claiming a great victory & the other rejoicing that they are not totally defeatede--

Bought two county papers-- a load of provisions-- took a pick with me on going down to the Blacksmithshop to get sharpened.

Arrivede at home about sunset. Baking bread and boiling beans tonight--

On the first day of January last I began to read the Bible through consecutively by taking one chapter each Evening--have advanced to the 20th chapter of the 1st Book of Kings--

Monday Eve Nov. 10th 1856-

Lay awake for many hours after going to bed. could not get to sleep in consequence of eating a hearty supper when I had been idle nearly all day--

Was very cold in the morning, plenty of ice-- Spent about half of the forenoone, in order to get more fall for the sluices. Had them reset before dinner--

In the afternoone washed some bottom, saw a few pieces of golde all fine, none that I saw would weigh a dime-- The sun favored us a couple of hours afternoon--

Tuesday Eve Nov. 11th 1856-

Chase's company at work on the Ditch were out before us. the days are getting shorter and are already short enough for it is hardly possible to put in a full day especially when as in my case the day is considerable advanced before breakfast is ready & then the mornings are usually so frosty that before we have our fingers well warmed and the blood circulatinf freely it is noone when the best part of an hour is again occupiede before we resume work again--

Did a good deal of woek to day however. feel very tired. Have been down to Davis' Cabin to borrow matches as we were entirely out of the article--

One week ago this morning when I was at Bapetts cabin, I borrowed two books of him, one the "Vestiges of Creation" & the other "Don Quixote" which I am reading-- have read about one third of the book. I think that the book deserves to be attentively studied rather than read to enable one to comprehend the beatiful satire or fully to appreciate the Exquisite poetry which glows in Everyline---

Wednesday Nov. 12 1856-

Our digings had been flooded duting the night as the marks or deposits of mud and leaves on the rocks & posts showed where we went out all of the forenoone the water troubled us, the difficulty was that Chase had allowed part of the East Fork water to run by the flume thus stopping the wheels when as a matter of course the place was soon overflowede.

The morning was quite cold, but warm about noone. Did not clean up anybed rock today was stripping off & shoveling in gravel & such stuff-- saw a few pieces of fine golde--



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The ground alongside of the river and on the opposite from my cabine is taken up for mining for several hundred yards on down the river--

Miott was here to day with a partner looking at the ground which he has taken up. he talked of making a Ditch from the mouth of my flum down to the Flat or Bank-- Davis has been here this Evening to get me to write a letter for him to his wife-- it is the third one that I have written this Fall---

Thursday Nov. 13 1856-

The sky is clouded over in the afternoon and I thought would surely rain soon had supper a little earlier than usual so that I could go to town. I wanted to go down & attend the lodge of I. O. of O. F. which I joined in Downieville over two since & had not been present at any meeting in Eightteen months. Since then they in conjunction with the Lodge of Masons have built a large wood edifice which they designate as Fraternity Hall. the two Lodges meet in the same room though of course on different Evenings-- the Hall proper is in the second or upper story--is large & commodious, has (?) air unto room & several closets-- is lighted by lamps hung around the the walls of the roome--the ceiling overnead is not high enough to suit my notions but will do very well in Downieville--

The meeting was very long & equally interesting. I hastened down in order to be on hand at the opening-- was nearly half an hour too soon the hour for opening is Seven oclock-- Was about eleven oclock when the meeting dismissed--Carried a lantern down with me which was of no use as the clouds were gone & the moon shining brightly when I started for home-- When I arrived about midnight somewhat tired & verysleepy, hastily arranged my bed & tumbled in or am about to do so---

Friday Nov. 14 1856-

Did not waken after falling asleep until about sunrise. the men employed on the Dmpire Ditch were going to their work making a great noise walking on the top of the Ditch which has a plank walk which through the still air of the frosty morning sounded like thunder-- Called Frank & Baker to build the fire & get breakfast ready for my desire of further sleep overcame all of my notions of duty which generally makes me lead the way instead of bidding others go in advance--

Not so cold as yesterday--had a fair yeild of gold for yesterdays work-- not much to day however-- I saw some pieces all very fine I do not think that there are any gasse pieces of gold along there as we have discovered none--

Am highly delighted with the wonderful story of Don Quixote-- In some respects it is equal to Shakspeare--

Saturday Eve Nov. 15th 1856-

Had a late breakfast, was cold, a hard frost, Miott & his partner came along in the forenoon to borrow sluices to begin woeking the Bank below here which they took up the other day-- I had three old boxes that I was not using & loaned them to them temporarily-- The weather grew warmer toward night & sky cloudede--Since dark it has been raining & from present appearances will probably make a rainy day of tomorrow-- The weather for the last ten days has been very fine but I am afraid will not continue so any longer-- It will take all of two months to finish our present flume if we proceed no faster than we have for several weeks past, Even if the weather

is favorable & no flood comes & sweeps the whole concern away--

The ground which we have gone over has all been worked some before, have much of that which yet remains to be worked has been worked in former years I am unable to say-- perhaps the greater part of it has been picked over & the best part of the deposit taken away-- Have read several chapters to night in Don Quixote--

Sunday Eve Nov. 16 th 1856-

Slept or lay in bed later than is my custom--Went out to the diggings and panned out while the boys prepared breakfast--There was some rain in the night & was cloudy in the forenoon- shaved bathed & got myself ready for a tramp to Downieville- Arrived there about noon, sold some dust and bought a bill of Exchange of Messrs Ladd & Co. for the amt which I enclosed in a letter to my wife- The money if obtained I directed my wife to apply on the purchase of a little farm which was contracted by Father for me now nearly two years since- A part only has been paid and I was afraid & still am that in default of complying with the agreement I might buy the property's being sold for the remainder lose what little has already been paid- I hope that no trouble will arise in getting the money for the draft and if all goes well I can hereafter with my wife & daughter retire upon our few acres & be content with a home though it be a poor one--

Returned home about sunset, baking bread and reading Don Quixote which is one of the most amusing books that I Ever read- Frank has brought a large lot of wood to the house & split it ready for the fire- Baker has been busily engaged in repairing a dilapidated pair of pants and I Expected to have the same duty to perform, but in overhauling my dusty & ragged wardrobe I found one pair which I concluded to try another week yet--

Monday Eve Nov. 17th 1856-

Awoke and found it raining, no prospect for work to day--After breakfast Frank & I went to Miotts to grind the ax--They that is Miott his lady & a boarder had not yet breakfasted. We sat there some time & had quite a chat on the prolific subject of the weather & the faults of our neighbors-- Mr James Kane came up from Downieville while I was there & I had to chat with him some time. he is a man of very good sense talks well on most subjects but has a poor expression for his ideas.

Miott was getting for a walk to town to attend the sale of his house & ranch this afternoon & on learning that the mail had arrived in town I concluded to go with him-- We proceeded down together when I recd from the P.O. three newspapers but no letters. As the mist and clouds began to break away & the rain to cease I started back immediately thinking to work in the afternoon--

But I was deceived it did not stop raining altogether nor was the rain heavy or violent at any time but a heavy mist was falling all of the time & has not yet ceased. The morning maybe clear however, I will be much pleased if it is so that we can work--for if I ever had need about seventy dollars besides a beef bill and have only six dollars in the world-- If a flood should come & sweep the flum away I would be destitute indeed.

Tuesday Nov. 18th 1856-

The stars were shining when I went to bed which was at a very late hour but the sky soon became clouded againe, some rain kept falling nearly all night. none of us were up early it stormed too much to think of

working in the forenoone anyway-called at Bradshaws cabine he & two others were playing cards. Dunbar had gone to towne-the flume that they have in now is about eighty feet in length. they have one weeks work yet they say & then they will move up to the other flume which is about two miles further up the river. They have ground enough to last then all winter--

On my way back called at Miotts. the Election held at his house lately for President, State & County officers has been contested on the ground that it was illegal to move the Polls from a cabin up the river down to Miotts-the Board of County Supervisors receive the Election returns after they pass through the county Clerks hands & they agreed by a vote of two v.s. one to accept it-the only person agreed is A.S. Headson the K.N. candidate for County Surveyor who is thus defeated by seven votes. I heard to day that he was disposed to take the matter before the county Court, & that he began suit yesterday-I think that in justice he will have his trouble for his pains--

We worked in the afternoone-did considerable labor but saw no gold of any account-Reading the Quixtote and boiling beans-is clear & getting colder.

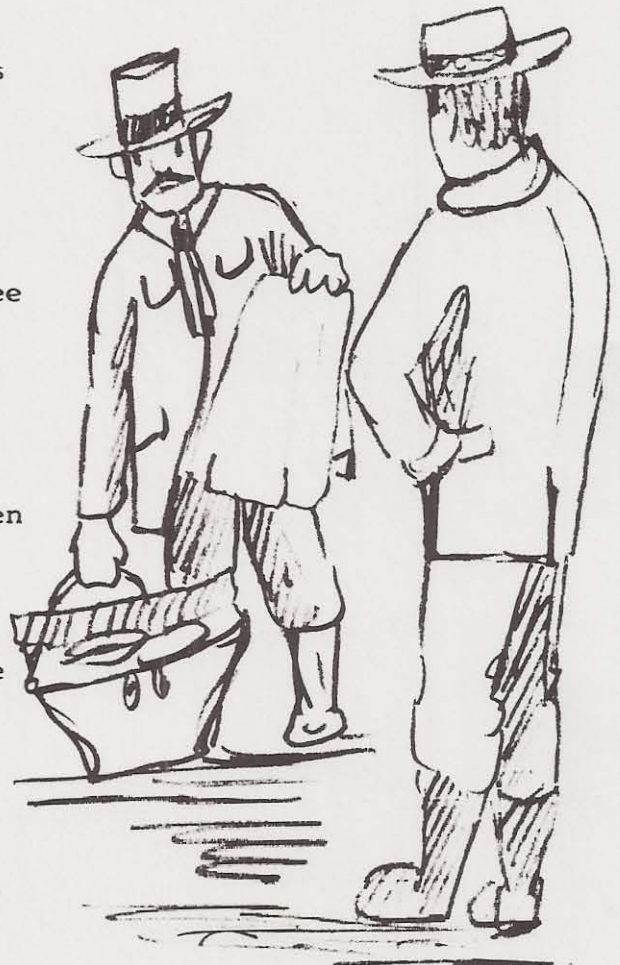
Wednesday 19th Nov. 1856-

A hard frost covered most everything out of doors there was ice in the house also--We get along very slowly with the work-two of us were engaged all day in cleaning bed rock neither of us were able to finish a piece two yards square--

Mr Geo. Leachman came down in the forenoon to borrow a patent block. I had none at all but sent him down the river to Davis' Co. he informed me that Yarrington was in his company. they are looming off on the Flat above here. Have moved their boxes to another place from where they were at first-- the river has a color between red & yellow occasioned by the ground which they wash away-- At noon a Pedlar came along-he had colthing and other little notions as he said- I invited him to dinner which he accepted-- made a few purchases-- matches & two pair of socks---

Thursday Nov. 20th 1856-

Morning was very cold and raw. did not see the sun at all-- Sky was all clouded over. I predicted a snow storm-while I was getting dinner I observed a few fine flakes falling quietly & silently to the earth. I called the boys in for their dinner. we all ate and was going out when one of the hands employed on the Ditch called to us that the flum had broken down-I ran out as fast as possible & saw an awful sight truly-- nearly all of the river was in the diggings-the upper wheel was carried out of its place so that it could not run thus backing the water out of the flum-the trouble was that the Empire Ditch had brought a great dial of water from the Middle Fork which so increased the quantity of water in the East Fork that our dam could not hold it but it ran over in several places making such a river in the Diggings as to carry away the riffle box and Effutually to wash out the gold there was (in) the river--



The water soon subsided & we got the wheels to going again but were unable to the balance of the day-I made out a bill and went to see Dr. Alehase & demanded of him payment for the damages I had sustained which I fixed at fifty Dollars-went to see him. he promised to come and see the ground in the Evening but did not give me satisfacione-A.S. Dodsens was up here says he is contesting the legality of this Election--

Friday Nov. 21 1856-

The night was very stormy. I slept but little & that towards morning- was up in the night, went out to the diggings- got the hammer nails and saw a piece of board- made a rake & hauled the snow off of the house. it was accumulating rapidly and I was afraid would break through & let the storm upon our heads- Was troubled a good deal with severe pains in my arms shoulders & particularly my left hand thigh- I usually have something of the kind in the beginning of a storm- Called Baker to make the fire- supposed that it was still storming. he reported it to be clear- I got up instantly & assisted to get breakfast.

Frank complained very much of a sore belly which kept him awake nearly all night & made him lie abed during the forenoon of today. Baker & myself were thus alone in the diggings. we placed the riffle in its place fixed up the broken boxes & got to work before noon. After dinner covered our house with some of the flum boards which we piled up some time ago- We did this to keep the snow off of the canvass, which is old & rotten. Snowed nearly all of the afternoon- getting colder- I got pretty wet. Saw a little gold-

John Bradshaw came down from his camp to borrow a little salt. I showed him the prospect I was getting upon which he went to crevicing & found several small pieces--

Saturday November 22nd 1856-

Snowed but little during the night. was warmer than it was las Evening- has been snowing all day- part of the afternoon very fast. Rained at one time- is snowing now but melts as it falls- We have worked all day- got pretty in the afternoone-

Whiting A. Fellows cane here in the afternoone. his campany were not at work to day. they have good ground yet to worke so Whiting says I had picked up a few pieces of gold before he came & he began to crevice in order to make further discoveries of the precious metal. he also found a little- but all which we got is fine- Whiting stayed about an hour-

I cleaned out the boxes & small riffle the dirt of which filled two pans- I brought them to the house. turned the water on againe-stopped both wheels as it will likely storm tomorrow we willnot work, any way the picks are all very dull & will have to be sharpened- I must take them with me to towne-

I am apprehensive of a freshit- if one does come it will be apt to sweep the flum away when my cake will be sough for another six months-

There is as much ground left yet as we can possibl' work in two months provided the bedrock will pay to work over-

Have read Don Quixote through once am now reading "Vestiges of Creation"--

Sunday Eve Nov. 23d 1856-

Was awakened in the middle of the night by the falling of the chimney-

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the back part tumbled downe falling outwards, making a terrible noise. it has been standing about a year--was built of inferior stone poorly laid up-- has been setting some time & lastnight gave way with a crashe--

After breakfast Frank & Baker began to build it up again-- Frank is a mason & takes charge of the job-- While they were at work I shaved & bathed --got ready for town about noone. Carried three picks with me-- on my way down met Mr Bassett coming up-- we talked some time-- it was clear when I started from home but an hour had hardly passed before the sky was again clouded & a gentle rain began to fall-- the trail is very bad-- the snow being just soft enough to form a slush much like mush when soft--

Recd a few papers & one letter from the P.O. the letter was from my wife-- she was sick at the date of writing--Had the ague & fever-- poor thing I was much grieved to hear such news. She prays me to go home & I really think that I ought to go but cannot now & am unable to say when I shall be able to go---

Mailed the Nov. No. of Hutchings Cala. Magazine to Sister Leatherin-- bought no papers-- delayed starting for home until dark--found the boys sitting by a cheerful fire-- they finished the chimney & made it apparently much better than it was before-- started the wheels--

Monday Nov. 24--1856-

Was cloudy but not raining-- quite warm--

The boys went out to work-- I went to Downieville to see Dr. Chase to learn whether he was disposed to make indemnity for the injury he did me last week in washing away the riffle & throwing the boxes down, filling the whole diggings with water--I saw him for a moment, he wanted me to wait one week & in meantime the Proprietors of the Ditch would be convened & he would lay the matter before theme-- I was forced to be put off with this flimsy excuse though it was not to the purpose at all.

The sky was well clouded over alloftheforenoon but there was no raine. I arrived at home about noon, got dinner ready & then called the boys-- was out at work with them in the afternoone-- It stormed nearly all of the afternoone-- We were cleaning some bed rock from which the gold if there ever was much had previously been taken-- we did not find much--

My head ached all of the afternoon & so bad at times that I thought of quitting-- ate no supper have been reading since dark & my head is better-- Baking break & boiling beans-- It is still storming--

Tuesday Nov. 25th 1856

No sign of storm. the sky was clear-- a heavy frost was on the ground. it was late before I awoke the sun which now rising at a late hour was already gilding the tops of the mountains-- the lower company on the Flat were at work. However when we got out we worked away as hard as we could in order to make up for lost time--

Soon after we had commenced working in the afternoon Mr Blakeslee one of the Editors of the Pacific a religious newspaper published in San Francisco, came along soliciting subscribers-- I invited him to dinner telling him that such plain food as we had he was welcome to. He assented & we returned to the house-- He ate his dinner & I read one of his papers. I subscribed for one year, paid the subscription price which was five dollars-- he went on his way & I returned to my work--

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We saw some gold. Frank & Baker were both cleaning bed rock--they found several small pieces--I was stripping off & washing gravel--

Weather to day was very beautiful, to night all is clear--but the weather is not settled for any great length of time I think--

Been reading the paper which Mr Blakeslee left--

Wednesday Nov. 26th 1856

The wind blew very hard in the night, I was awakened by the noise & thought our frail house would be carried away--of course was cold this morning--

Baker found a fair prospect in the forenoon--Frank found a little & I way a few pieces but nothing to compose with what Baker found-- the the ground has been worked before us but not very well worked--

The Ditch Co. have recommended operations--

The last letters I recd from home have given me the home sickness I cannot help thinking of home and of scenes in which I suppose myself to be an actor. My thoughts if I might dignify loose fancies by such a name are of home & of nothing else both when I sleep & when I wake-- It is difficult to say whether I shall get away from here this winter or not I should like to leave in two months from this time--perhaps when that time arrives the contemplated season of my departure may be fixed (sic) two months later--

It is growing colder--the wind is growling along the mountain like an angry lion--



Thursday Nov. 27th- 1856

Clear & cold- my hands a (sic) beginning to be affected by the raw atmosphere- so much so that they trouble me when I am at work. Did not see as much gold as yeaterday- Miott & his partner were in the diggings in the forenoone. they are making preparations to mine in the bank a short distance below here-

After dinner I went to Davis & cos & borrowed a pound of candles- entirly out-

Reading Vestiges of creation-

Friday Nov. 28- 1856

It was very cold all of last night & has continued so all day- became cloudy in afternoon expect we will have another a (sic) storm soon

My hands are very sore- caused by being chaffed- I could hardly work on account of them-

Saturday Nov. 29th- 1856

Snowed all night and from appearances at daybreak I thought that we would have a stormy day- after breakfast washed out the riffle- while the boys gathered the tools & took them to the house stopped the wheels- In the forenoon went up to Miotts & sharpened the ax, while there the snow ceased, the clouds dispensed & the sun made his appearance, much warmer to day than yesterday. Wrote a letter to my wife- after dinner took four picks to the black smith to have them sharpened- was in town- made a few purchases & arrived home by dark-

Sunday Nov. 30th 1856-

The last of the eleventh month of this year- and an unusually cold day it has been. Was perfectly clear in the morning & has continued so all day- Snowed about four inches last night- attempted it again since dark to night but soon gave it up for lack of material I hope if there is such a thing in the meteorological economy- spent the day at home and notwithstanding idleness have eaten three hearty meals. Was not sleepy when I turned in last night so I began to read "Life in Paris" a novel by Reynolds- there are nearly two hundred pages & to day I finished it- have read a few short dates in Harper- also a chapter in "Vestiges"

Baker was to town- Frank staid with me- There has been no air stirring to day, if there was it would be as cold as in Pennsylvania in winter-

Monday Dec. 1- 1856

Suffered more from cold last night than I have in a great while before- Any quantity of ice- it has been forming all day- snow is about two feet deep, it is dry and well adapted for sleighing- the air is quite cold enough for good sleighing- Did not work. One of the pumps froze up during the night- I got them to going better but the water was not out at noon- We have been about the house most of the time. the boys built a wall in the back part of the chimney making it more shallow.

Tuesday December 2nd 1856---

According to instructions was awakened by Frank-- after breakfast the boys proceeded to the Diggings carrying the tools with them-I started a moment afterwards but soon met them returning with the intelligence that the Liggings were filled with water. the pumps were moving very slowly & each wheel was carrying a great load of ice-- A large portion of the East Fork water was running by in the Empire flum. I hastened up to the Flat & shut it off-- While there Mr. Leachmen came out and had a good deal to say about his prospects- his company & Yarrington in particular- They have worked two weeks on the Flat there & have not make their boarde. They intend to prospect another bank about one half mile down the river---

The weather has not abated any of its rigor yet.- when the sun shone in the afternoon the snow softened a little- There is no breeze at all, if there were we would be unable to go out.---

About Eleven oclock a young man came up with a Sierra Citizen Extra containing telegraphic reports from the last steamer which arrived the day before yesterday.

The news which in interest supersedes all others- is that Pensylvania's distinguished Son is elected to the office of President of the United States for the term of four years from the 4th of March next--

Have been at work in the afternoon---Saw no gold of any consequence.

Wednesday December 3rd 1856

Was out by sunrise. weather intolerably cold-- was obliged to go up the Ditch & turn part of the water out into the river-- the cold weather has frozen a great deal of the water- there is hardly enough left to turn the wheels--- At noon had a talk with Dr. Chase about the damages he did me nearly two weeks ago- he said he would give lumber or water but no money-- I ought to commence suit against him, Saw a few specs of gold in the afternoon---

Thursday Dec. 4th 1856

Weather still continues very cold. really to cold to work to advantage- water freezes in a few minutes. a pile of dirt we had thrown up yesterday & which we did not wash we found frozen up the hardest kind this morning soon after we got to work Mr. Davis came up to borrow a shovel. he requested me to go down to night & write a letter for his brother-- How unfortunate is that man who cannot write- I sat & talked with them some time afterwards-- came home & found Frank in bed & Baker by the fire superintending the baking of bread & the boiling of a kettle of beans.---

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Friday, Dec. 5th, 1856

Were so unfortunate as to be unable to work--the lower wheel was loaded so heavily with ice that it had great difficulty in turning & finally stopped & threw the water out of the flume into the diggings by damming the water. We knocked the ice off of the wheel & started it again--it went very slowly but seemed in a fair way to throw the water out by noon when one of the buckets came off which caused another delay so instead of having the water all out it was not much nearer than it was in the morning--we expected to work in the afternoon but could not on account of the water. As we were eating our dinners Mr. Davis came up bringing a letter for me from Sister Hannah--He had one from his wife which he brought for me to read as he is unable to read himself.

In the afternoon--as we could not work the logs--made each of them a mattress by filling their ticks with pineleaves--They were thus engaged when I observed that the diggings were dry. I washed about half of the afternoon--saw some gold--Have a headache tonight.

Saturday Eve Dec. 6th, 1856

About one third of the East ran in the Empire Flume during the night--thus the river was left so low that the wheels had not power enough to turn there. The consequence was that the Diggings were filled with water & covered with ice of half an inch in thickness.

Went up the flume & let the water out into the river again. Called at Ditch Cos. Cabine 7 found there Dr. Chasacall eating breakfast. The Dr. said that he was not warned and that they would injure me by abstracting the water from the main. He is always full of excuses and he is never willing to make reparation. After a couple hours of hard labor got the wheels to running again--I took a couple hooks I borrowed some time ago of Bassett & visited him--on my way called at Fellows & Co.--they were busy at work--will finish their claim in a couple of weeks---They invited me to dinner & I stopt--returned home about four o'clock. The Diggings were dry again only to be refilled before morning I expect.

Borrowed the life of the Duke of Wellington & the Oct. no. of Knickerbocker of Bassett. Have looked through the Knick--since I came home.

Sunday Eve Dec. 7th 1856

Frank made the fire--when I got up there was a slight rain drizzling. Before we had breakfast ready the newspaper man came with the latest papers recd from the Atlantic States. I bought one New York Herald & the Weekly San Francisco Herald--All of the United States papers are sold at twenty five cents each

I heard yesterday that Graughtons Express & Hauling Office was closed by the Sheriff--the failure is said to be for one hundred thousand dollars--I was in town in the afternoon and paid the butchers bill for the last two weeks. Bought a small addition to my stock of groceries--received three Tribunes from the mail & returned home--which place I reached about dark--Baker had started the bread & had it in a fine way for baking when I arrived. He also got supper ready--

Have been looking over the Tribunes--I bought one with the result of the Presidential Elections--the town does not indicate much happiness on the part of the writer but discourses very much as the

Knight- of the - sorrowful Figure held forth after he had been discomfited in a severe battle with the Wind Mills alias giants of winchegs ditto- The Democrats have won laurels in the great contest which has just been decided- hardly a word is heard concerning the Election of its result-

the rain has increased since morning-- it is now raining quite briskly-- Expect that the river will rise and drive me out in consequence, but I hope not
Mon. Dec. 8th- 1856

The rain continued most of the night. was nearly clear at sun rise- river a good deal higher- wheels going with great velocity & the Digging filled with water. the lower pump was displaced during the night by which means the bank was loosened so that the wheel could turn without the band moving-

got the wheel to going soon after breakfast & had all of the water out of the Diggings by half past nine oclock- we have made three quarters of a day-

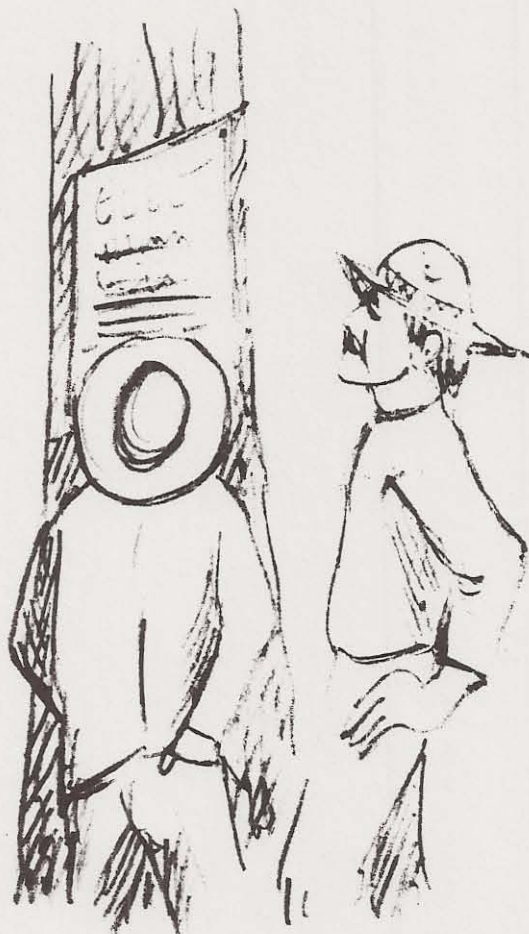
The sky is clear most of the time. a few light clouds flying, to noight weather much warmer than before the storm-

Have finished my first perusal of the Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation & have begun the Life of the Duke of Wellington-

Tuesday Dec. 9th- 1856

Found on going out to work that the Diggings were filled with water-- Both pumps had stopped in the night-- There being a rise of the river yesterday the wheeks went faster then was necessary. I raised them a little to make them go slower but still they sufficiently fast. In the night there was a hard frost & the river became chilled & the water fell so much that it did not touch the wheels at all-- Hence the pumps were idle & the diggings full of water & another day is lost. It is really discouraging the way I am getting along. It will require Seven Years to work out the claim at this rate-- Have been reading nearly all day--

Mr Davis cam up to night to get me to write a letter for him to his wife in answer to the first one which he has read lately from his wife. I wrote the letter- filled a sheet for him & enclosed a pretty gold specimen which he had-- Mr Basach Pride? who lives with Davis wants me to write two letters for him, on to his Father & one to his Sweetheart which I intend to do before the mail closes- which will be the first of next week-- Going to nsow again from appearances-



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Wednesday Dec. 10th 1856-

Was up early--snow hadbeen falling about one hour. It was already two inches deep-- We began to work in the Diggings but the storm was so great that we could not see to clear up bedrock will & more than that the snow would carry off any gold which it might touch in its passage down the sluices-- we only worked a few minutes & then quit, brought all of the picks & shovels to the house--

As we have done so little work lately Baker & Frank becamd discourage & concluded to leave for Nevada. I paid them off but as the snow was falling so fast they thought it best to wait till tomorrow.

Went to town in the afternoon-- snow about one foot deep has fallen to day & but few people hadbeen along the trail-- the walking was difficult-- When I arrived in town most of the people there were enjoying themselves at snow balling-- Sold three ounces of dust, purchased a few tacks & two lumbars of Blackwoods Mag-- & came home-- took the snow off of the roof & started the wheels-- the moon rose clear & one star shone brightly though more the heaviness an again overcast with dark sullen clouds which indicate that the storm has not yet ceased, a light snow is still falling--

The winter is here & I have not got finished mining, last year at this time I thought I certainly would have before the close of the present year-- I cannot say when I shall leave-- only wish I was away, but first I want to work the claim which I have here & it is probably that I cannot do so this winter--

Thursday Dec. 11th 1856-

Was partially clear in the morning. the pump was at work all night but the Diggings were full of water quite a large stream came out of the hill alongside of the flum it came out so far above the flum that I put a box there which conveyed the water into the flum. after that the water soon went down- I then came in & got breakfast the Boys had their blankets packed ready for starting, They left soon fter breakfast. I was sorry to see them go. but as we were not doing much in the claim they couldnot earn much of any account--

I couldnot afford to board them for nothing all though The stormy weather- They intended to goto Arleans Flat to day but I doubt their being able to get there to day as there was quite a storm of snow & wind this afternoon Thus I am alone. Did not work in the claim--Cleaned the table and dishes. washed a lot of shirts and drawers-- finished a letter which I began- lastnight for Barrack Pride to his Father. Filled a sheet to her also--

Have read a good deal to day in the "Life of Wellington" The sky is clear & moon & stars shining brightly-- perhaps will storm again tomorrow-- has grown colder in a few hours--

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Friday Dec. 12th 1856

The early sun was shining on the mountain tops when I first went out of doors-- had a late breakfast. Called to Barrach Bride to come & get the letters which I had written for him he came & I placed them in Envelopes & directed them for him-- It was exceedingly cold, a good deal of ice in the house and freezing all of the time-- was up the Middle Fork far as Wilson's Ranch to order a couple sacks of potatoes-- snow is deep & but little trail-- Was nearly night when I returned. got my supper & brought wood in the house. made a fire & have written a letter to Sister Hannah.

The sky is clear & shows no vestiges of yesterday storm-- except it be the snow which covers the earth & the cold raw air which every one seated close to the fire--

Saturday December. 13th 1856

The cold has not abated any of its vigor yet. Any quantity of ice & more forming all of the time. Sat by the fire reading the September No. of Blackwood until late in the forenoon. In the fore part of the day the sky was dark & gave tokens of another snow storm but the sun came out before noon & the remainder of the day was pleasant. On going out to the diggings found the wheels fast & the water dammed by their running over the sides of the flume. Got up some wood-- ate two meals-- George Cochnamnas here & took Locke's Books away with him. they had been here all summer. I sold a sack of flour to Cochnamnas as he said they were out & did not want to go to town for so small a quantity It is snowing to night-- will storm all of this month most likely.

Sunday Eve Dec. 14 1856

It was late when I got up. Did not freeze last night. Started for Downieville before noon. Two men from the flat accompanied me downe. Snow has been thawing nearly all day-- Mailed the letters which I had written to Sister Hannah & to Mrs W. Headson. Recd the first No. of the Pacific for which I paid a years subscription a few weeks ago & mailed it to my wife. Recd a letter from Mr F. L. Dunbar. He was at Nevada City at the time of writing. He left here a few weeks ago & just before leaving came to me & requested the loan of ten dollars with the plea that he wanted to buy or pay for some provisions in Downieville. I loaned the money to him & have not seen him since-- The money is gone of course so goes the world-- Arrived home again a little before night--

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Monday Eve December 15th 1856

Tossed the night away in uneasyslumber. slept late, breakfasted & then started the wheels. The lower one was minus two braces & one paddle-- they have been going all day but the water is not out yet. The weather is getting warm, snow is going fast. The sky gives appearance of rain-- read a load of potatoes in the fornoon. They were grown by MrWilson on his Ranch which is situated above the Empire, They are a good potato & cost me nine & a half cents perpound. Have been mending my oldshirts-- habe about a dozen & all of them nearly worn out. I tear a great many shirts in the course of a year. Bob, a late S. Frisco Hero, of the paper came this afternoone--

Tuesday Eve December 16th 1856

No fresh ice this morning-- Sky is still cloudy & gives tokens of another storm. Have worked in the Diggings most of the day--The flum hasbeenfrozen so much lately that it leaks much more than it did before the cold weather cameon. Was troubled with water running over the ground or rather bed rock which I was working--- My head began to ache about middle of afternoone & is quite troublesome to night--- Ate a lightsupper & intend to go to bed earlier than usual---

Wednesday Dec. 17th 1856

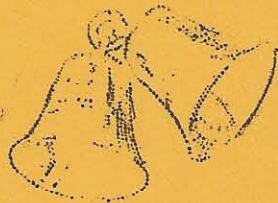
A heavystorm of rain set in about dark last night & continued till morning-- by which time the air was colder & the rain had changed to snow-- Considerable snow hasfallen to day but it is still warm so that the snow which falls is soft&slushy-- The river was high this morning--- When I first went out of doors I saw that it had raised a great deal in the night I was fearful that the flum & wheels were damaged or carried away. the water was pouring over the dam &the wheels were going with greatspeed I stopped them-- pulled a board out of the mouth of the flum which caused the water to stop running over the dam-- The water was at its highest in the morning -- it has fallen considerably since-- Of course have not been at work--



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WE HOPE YOU HAVE ENJOYED THE 1972 HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN. WE HAVE PLANNED FOR YOU MANY INTERESTING ARTICLES FOR OUR 1973 ISSUES---SO WE HOPE YOU WILL DECIDE TO JOIN OUR SOCIETY AND PAY YOUR DUES (five dollars) TO MRS. G. COPREN, SIERRAVILLE, CALIFORNIA, AS SOON AS YOU CAN AFTER THE FIRST OF THE YEAR.



Thursday December 18th 1856

The morning was clear & frosty. Started the wheels & as the water was still high they had pumped the diggings dry by two o'clock when I went to work & kept myself busy shivering the balance of the day-- Has been growing colder all day ice has been forming all of the time. It is very cold to night. I have been sitting by a large fire & am nearly frozen.

Have read two chapters in Gibbon's 'Decline & Fall' the 11th & 12th to day-- read about half of the whole work nearly ago-- but as I neglected it for a time I thought it best to begin at the beginning again & now I am just getting interested in it--

Friday Eve December 19th 1856

The cold has been increasing since yesterday the wheels were heavily loaded with ice I was afraid that they would break down as they were running slowly & the ice constantly accumulating-- I could not knock the ice off while they were running & they were too heavy for me to lift so as to stop them with this difficulty I wanted more water in the river to make the wheels run faster so I went up the Ditch & turned most all out that was going by-- Did a fair day's work-- am not quite well-- ate two meals-- Mr Gould was here awhile at noon-- Have read the 13th chap-- of the 'Decline & Fall' this evening---

Saturday Eve. Dec. 20th 1856--

Rose at daybreak--hurried out to the Diggings as soon after breakfast as possible & was astonished to find the whole place submerged with water, caused by the stopping of the upper wheel which backed the water out of the flum-- The wheel was frozen fast & could no longer move I started it after removing some of the ice & further employed myself for a couple of hours in knocking the ice off of the wheels when they moved much freer & with greater velocity-- The water was not out so that I could work before noon--then when I attempted to work had such a giddiness (caused I suppose by the motion of the wheels while I was engaged in taking off the ice) that I was unable to continue at work--

Bathed & donned clean shirts--took a couple of picks & started for town-- arrived there & recd a letter from Sister Mary-- also recd one number of the Pacific-- Bought the Dec. No. of Harper's Mag.-- the latest N.Y. Tribune-- Was dark before I left Downieville on my return-- And consequently the Evening was pretty well advanced when I reached home after walking three miles on a poorly broken snowtrail, the star light was just bright enough to deceive me and I : ruled from side to side like a drunken man-- Read two papers through before going to bed---

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