

SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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SOCIETY
NEWS

AGRICULTURE
IN SIERRA VALLEY

DEC. 29 1974

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THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

December 29, 1974

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THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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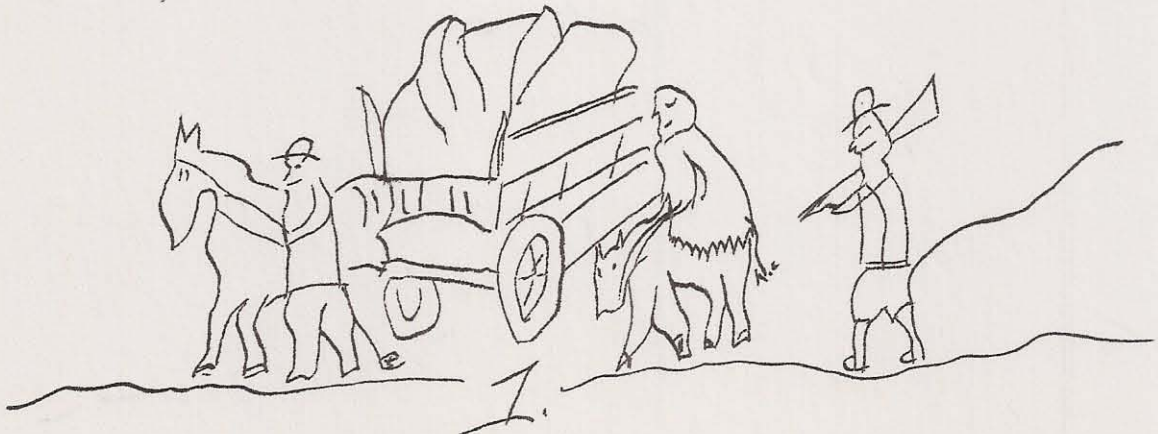
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AGRICULTURE IN SIERRA COUNTY FROM

1880 TO 1890

(Part II of a series of articles)

The author of this series of articles is Bill Copren, president of the Sierra County Historical Society. This is part of a larger study by President Bill which deals with the history of lumbering and agriculture in Sierra County from 1880 to 1890.

In 1888, pinkeye devastated the horse herds, killing foals of mares that had contracted the disease. The same year, a dysentery ailment took its toll of the calf crop and killed a prize Holstein bull in A. S. Nichols' dairy herd, one of the first Holsteins brought into Sierra County. In 1889, an eye disease afflicted cattle, causing almost total blindness to much of the stock. The absence of any type of scientific veterinary knowledge left the farmers to their own devices. Home remedies could not prevent or restrict contagions that spread like wild-fire.¹

There was one plague which the local farmers and cattlemen could fight--sheep. In this instance their fight would bring temporary success. In 1880, one thousand one hundred and fifty-one sheep were grazing in Sierra County. Sheep, "Montana horsemeat," were anathema to the cattlemen and the latter were intent upon using every means, legal and illegal, that were required to drive them out of the county and prevent migratory herds from coming in. Year after year, bands of sheep moved into the mountain valleys in the spring and returned to the low country in autumn. Sierra, along with Plumas, Mono, and Nevada counties, placed a "sheep license tax" on each animal. Sierra County's sheep tax was five cents per head each year, regardless of whether the sheep were locally owned or migratory. In 1887, Lassen's sheep tax was declared unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court because it did not tax locally owned animals. Fortunately for the cattlemen, the decision did not affect Sierra County.²

The cattlemen had good reason for their dislike of "tramp" sheep, and Sierra County taxpayers, who paid for the upkeep of local roads, had similar disgust for the razor-hoofed animals. The migratory sheep destroyed the county roads as they passed over them, to and from the high ridges. The woolly pest left the range a "howling wilderness," leaving "a trail of fire and poisonous pastures" which cattle would not touch. Two methods were used to drive the sheepmen and their herds from the county.³

First, the cattlemen resorted to violence. Sheep were killed on the range and small, localized range wars broke out around Goodyear's Bar and near Gold Lake. The result of these minor skirmishes was the death of one sheepman, the wounding of another and the incarceration of yet another. When violence was not effective (it was never used on a large scale), the ranchers began applying political pressure on the county's governmental officers. The newspapers editorialized for a prohibitive tax of from ten to fifty cents a head. The Board of Supervisors failed to raise the tax rate but the politically vulnerable sheriff was pressured into enforcing

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the existing law. When taxes were not paid, sheep were attached and impounded by law-enforcement officers. By 1890, the problem of the "tramp" sheep had not been satisfactorily solved, at least as far as the cattlemen were concerned, but steps in the right direction had been taken and the local sheepmen had been driven from the county. In that year only twelve sheep were left in Sierra County and only twenty had been slaughtered there during the previous year.⁴

Beef and dairy cattle were the most important livestock raised in Sierra Valley during the period, 1880-1890. Dairy stock will be considered independently of the cattle business since the animals themselves were not a primary product of the dairy industry. For the beef cattlemen the eleven year period was to be a long and difficult one. In 1880 there were about 2,500 beeves in Sierra Co. These were mostly of the Mexican or longhorn type, native cattle, with few or no pure breds. Beef was either marketed by the individual ranchers or was handled by large firms with cattle herds in two states and land holdings outside Sierra County. Two of these firms, "Rowland, Flint, Heinten & Strang," and "Strang & Humphrey," jobbed five to ten thousand head annually. The industry was highly susceptible to influences that were beyond the control of the local ranchers: the economic viability of the mining camps in California and Nevada and the weather.⁵

The period under discussion, unfortunately for the cattlemen, began and ended with extremely hard winters. In 1880 cattle in the high ranges were trapped by heavy snows and frozen to death. As heavy snowfall and low temperatures continued, feed ran out and weakened animals were still dying of starvation in May. In 1888, another heavy winter hit the Sierra Nevada and cattle floundered, and then froze in the deep snow. Apparently two such disasters within eight years taught the cattlemen a lesson. The winter of 1889-90 was probably the most severe ever experienced in the region and there is not a single account of cattle succumbing to starvation or the cold. Some did die when barns collapsed under the weight of the snow and calves drowned when water flooded stables.⁶

The problem of wintering cattle that grazed in Sierra County was solved by one of the two practices which have been continued to the present day. The cattle were either kept in the valley and fed hay, or they were driven into areas where the climate was not so severe. A certain amount of mismanagement was connected with the practice of winter feeding. Some Sierra County beef remained on the valley ranches and other herds were moved east into Nevada to be wintered around Spanish Springs and in the Truckee Meadows. But at the same time, cattle from Nevada County ranges near Truckee were brought into Sierra Valley to winter there.⁷

The cattle market existed outside of Sierra Valley and the only means of moving the beef to market was to drive them, summer and winter. The mining camps in western Sierra County could be reached only by way of Yuba Pass. Herds of cattle, numbering from twenty five to sixty, were periodically driven over the pass to supply the mines and communities with fresh beef. Cattle moved over the same route into Nevada City. Even larger herds were pushed over the Little Truckee Summit to the Central Pacific yards at Truckee. Cattle that wintered in Reno, or were sold there, had to cross the

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Beckwourth Pass regardless of the weather. Winter drives were extremely difficult, with temperatures dropping to twenty degrees below zero and cattle breaking trail through as much as five feet of snow. In heavy snow the cows, if pushed hard enough, could travel about a mile an hour. When the snow reached depths greater than five feet, cattle drives were impossible. In 1890, when Sierra City became isolated by heavy snows, there was an attempt to drive cattle to the town which was dangerously low on provisions. The effort failed in snow reaching forty-five feet in depth and the town existed on short rations until provisions reached it from Downieville.<sup>8</sup>

Most Sierra Valley beef was marketed in the nearby gold fields. The mines in Sierra and Plumas Counties were the biggest customers. The large, English owned, Sierra Buttes and Plumas-Euroka mines were especially heavy buyers. These mines accepted bids from the ranchers for a specified number of pounds of beef per month, usually from 12,000 to 15,000 pounds. The cattleman who offered the lowest prices and the highest quality beef received a one year contract. Because of the large number of men employed in the quartz mines and mills it was not unusual for all the beef raised in Sierra Valley to be sold to the mines in some years. The valley ranchers also supplied most of the beef to the towns of Downieville, Alleghany, Forest City and Sierra City. The beef was sold to slaughter houses and butcher shops for resale to the residents. What cattle remained after the mines and towns had received their quotas was either sold in Nevada City or driven to the railroad yards at Truckee for transshipment to Nevada or to the San Francisco Bay area.<sup>9</sup>

Beef prices remained relatively stable up to 1888, at around six cents a pound, on the hoof, in Sierra Valley. In 1888 the price rose to a high for the decade of seven cents and then started a steep decline as cattle prices began to show the effects of the depression in the Nevada mining industry and the slackening economy in the gold districts of Sierra and Plumas Counties. By August, 1888, the price had plummeted to one-and-a-half to two cents and beef was cheaper than at any previous time during the decade. The price rose slightly and finally leveled out at four cents a pound in November, 1889. In 1890, Sierra County contained 1,400 more cattle than had been there ten years before. But the total value of cattle was significantly less than the value of a smaller number in 1880. Sierra County's ranchers had entered a depression five years before the nationwide panic struck in 1893. 10

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1. Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Nov. 30, 1888; May 4, 1888; July 27, 1888; April 18, 1890; Feb. 14, 1890; Feb. 8, 1889.

2. Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned as the Tenth Census (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 144; Interview with Arthur M. Morrell, Loyalton, California, Sept. 24, 1970; Mountain Messenger, Downieville, June 19, 1880; May 14, 1881; June 18, 1887; Sierra County Tribune, Downieville, Nov. 16, 1882; Oct. 11, 1883.

3. Sierra County Tribune, Downieville, June 19, 1885; Sierra City, Aug. 31, 1888; Mountain Messenger, Downieville, May 28, 1887, quotations from the last two entries.





4. Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, July 5, 1889; Editorial, Sept. 7, 1888; Editorial, June 8, 1888; Editorial, June 1, 1888; Sierra County Tribune, Downieville, Jan 4, 1883; Mountain Messenger, Downieville, Sept. 10, 1887, Editorial, May 28, 1887; Reports on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States, Eleventh Census (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), p. 239.

5. Report on the Productions of Agriculture as Returned at the Tenth Census (Washington, D.C. : Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 144; Fariss and Smith, Illustrated History of Sierra County, pp. 263-264.

May 29, 1880; Mountain Messenger, Downieville, March 6, 1880; May 8, 1880;

6. Mountain Messenger, Downieville, March 6, 1880; May 8, 1880; May 29, 1880; Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Jan. 6, 1888; Jan. 27, 1888; Feb. 14, 1890; Jan. 31, 1890.

7. Sierra County Tribune, Forest City, Apr. 20, 1882; Downieville, Nov. 9, 1882; Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Jan. 6, 1888; Nov. 16, 1888; Oct. 26, 1888; Arthur M. Strang, "History of the Cattle Business in Sierra Valley, " SCHSQ, I (June, 1969), p. 2

8. Mountain Messenger, Downieville, Jan. 17, 1880; May 8, 1880; Dec. 25, 1880; Sierra County Tribune, Downieville, Feb. 8, 1883; Feb. 14, 1884; March 13, 1884; May 29, 1885; April 24, 1886; Sierra City, Jan 8, 1886; Jan 29, 1886; Jan. 27, 1888; May 4, 1888; Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Jan. 13, 1888; April 6, 1888; April 13, 1888; Jan 31, 1890; Feb. 14, 1890.

9. Mountain Messenger, Downieville, Jan. 10, 1880; March 13, 1880; Dec. 25, 1880; Jan 8, 1881; Jan. 29, 1881; March 19, 1881; March 5, 1887; Nevada City Daily Transcript, March 1, 1887; Sierra County Tribune, Forest City, April 20, 1882; May 4, 1882; Sierra City, March 12, 1886; Truckee Republican, March 6, 1880; Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Jan. 13, 1888; April 13, 1888; Nov. 23, 1888.

10. Sierra Valley Leader, Sierraville, Jan. 13, 1888; Feb. 10, 1888; Aug. 24, 1888; Aug. 2, 1889; May 31 and Nov. 1, 1889; Reports on the Statistics of Agriculture in the United States, Eleventh Census (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1896), pp. 200, 278.

Part III in this series on Agriculture in Sierra County will deal with the Dairy Industry in Sierra County and will appear in our May, 1975 Bulletin.

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## SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPONSORS HISTORY ESSAY CONTEST

The Historical Society is presently sponsoring an essay contest in the Sierra County schools. There will be a prize in the elementary schools and in the high schools. The subject of the essay must be, of course, some phase of Sierra County History. Students must have their essays in to Mrs. G. Copren by the first week in May and the winners will be announced by the end of the school year when prizes will be given. The winning essays will be published in the 1985 editions of the Historical Society Bulletin.

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### HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUST RAISE DUES FOR THE 1986

### HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUST RAISE DUES FOR THE YEAR 1975

Inflation has caught up with the Historical Society. We must raise our dues for 1975 from \$5.00 to \$7.50. We had to do this for two reasons:

1. The cost of publishing our bulletin has gone up dramatically, and
2. We wished to put some monies in a special account for our museums (to be explained later)

We hope all of our loyal members will be able to afford the extra money and will join the Historical Society in 1975. Please send your dues to our treasurer. Remember, you get your bulletin with your membership which is tax deductible. \* \* \* \* \*

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### HISTORICAL SOCIETY PLANS SERIES OF INTERESTING BULLETINS

The Historical Society has planned a series of very interesting bulletins for 1975, and the editor even plans to publish the bulletins on time!! We will feature such articles as agriculture in Sierra County in the 1880's, a continuation of the very interesting diary of the Downieville miner, notes from the museum in Downieville by Ruth Drury, a historians visit to each of the communities in Sierra County, interviews with Senior Citizens of Sierra County, Historical Society news on our museum projects, and the finish of the articles dealing with Chinese Chatter.

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### HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPONSORING TWO MUSEUMS IN SIERRA COUNTY

The really big news concerning the Sierra County Historical



## Sierra County Historical Society News-Page 2

Society is the work being done by the Historical Society in relation to California Proposition I. As you are all aware, Sierra County received \$200,000 dollars under the rules of Prop. I. The various agencies in the County, mainly the Cities, the County Board of Supervisors and the School District, submitted projects to an Ad Hoc Committee (comprised of interested people from all over the Co.). It was hoped that the committee would agree on a priority list of the projects submitted, and then the Co. and the City would make the necessary applications to the State.

The Historical Society is interested in two projects, and has submitted them for monies from Prop. I. One of the projects is a restoration project in Sierra City, California. The project will restore the Old Kentucky Mine. The mine is one of the best preserved (if not the best preserved) stamp mill in the West. A museum would be built into the existing plant and a recreation area will be included. This area will have lavatories and picnic areas and a parking lot. Living quarters for a caretaker are also being planned as part of the project. This should be a tremendous addition to Sierra County and a project that will preserve some of the most colorful and interesting aspects of our heritage. The other project will be a museum in Loyalton. This museum will be built into the old fire house plus have an addition (fire proof) built onto the fire house. This museum will also have lavatory facilities and an area where visitors may eat a picnic lunch and rest. While the museum will display collections of interest from many phases of Loyalton and Sierra Valley history, it is planned to be primarily an agricultural history museum. Several pieces of old farm machinery used in the valley will be displayed.

NOTE: IF YOU HAVE ANY OLD PICTURES, OLD ARTIFACTS OR ANY OTHER THING OF INTEREST TO THE HISTORY OF SIERRA VALLEY OR SIERRA CITY, AND YOU ARE THINKING OF GIVING IT AWAY, PLEASE DON'T. Contact a member of the Historical Society and we will come and get it, and display it in your name, or in memory of one of your loved ones. Help us to stop the flow of historical objects out of the County-- and keep them here for display.

We again invite all of you to join the Historical Society for the 1975 year. We need your support for the many projects underway in Sierra County and we hope you will support us.

Many interesting artifacts of historical interest to Sierra County are being sent out of the County. Please help us to stop this and to keep our heritage here, in the County, where it belongs.



THE HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED DIARY OF A DOWNIEVILLE

MINER IN THE 1850's

The following article is part of a series which has appeared in the Sierra County Historical Society Bulletin over the past two years. The diary, or at least the part which has survived, was written from April 12, 1856, to March 2, 1859. We again thank Mrs. Marian Lavezola, Sierra County Treasurer, for making the diary available to the Historical Society. We also thank Mr. Harry Klein and members of his Sierra County History Class for "translating" parts of the diary. We have attempted to keep the flavor of the original diary by making a minimum of changes in the original punctuation, sentence structure, and spelling.

Sunday, June 21st, 1857---

Before our breakfast was ready Mr. Bassett came down on his way home (to town?) He borrowed ten dollars of me and left some specimens in pledge---Baruch Porides was down here last night from the Buttes. I wrote two letters for him--one to his father and the other to his sweetheart---We all went to town after breakfast. Came home early in the afternoon. Andy, I travelled up to Bassetts. They served up some seventy trout which one of his partners had just caught. The river trout are much smaller than the trout which we found in Gold Lake---Bassett came home with us to stay with us so as to be ready to accompany Andy and I to Forest City and Wet Ravine---

Monday Eve--June 22nd 1857

Andy was up early and had breakfast ready a little after sunrise. We got an early start, passed through Downieville without stopping anytime, found it very hot going up the City of Six Hill. I panted all the way up and my shirt was perfectly wet with perspiration. Arrived in Forest City about ten o.cl'k, after a short delay we passed on to Wet Ravine a distance of One mile and a half from Forest City and nine and a half from Downieville. A friend of Bassetts gave us our dinners and we settled the business we went over to attend to and started on our return--Returned by the way of Galloway's Ranch and reached Downieville about five o.cl'k P.M.--got our suppers and soon after left for home. Bassett went on by.

Tuesday June 23rd 1857

In the forenoon I assisted Uncle Stephen on his river claim. He has a great many tailings to move off of the ground and we tried to twin the river so that it would wash against the bank of gravel. We did not succeed in doing much though. We were in the water a couple of hours and as the morning was a little cool we were soon chilled through. When we returned for dinner found Whiting A. Fellows. He is about leaving California for Iowa where his Parents reside---he stopped with us during the afternoon and then left. I

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could not persuade him to stay overnight. I have been acquainted with him about four years and have never yet seen anything wrong about him yet.

Wednesday June 24 1857

Accompanied Uncle Stephen up the river to see his claim. He is engaged there in washing the tailings off--the river is not high enough to wash them off rapidly. I returned immediately with some tools which I had been using there last week. Have been about the house most of the day---filled a hand saw in the forenoon and read Harper and Putman in the afternoon. Davis and Andy are off assisting some friends of theirs to put in a flume. They are floating lumber down the river to their diggings today---

Thursday June 25th 1857

Went to town in the afternoon. Bought a bill of provisions, helped to put them up and then paid for them. Attended the theatre in company with Whiting Fellows. The great play of Richelieu was performed. Mr. James Stark was the leading actor. I never saw the play acted before but I was satisfied that the play was well done.

Friday June 26 1857

Whiting Fellows came home with me from town. We staid about the house until the middle of the afternoon then visited Uncle Stephens fluming grounds. He was beginning to build a house--I returned to town with Mr. Fellows to see the play of "The Moors in Spaine" performed. Davis accompanied us---

Sunday Eve June 28th 1857

Yesterday I moved my blankets from our Cabin up to my old place. Baked a loaf of bread and borrowed some coffee and then started for town. Uncle Stephen, Davis, and Andy went after me in a couple of hours. We all went to the theatre to witness the tragedy of Macbeth. It was Starks benefit night, the house was crowded. It was the first time I had ever seen the great prince acted but I think it was well done, at least I was highly interested. A.S.D. and his wife were out, were both well pleased with the performance.

Stopped at the "hotel DeGarrote" and was at Asborne's in the afternoon. Whiting Fellows, Mr. Jones, and Uncle Stephen were dining with them. Whiting Fellows leaves Downieville tomorrow morning in route for Iowa in the Isthmus of Panama. I expect he will visit Hemington and see my Fathers folks. Had great difficulty in hiring a man, I succeeded at last in engaging a western man at fifty dollars a month. He came up with me this afternoon and will work a week on trial. Cooked supper here tonight and ate it, it is the first meal I have eaten here since last January---brought up my table, chair and c from the other house since supper. Davis has been up to see us, he has just gone home.

Monday June 29 1857

My broken slumber disturbed by unpleasant visions and wearying dreams left me tired and spiritless though I slept soundly long after sunrise. Began to work at the flum assisted by my hired man. We

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got the heavy timbers in their places and the trio carried and some of them levelled. The air has been quite cool. The sun has been obscured nearly all day and now (a little of the dark) it is raining though gently---We were in the water about three fourths of the day--most of the time about knee deep---It is very cold for the season. I was chilled through---My hired man had the misfortune to lose his purse which he was so imprudent as to carry in the pocket of his overalls. He is a little curious and not a little either, for he asks a gret many questions---I am in the habit of leaving dishes go unwashed for a week at a time as I can't spare the time to wash them and besides it makes but little difference to me whether they are clean or not, especially when I am the cook. I was pleased to hear him frowl a little and see him turn up his turnip nose at the exceeding filth of a tin plate which he had eaten off of twice--

Tuesday June 30th 1857

Half of the near year already gone. When I woke up it was raining briskly---there was a slight rain when I went to bed, the river raised during the night. It rained several inches today. I was afraid the timber we put down yesterday would be carried away. Have been idle all day---Took the letter which I wrote last night to the Post Office today---recd a "Pacific" was home again by two o.cl'k called at Asborne's to inquire about Uncle Stephen. Have read several pages in the history of England. The rain has ceased but it is cloudy yet---

Wednesday July 1st 1857

The weather is unsettled yet, considerable rain fell in the forenoon. The fork raised some six or eight inches but it is falling now. Was up to see Uncle Stephen since dinner and found him at work washing gravel and showed off his claim. He has one man to help him, he has built a comfortable little house since he got there Monday morn. Read the conclusion of the reign of Henry 2nd--all of Richard 1st and part of John--

Thursday July 2nd 1857

I had just sat myself down to read Humis History of Eng--last night when Mr. Long came and requested me to answer a letter which he had lately recd from his son. Mr. Long is engaged with sawing at the Buttes. The recent rains have prevented them from working so he and others came to Downieville a distance of seventeen miles to do a little trading and see their friends. Mr. James Davis, one of the party, brought a specimen of gold bearing quartz which he sent to me by his brother Issacc Davis--after Mr. Long went away last evening I wrote his letter and filled four pages. He came up this morning and appeared to be very much pleased---I had breakfast pretty early. We laid the lumber down, I placed the boards and nailed them and my hired man carried the lumber. The rain appears to be over for the present though dark and heavy clouds admonished us not to be too sanguin of fair weather yet. Have been to see Davis and Andy. Since supper brought up a lot of letter paper and the second volume of American Encyclopedis---The air is quite cool and to me it even feels like frost.

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Friday July 3rd 1857

Was up before the sun. The flume is now about ready for the water. We caulked the cracks this afternoon. The sun came out clear in the forenoon, but since dinner there has been rain which almost froze as it fell. I was so cold I had to put my coat on and then when I came up to get supper I was chilled through. Davis came up at noon and said that he had been to town, that the mail had arrived and brought nothing for me--

Saturday July 4 1857

The Glorious Fourth. I placed some hose above the dam for the purpose of bringing water into the flume to swell the lumber--I started for town about nine o'clock a.m. had four men from Davis' Cabin accompany me down--Downieville was already full of people when we got there. Three Military Companies were mustering--in all about one hundred men--each company was preceded by a band as they marched through the streets. There was a procession formed of the military companies and also of the citizens. They went through town several times and then stopped at the Theatre, where the Declaration was read and an Oration delivered--The oration was delivered by Mr. Kirkpatrick. It was very able and much applauded. In the afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Stark played "Catherine and Petruchio" to a large audience--In the evening they played the "Iron Chest." I did not admire it so much as some of the other plays I have seen played. I got home about One o'clock.

Sunday Eve July 5th 1857

Kept my bed till about nine o'clock. Ward had breakfast ready when I got up. Started for town soon after eating breakfast. Saw Asborne outside of his door, he asked me in said he was alone, his wife having gone to church. Little Rosemond was tied up to prevent her from getting into mischief and trouble--I sat and talked with him a couple of hours, he is much more pleasant then he was two years ago--He don't display so many taunts and reproaches in his speech as he did at that time, but seems desirous to render our intercourse as amicable as possible. I made a few purchases in town and then returned home, without any delay--Have commenced the 2nd Vol. of the History of England.

Monday Eve July 6th 1857

Began to build another flume, on the ground which I flumed last year--We were in the greater part of the forenoon. It was very cold and my legs fairly smarted or rather felt as if they had been stuned all over. My hired man complained a good deal. He was not very well, though which made it worse for him--We got the timbers to their places and the ties all carried before noon, in the afternoon we got bottom boards placed and the sides carried but did not nail any--The weather is getting hot again as I noticed when I was at work out of the water---

Tuesday Afternoon July 7 1857

Nailed the side boards to one half of the flume but did not fasten the other boards because they were too wet. So that being

Page 5 Diary of a Downieville Miner

swollen to their full extent I could not get them inside of the stakes when both sides were up. Sharpened our axes, and cleared off a place for a house. Expect to build it tomorrow. Ward was taken sick about the middle of the afternoon, he came to the house and laid down. I found him abed when I came in at sun set. Davis and Andy have been up here since supper. Am boiling beans--

Wednesday July 8 1857

Ward complained of being unwell and said he would not work today. I boarded the sides of our new shanty in the forenoon and after went to town to get drilling to make the roof of--I got back in time to saw it before supper. Been reading the "Pacific" since supper--

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY THANKS THE FOLLOWING PLACES OF
BUSINESS WHICH SUPPORT OUR ACTIVITIES. WE URGE ALL OUR
MEMBERS TO REPAY THESE KIND PEOPLE BY SUPPORTING THEM!

BOWLING'S GROCERY AND FURNITURE
Loyalton, California

LOYALTON PHARMACY
E. J. and Bob Peeler
Loyalton, California

LAMBERT-WHITTAKER INSURANCE,
INC.
Loyalton, California

ED G. WHITE AND SONS
Garage-----Ford Dealer
Loyalton, California

LOYALTON MARKET
Groceries--Fresh Meat and
Produce
Debi and Bill Davis
Loyalton, California

Thursday, July 9th 1857

Ward has been idle today. He complained a good deal and has been taking medicine. I worked on the upper flume. Nailed the boards and stopped some of the cracks--was at work a couple of hours wedging up the ties during which time I had to be in the water. When I finished that job I got in the flume in order to finish caulking the bottom. I pulled my boots and socks off and hung them up on the side of the flume facing the sun so as to dry them and immediately went about my work. In about a half an hour I chanced to look around and saw that one of the boots was missing--by hammering on the sides of the flume I had jarred the board on which the boot hung when over it went into the river. I looked a long time for it busy but was finally obliged to give up the search--So much for carelessness. I have the mate left but I might as well have none---

Friday July 10th 1857

Was at work on both flumes today--Have just returned from town. Was down after drilling to spread over the puncheons of the dam.

There was none to be obtained in Downieville so I returned without-- The three companies whose flumes join expect to begin on the dam tomorrow. Want to get the water in the flume tomorrow if possible. The weather is getting very warm. The nights are warm again.

Saturday July 11th 1857

Have been at work building the dam for the lower flume which is the uppermost of three flumes joining. The other companies were assisting. We did not finish. It will probably take a day yet. The other men at my solicitation have agreed to come up tomorrow and finish it before the gravel can get washed from under the puncheons-- have been in the water a good deal today. Was in most of the afternoon. It was very cold and when I came out to night I was chilled through. Since supper have been up the river to see Uncle Stephen. He has done considerable work but has not got his flume made yet--

Sunday Eve July 12 1857

Was busy during the forenoon in working at the dam--The frenchmen were out before I had breakfast---Since dinner I have been busy in cleaning up things generally---Have read but little today. Am in that part of history of England which treats of Edward 3rd--

Monday Eve July 13 1857

Was up early. The three companies have been at work at the dam nearly all day, and washed the dirt into the dam, the dam is not tight yet but there is not half so much water as there was this morning--Ward and myself were perfectly wet long before night. Some water runs over the sides of the flume. Am And there is considerable leakage. We caulked some of the cracks before quitting work.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY THANKS THE FOLLOWING PLACES OF
BUSINESS WHICH SUPPORT OUR ACTIVITIES. WE URGE ALL OUR
MEMBERS TO REPAY THESE KIND PEOPLE BY SUPPORTING THEM!

PAT AND JIM'S EMPORIUM

Sporting Goods--Clothing
Loyalton, California

BRICK'S PLACE

Loyalton, California
Your host, Bob Bowling

LOMBARDI MERCANTILE

for all of your mercantile
needs!
Loyalton, California

Tuesday July 14 1857

Began work soon after sunrise and stuck at it whole day till after dark. Finished the house and moved in the forenoon. After dinner we cleared out the river below the tail of the flume, threw a great many rocks out and lowered the water several inches--Wethen put the wheel at the upper end of the flume which I had there last year. Ward then went and cut some spruce brush to place in the bottom of his bunk. I am much fatigued.

"CALIFORNIA CHINESE CHATTER"

Editor's Note:

The following article is taken from a book by Albert Dressler. The book is a collection of telegrams sent to and by the Chinese miners of Downieville in 1874, as well as the account of a trial of one Ah Jake. Our series of articles only concern the telegrams. We quote Mr. Dressler's foreword to his work:

"To the reader the contents of this book may at times appear comical. It is not my purpose to lampoon, and I wish to state, here, my attitude toward the Chinese. I have high regard for the Celestial Brethren, and I am ready at all times to accord them the respect I consider due them, because of their achievements, and most ancient lineage.

"The heat of the tropical sun shines down,
What matter the skin be black or white;
For white, or yellow, or black or brown,
Are equal, at last, in the Master's sight."

To those interested in the history of the State of Calif., and to those inclined toward the humorous, it is not amiss to call attention once again to the adage, "Truth is stranger than fiction." The truth herein contained is represented by 120 telegrams, exchanged among the Chinese, to and from Downieville, Sierra County, California, in the year 1874. It provides the reader with a heretofore unnoted aspect of California's Melting Pot. It offers a glimpse into the realism of her romance, as yet unknown save to a local few, and it proclaims the atomic part of that Entity to which it belongs.

TELEGRAMS EXCHANGED BY THE CHINESE TO AND FROM DOWNIEVILLE, SIERRA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, DURING THE YEAR 1874-----Part 4 of a series.

Ah Yu Dick
Sierra City

Downieville, Cal.,
Oct 8, 1874

Ah Chee send a dispatch to me saying that you snatch his money. Give it back to him and not make any trouble.

Answer.

25 words Pd. 55c

Ah Tri

Eing Goon, Fook Sing

Marysville, Cal.,

Last two time long pay fifty dollar
Colusa and policeman just now chinaman want money. Send it quick by telegraph.

22 pd.

Sing Lung

Eing Goon, Fook Sing

Marysville, Cal.,
Oct. 9, 1874, 12:35 P.M.

Send fifty dollars here for tonight by telegraph hurry it quick. Answer

14 pd.

Sing Lung

14

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Sing Lung, Marysville
What for you want fifty dollars.
6 words Pd. 50c

Downieville, Cal.,
October 9, 1874

Fook Sing

Tie Yuen
When you coming to pay. If not in few days will send of-
ficer after you.
15 Pd.

Nevada, California
Oct. 13, 1874, 1:30 P.M.

Hong Hi Wien

Fook Sing, Care Tie Yuen
If you don't settle immediately will bring sheriff up.
Answer.
10 Pd.

Nevada, Calif.
Oct. 15, 1874, 6:30 P.M.

Hong Hi

Hong Hi--Nevada
Will send money down in two days.
7 words Pd. 40 c

Downieville, Cal.,
October 15, 1874

Fook Sing

Sing Goon
Tell Fook Sing send money by telegraph come down Col-
usa policeman here now will wait til tomorrow money no
come he go to Downieville to collect.
26 Collect

Marysville, Cal.
Oct. 24, 1874, 8:15 P.M.

Sing Lung

Fook Sing
She will go down tonight if you want see her you will
have to go to San Francisco.
17 Pd.

Wadsworth, Nevada
Oct. 26, 1874, 10:15 A.M.

Kaw Chung

Tie Yuen
My woman sick, is she well or not. Answer telegraph.
10 Pd.

Jamison, California
Oct. 28, 1874, 10:12 A.M.
Ah Jim

Ah Jim--Jamison
She all right now. Go Jamison few days
8 Collect 25c

Downieville, Cal.
October 28, 1874

Tie Yuen

~~~~~ 15 ~~~~~



Ah Jim  
Jamison

Downieville, Cal.,  
November 2, 1874

Your woman go to Sierra Valley be up tomorrow too much  
snow other way.  
13 words Collect

Tie Yuen

Tie Yuen

Jamison, California  
Nov. 2, 1874, 4:30 P.M.

I go to Sierra Valley today did my woman start.  
9 Pd. 25c

Ah Jim

Ah Jim  
Jamison City

Downieville, Cal.  
November 2, 1874

Yes she started for Jamison this morning by eight o'clock  
on horse back she did not go by Sierra Valley.  
20 words Collect

Tie Yuen

I Yuen Store

Nevada, California  
Nov. 6, 1874, 4:20 P.M.

Gim Sing and Gan Que in jail send money quick.  
10 Collect

Fook Sing

Ah Tim, Ah Sing

Nevada, California  
Nov. 6, 1874, 4:40 P.M.

I take woman, good deal expense, send one hundred dollars  
by telegraph. All settled.  
14 Collect

Fook Sing

Sam Wo  
Sierra City

Downieville, Cal.  
November 9, 1874

Woman Tie Ho come back today sure.  
7 words Pd. 25c

Ah Jake, Fong Sing

Nevada, California  
Nov. 16, 1874, 2:14 P.M.

Can you bring Gan Que to San Juan right away. Answer.  
10 Pd.

Ah Wein

Ah Wien  
Nevada

Downieville, Cal.  
November 16, 1874

I Can't do it. I am going to leave here for China tom-  
orrow. Come up yourself and get her.

19 words Collect

Ah Jake



Sam Wo  
Sierra City

Tell Fong Hing come tomorrow morning by seven o'clock.

Answer

10 words Pd. 25c

Downieville, Cal.  
Nov. 17, 1874

Hong Quong

Hong Quong

Send me right name who you want to come down. I don't know that name.

15 Collect 35c

Sierra City, Cal.  
Nov. 17, 1874, 5:20 P.M.

Sam Wo

Sam Wo Wash House  
Sierra City

His name is Sam tell him to be sure and come down here by seven o'clock tomorrow morning. Answer he no come or not.

29 words Pd. 65c

Downieville, Cal.  
Nov. 17, 1874

John Sing  
Tong Wo and Co.

Gan Que Yee Ah Sing  
Nevada

Gan Que go to Sierra City. Come up here quick. Answer quick.

11 words Pd. 60c

Downieville, Cal.  
Nov. 19, 1874

Ah Tim

Ah Tim, Ah Mow  
Care Jin Sing Store

Nevada, Cal.,  
November 20, 1874, 8:04 A.M.

Will send officer up today to stop Gan Que. Answer.  
10 Pd.

Ah Wein

Wong Ah Yeu,  
Fong Sing Store

Nevada, Cal.  
November 20, 1874, 4:30 P.M.

Is Gan Que in Downieville. Answer quick.

7 Pd.

Ah Wein

Ah Wein  
Nevada

Downieville, Cal.,  
November 20, 1874

Yes she is here.  
4 words Collect

Wong Ah Yeu



