

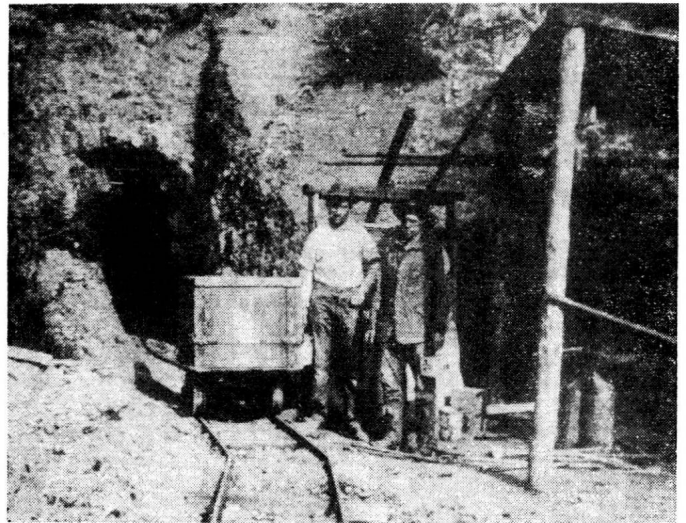


THE TANNER MINE AS TOLD BY AMON TANNER TO COKE WOOD

Although this mine had a comparatively short life—from about 1908 to World War I—it produced a good deal of rich ore and was one of the important small quartz mines in the Murphys region. It was located on the ridge about one mile north of Murphys at the head of Long Gulch and directly behind the Price Williams ranch and was located and developed by Amon Tanner and Billy Plumber in 1908. This mine is in the region referred to as the East Belt of the Mother Lode.

Billy Plumber was suffering from malaria about 1907 and couldn't hold up under a steady job that required heavy manual labor and, therefore, spent much of his time prospecting. He started prospecting up Long Gulch from the Sheep Ranch Road and found color in many places. In search of the source of the gold he followed the gulch to the point where it divided into two branches, but lost the color, or the free gold, in the gravel. It was at this point that Amon joined him in his prospecting and by working up an adjoining ravine they were able to find several good prospects of quartz outcroppings. After investigating the property titles, they found that the prospects were on government land and so staked out two claims which they called the "Hardscrabble" and the "Laurel." Billy Plumber would have preferred to call the claims the "Gray Eagle."

The two men then began the development of the claims and found a narrow but profitable lead which they worked until Billy Plumber wanted to sell. When Mr. Tanner learned that Plumber was trying to sell out his half, he purchased Billy's half. For this reason the mine has always been called the Tanner Mine. But it took a good deal of time to work and to develop the mine and Mr. Tanner had the ranch to operate. Therefore, he gave a half interest in the mine to Johnny Campbell who was



THE MOUTH OF THE TANNER MINE, showing two workmen, Chas. Letora on the left and Frank Cuneo on the right.

running the ice plant a short distance up Murphys Creek from the Tanner Ranch.

As the two men developed the quartz lead, they uncovered rock that was paying well. Johnny Campbell began devoting all his time to the development and the two partners placed a value on the mine of \$10,000. At this point Campbell saw the need for additional capital and interested Matt Manuel, a local lumberman, and Charles Snyder, a local attorney, in the mine. A tunnel was dug at the base of the ridge to cut across the quartz lead at a lower level and a two-stamp mill was constructed at the mouth of the tunnel to work the ore. Matt Manuel's idea was to take only the richest ore and not bother with the poorer rock and if it was only a short lead they would soon work it completely out without too

much investment. However, the ore proved to be quite rich and both Tony Malaspina and Walter Martell, who worked in the mine, told of pockets being blasted out that were almost pure gold.

At this time the investors, especially John Campbell, decided to incorporate and sell capital stock to increase the financial resources of the operators. Charles Snyder drew up the incorporation papers. One of the gilt-edged stock certificates made out to Amon Tanner shows that the East Belt Development Company, with John Campbell as president and Charles Snyder as secretary, was incorporated at Angels Camp on February 3, 1910, with a capital stock of \$250,000 based on 250,000 shares of capital stock valued at \$1.00 each.

Matt Manuel provided \$900 to send John Campbell to the eastern securities market to place the stock on sale. With revenue from the sale of the stock, the company expanded operations and overhead. The two-stamp mill was increased to a seven-stamp mill, and the crew was enlarged and a foreman employed. Amon Tanner sold his half of the partnership to the company for \$5,000—\$4,000 in cash and 1,000 shares valued at \$1,000. He was engaged at this time in running the mail stage to the Big Trees as well as farming the ranch.

The most successful period of operations of the mine was around 1912 when the rich ore being taken from the mine caused a mining boom in the Murphys area, and many amateurs became prospectors searching carefully the hills around Murphys for outcroppings and prospects.

Various methods were used to promote the sale of stock in the mine. On one occasion the general public from Murphys and Angels Camp was invited out to a picnic at the mine where free ice cream was served and John Campbell, the president, told the crowd that he wouldn't sell his interest in the mine for \$100,000. Tony Malaspina tells how he brought out several ore cars loaded down with beautiful gold-laden rock and Foreman Canfield, who was running the mill, became very excited and asked the miners not to say anything about the rich ore. To which Tony replied that he should tell everyone so that stock values would increase. Canfield apparently had the idea of keeping the dividends from the rich ore for the benefit of a small group of investors.

However, as operations continued, the leads pinched out and became so small they were not worth working. Matt Manuel sold his stock for \$3,000. The directors of the company had to levy assessments on the stockholders in order to continue the search for the disappearing veins or leads. After paying nine assessments, Mr. Tanner lost faith in the operations, and had his 1,000 shares of stock sold because of his failure to pay the assessment.

The East Belt Development Company finally was forced to close down operations and sold the mine to another company. However, no worthwhile activity resulted and the claims were eventually abandoned. Mr. Tanner feels that there is rich ore left in the mine if adequately explored.

In later years Lewis Williams relocated the property as a mining claim because he wanted the water that was running from the tunnel. In the 1950's he leased the mine to a Mr. Miller who, working almost alone, sank a shaft



AT DEDICATION—Amon Tanner, discoverer of the Tanner Mine, is shown on the left above, and Archie Stevenot, "Mr. Mother Lode," on the right. The picture was taken at the dedication of the Forrester Building as the Old Timers Museum in Murphys in May, 1962.—Photo by Earle Edmiston.

down from a quartz lead on the side of the hill above the tunnel, and was able to produce some good specimens of gold that have been exhibited at both the Tuolumne and Calaveras County fairs. This proves that not all the gold has been taken from the hill.

All the old timers refer to the mine as the Tanner Mine and none of them seem to even remember the name East Belt Development Company.

Walter Martell and Tony Malaspina worked in the mine between 1912 and 1915, and finally had to attach the property in order to get their wages.

The property was finally sold to a man named Schliemann or Schlieman who sold the equipment and materials to compensate for his investment.

The following individuals were among those who worked for the mine: Walter Martell, Chas. Letoro, Frank Cuneo, George Thompson and Tony Malaspina.

18-YEAR-OLD SHOT

On the night of April 8, 1861, at Upper Calaveritas, Benito Morana, a young man 18 years of age, was shot with a pistol by Pedro Leon. The shooting took place in front of the Fandango in Upper Calaveritas.

THE FATAL DUEL AT MOONLIGHT FLAT COMPILED BY J. A. SMITH

From the San Andreas Independent of September 17, 1859, we are informed of the secret arrangements of a contemplated duel between two of the town's respected gentlemen residing there. Nothing was known officially but it was generally known that a meeting had been arranged between Mr. Wm. J. Gatewood, Esq., and Dr. P. Goodwyn.

It was understood that the seconds for Dr. Goodwyn were W. T. Lewis (later State Senator) and Major Glynn, while Captain Pope and Martin Rowan were acting as seconds for Mr. Gatewood. There also was no doubt that all honorable efforts had been made to remove the cause of the quarrel without a resort to firearms. The cause of this fatal duel has never been revealed.

The story continues as follows:

"Early yesterday morning, four or five carriages, containing the principals, seconds, surgeons and a few friends left town, driving along the old road toward the Kentucky House. The meeting, we are informed, was arranged to take place at 6 o'clock, near the Kentucky House, but for some reason unknown to us, the parties drove farther along the road, coming to a halt on the flat near Foreman's. (The place is located near Fourth Crossing and is also known as Moonlight Flat.)

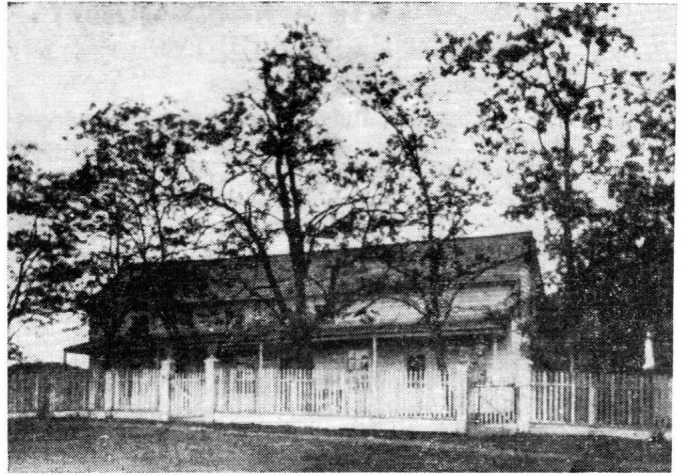
"Here they alighted and proceeded to measure off the ground. The agreement was, to fight with rifles, distance 40 yards. Lewis, acting for Goodwyn, won the word; Captain Pope for Gatewood, the choice of ground. The preliminaries were all arranged and the parties ready for position by 7 o'clock a. m. The principals are both reported to have re-appeared cool, and to have exchanged the courtesies of the moment of taking positions assigned by the seconds. The word was given, thus: 'Are you ready? Fire, one, two, three.' At the interrogative part of the sentence, each answered, 'I am.' At the moment that the word 'three' was about to be articulated, both sprung the triggers of their rifles. Dr. Goodwyn's hung fire and he lost his shot. Gatewood's shot struck Goodwyn in the abdomen, ranging obliquely, and downwards, passing out at the hip.

"Immediately upon Dr. Goodwyn's fall, Gatewood advanced toward him, extending his hand and remarking, 'Doctor, I am very sorry that this affair terminated so—very sorry, indeed.' To which the doctor replied, 'I am glad to know that you acted like a gentleman.' Gatewood thanked him for his kind remark, and left the field in company with his surgeon.

"Gatewood's carriage, which was a large vehicle, with room to accommodate the wounded man in a reclining position, was left for that purpose, and he returned to town in the doctor's buggy. In about an hour Goodwyn was brought in and conveyed to his room. He was in great agony, and only survived some two or three hours, dying between 11 and 12 in the morning.

"Universal regret at the bloody affair and fatal termination is the sentiment that pervades the town. Both gentlemen are well known here, and have lived in this

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THE OLD ROONEY COTTAGE AT CARSON HILL, Calaveras County, was headquarters for mining men in that vicinity. It is now gone, and the site is occupied by the Marvin Airola home.

Rooney's daughter, Theresa, married James G. Fair of Comstock fame, and the Fairs' daughter, Virginia, married into the Vanderbuilt family.

Judge J. A. Smith, our Society's president, lived there when he taught school at Carson Hill, 1903-04. —Photo courtesy of Judge Smith.

SPECIAL TO THE "MAIL"

The following special telegram was received by the Stockton Mail at a late hour this afternoon:

"San Andreas, April 30—Owing to the intense excitement produced here by the news of the attempt to rob the stage between San Andreas and Sheep Ranch and the killing of two people, it is impossible to obtain full particulars of the affair.

"No sooner did the news come than the whole town started out after the robber and murderer, not stopping to inquire into the details of the shooting.

"The only particulars that have reached this city are that the masked man, who was standing by a tree, blazed away at the stage when it came up to him, not stopping even to call out to the driver to halt. The stage had a considerable amount of money aboard, which was saved, the robber fleeing into the brush immediately after firing. He discharged both barrels of his shotgun.

"Mike Tovey, Wells Fargo & Company's messenger, who is well known for his nerve, was on the seat with the driver. It is thought here that he moved his shotgun towards his shoulder upon seeing the robber step from behind the tree, and that is why the robber fired.

"Tovey was shot in the arm. The driver, A. Raggio, and Miss Rodersino, a passenger, were mortally wounded. Tovey put the driver into the stage with the lady and drove to Sperry's, where the lady died. It is reported that Raggio died before reaching Sperry's."

CHINESE MURDERS COUNTRYMAN

Ah Slung, a Chinese, was murdered at Poverty Bar by another Chinese named Ah Ban on August 31, 1861.

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The Calaveras County Historical Society meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Courthouse in San Andreas. Dinner meetings are held each quarter at different places in the county.

EDITORIAL

Congratulations to Mrs. Alice Eldridge for arranging the best Christmas program the Society has ever experienced. Also, this program was arranged while she was hobbling around on a badly sprained ankle. However, Mrs. Eldridge would want credit given to those who assisted her, I'm sure, such as Mrs. Zumwalt, who very competently accompanied the musical numbers by Al Gross, Ralph Treat, Harry Buchanan and Mrs. Bowman. Paul and Helen Lewis added color and fun to the occasion by presenting a medley of popular numbers on their harmonicas. The decorations were arranged by Sadie Hunt and Eva Soracco. Judge Smith provided the lovely little Christmas tree. One of the best parts of the program was the reminiscences of our beloved president, Judge Smith, on Christmases that he could remember in Calaveras County.

Your editor was pleasantly surprised by the gorgeous birthday cake presented to him by the ladies during the refreshment hour.

In spite of the refusal of the State Division of Beaches and Parks to provide a plaque, the Calaveras County Historical Society and the Matuca Chapter of E Clampus Vitus combined their efforts to mark the spot near Mountain Ranch where the last stagecoach hold-up was attempted in Calaveras County on April 30, 1892. The dedication of the plaque occurred on January 12 at 2 o'clock with the Clampers in their colorful red shirts assisting in the dedication. Judge Smith gave the dedicatory address. The joint dedication is a fine illustration of cooperation between two organizations interested in preserving our romantic heritage.

Paul Lewis reported at the last meeting that the

The Fatal Duel at Moonlight Flat

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place for years, and have many warm friends. It also happens that the friends of one are friends of the other. Everyone exonerates Gatewood from blame and it is agreed upon by all hands that the duel was, throughout, conducted upon the most humane and honorable terms known to the code. Perhaps no one more sincerely regrets its fatal termination than Gatewood himself.

"We are not informed as to the precise cause of the meeting, but heard that it originated before election. Angry words were passed by Dr. Goodwyn and were resented by a blow from Gatewood. A challenge was then sent by the former to the latter, when the matter, we believe, was postponed until yesterday.

"We might here, with much appropriateness, indulge in a moral essay upon the general evil of the duello and prove, for the thousandth time, its utter incompatibility with the faith of a Christian, but when the supreme judge of the State can lay down his ermine to fight a duel, when a U. S. senator does not think it so terrible to face the shot of an experienced marksman at ten paces, as to look public opinion in the eye and incur its scorns, by refusing to accept a challenge, when society and the people lavish favors and caresses upon those who have fought duels and honor them—we see no recognized crime or violence to the commonwealth in the act just perpetrated.

"If the people desire to put an end to the 'Code,' let them say so in some unmistakable manner; but so long as the record stands as it does, and the public are more eager to scorn him who refuses, than punish him who accepts a challenge, we challenge, we cannot hold duelling as a very obnoxious exception to our public morality, whatever may be said and written under the impulse which some great or good man's fall gives to our sympathies."

STABBED SEVEN TIMES

Jose Marie Malmosel was stabbed seven times and killed at Gately Gulch, near Reynold's Ferry, by Ramon Gasporo, on August 1, 1862.

THREE MEXICANS MURDER CHINESE

Ah Lung, a Chinese, was murdered by three Mexicans one mile southwest of Campo Seco on the night of February 24, 1864.

transfer of graves from the flooded Camanche Reservoir area at Poverty Bar had been completed by the East Bay Municipal Utility District and can now be seen at the Pioneer Cemetery near San Andreas. This project was carried out in cooperation between the Society and EBMUD and represents another effort of the Society to preserve the record of the past in Calaveras County.

Mrs. Hattie Hertzig reports that materials and information on the annual local history essay contest have been distributed to the schools of the county. The deadline for these essays to be turned in is April 1. We hope the social studies teachers of the county will encourage their students to write up essays on local history.