

Quarterly Bulletin of the Calaveras County Historical Society JULY, 1957

VOLUME 5

# NAMES OF OLD PLACES IN VALLEY SPRINGS REGION

NUMBER 4

DOUBLE SPRINGS—It is located just off Highway 12, between Valley Springs and San Andreas, Originally it was situated at the Junction of Five Roads—Stockton to Mokelumne Hill, San Andreas, Campo Seco and the River Road. It was the location of the first Courthouse of Calaveras County in 1850 and was at one time laid off in town lots. A post office was there from 1851 to 1860.

CLEAR SPRING COTTAGE—It is located about a mile east of Double Springs and the name was derived from a spring of crystal clear water. This spring was drained when they opened the Horswell Tunnell.

STONY HOLLOW or ROBBER'S ROOST-A little story of love and jealousy is connected with this place which took a man East and brought him back to California again with murder in his heart. A man named Fyre and a man named "Griz" Gray loved the same woman. The men quarreled more than once about her and Frye, who never forgot or forgave, became so insanely jealous that, in failing to win the object of his affections, he went "back East." There he brooded over his fancied wrongs until he could stand it no longer. He returned to California in 1866 or 1867. One day Fyre quietly re-appeared in the foothills and took up his temporary abode in Spring Valley. Gray knew nothing of the re-appearance of his old enemy. Fyre lay in wait in a clump of bushes at Stony Hollaw, later to be known as "Robber's Roost," a little north of the Horswell Tunnel, shot Gray with a rifle and fled. Great was the excitement that followed. Posses scoured the hills for days and finally gave up the search and the disappearance of Fyre became a mystery. Two or three years later a skeleton was discovered by miners in a long abandoned tunnel in Poor Man's Gulch, which was near the Schrack Ranch. By it lay a rifle known to belong to Fyre. He had committed suicide with the same weapon used in slaying his one-time friend.

GREASERTOWN or GREASERVILLE—It is named since it was a Mexican settlement. It was located on the Calaveras River, above the Hogan Dam. After the Mexicans moved out a colony of Germans settled about a mile up the river from Greasertown. There a new mining camp was started and it was called "Petersburg". Just down the river from Greasertown was "Johnson's Store". Johnson was killed by three Mexicans while waiting on them in his store, on September 27, 1866.

BOSTON RANCH—Now know as the DeMartini Ranch is located south of Hogan Dam in what was known as the Weehawken Valley. It was also called the Swiss Ranch. A county road ran past there and it was described as being half way between Johnson's Store and Carmen City, which is toward Copperopolis. They kept a stopping place for teamsters and stages going cross country. It was settled by Jacob Leoni, a native of Switzerland.

SPRING VALLEY HOTEL—It was located one mile below Double Springs. It was a three-story wooden building. The main floor and the second floor were used for bedrooms and on the third floor was a hall used for public meetings and dances. It was later destroyed by fire.

SPRING VALLEY SCHOOL—This place was formally located about one and one-half miles east of Valley Springs. When the town of Valley Springs was formed the school district was divided and the school house moved to a new location just east of Mountain Gate.

MOUNTAIN GATE—This location on Highway 12 is three miles east of Valley Springs. The house was formerly located at the lower end on the ranch between two mountains. All that marks the spot today are a few Osage orange trees. The Antone Schachten family lived there. This house was later torn down and a roadhouse, using the same name, was built on the highway about one-half mile east which was replaced in later years by a two-story building. When the highway was re-constructed it had to be moved. It was torn down and a family home has replaced it, which is now the home of Mrs. Lula Reinking.

- NORTH AMERICA HOUSE-It is located on the highway about half way between Valley Springs and Jenny Lind. The following article is taken from the San Andreas Independent, dated May 21, 1859: "The house situated at the junction of the stage road via McDermott's Bridge and the new Stockton road is in successful operation and the proprietor is prepared to attend to the wants of the traveling public. The bar is stocked with the choicest liquors and cigars and every accommodation appertaining to a road side hotel. Hay and grain by the sack, bale or ton. I also take this opportunity of returning thanks for the liberal patronage I have received for the last two years and hope to meet a continuation of the same." Signed James Cole. Also, in the San Andreas Independent, dated July 14, 1860 is the following: "A duel was fought near the North America House on the Mokelumne Hill Road last Saturday morning between two Frenchmen named F. Dauphin and Julius Pache. They fought with rifles at 40 paces. One shot was exchanged without harm to either party. When the cause of difference was adjusted, each man acknowledged the other a gentleman and himself satisfied."
- TREMONT HOUSE It was a stopping place on the road from Stockton to the mines in Calaveras County and originally run by a man named Rogers. The building erected was shipped "around the Horn" and was located on the north side of the road about a mile and a half below the America House.

# NAMES OF OLD PLACES AROUND WEST POINT

- SANDY GULCH—This is a long gulch beginning on the old Harris place, near the sign boards, and running west and then turning north, emptying into the Middle Fork of the Mokelume River.
- LASCY FOUNDRY—This is probably the oldest foundry in Calaveras County. It stood on the north side of the Middle Fork River about 500 feet above the bridge on the West Point-Sandy Gulch Road.
- GROUTY GULCH—A gulch on the north side of the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River, that parallels the road leading from said bridge to the town of West Point.
- INDIAN GULCH—A gulch about one-half mile west of town of West Point. It empties into the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River. One branch of Indian Gulch drains the area where the town of West Point is located.
- BUMMERVILLE A mining center about one mile easterly of the town of West Point. The Blazing Star, Water Lily, Wide West and Matrimony Mines are located at Bummerville.
- VALENTINE HILL A hill north of Bummerville where there was much surface mining done on the hill in early days. The hill is named after Valentine Granados, a well-known early-day prospector in Calaveras County.
- CAMP SPIRITO—This is an early-day Mexican location on the road leading north from Bummerville to join the road near the former Nixon place.
- LINCOLN SCHOOL HOUSE—It is located at the junction of the road from Bummerville to near the former Nixon place. Nothing now remains of the site of the old school building.

- CAMP CATARRAH—This is an early-day Mexican location, now on the property belonging to the Smith Bros., and was formerly the McGhee Place.
- THE BEAN RANCH In the early days Mexicans used the property to grow beans. Later it was known as the Nixon Ranch. It is near the old location of the Lincoln School House
- MOTTS GULCH—This gulch has its origin in Skull Flat and flows west until it empties into the North Fork of the Mokelumne River.
- BIG FLAT—Located about one and a half mile northwest of West Point. The old home of the Carlton family. In early days many Indians of the Mi-wuk Tribe lived at this place. The creek flows southwest and empties into the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River.
- BUTCHER RANCH—In the old days the butchers of West Point grazed their stock on this place. Afterwards it was patented by Robert Smith and later it belonged to Kate Spink.
- JOHN HENRY QUARTZ MILL—This was a custom mill of five stamps belonging to John Henry and located on the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River about one-half mile above the crossing of the river on the road between West Point and Glencoe.
- SOAP ROOT GULCH—This is a gulch originating between West Point and Bummerville and it empties into the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River just below the old John Henry Mill.
- SIGN BOARDS—This place is located on the top of the hill on the south side of the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River. Four roads lead from the spot. In the very early days of Sandy Gulch, the old Sandy Gulch School House was located about 500 feet west of the Sign Boards.

### LATIMER'S

#### By SAM REDMOND to MATTHEW HAMILTON And Published in the Stockton Record)

Lattimer's Gulch and Store were about three miles this side of San Andreas near the junction of the North and South Fork of the Calaveras River. He states that his father was well acquainted with Latimer and that quite a village grew up around the store. There were in the neighborhood of 60 families living there, mostly Irish or of Irish extraction. So you can see it really was a bustling little place.

This man Latimer was a typical "Down Easter" who spoke with a pronounced twang. He was well liked, good natured and for that reason was made the victim of many practical jokes by the young men of the community. One of these pranks will bear repeating, as it reveals Latimer was as shrewd as he was good natured.

It appears the first of April that year fell on Sunday and some of the miners decided to have a little fun with the storekeeper, at his expense of course. Procuring a wickerbound Demi-john, they very skillfully broke the bottom into tiny fragments, which they just as skillfully managed to work out through the wicker covering. It was a fine piece of work and nobody but an expert would have noticed that the container was minus its bottom.

All headed straight for the store. The leader asked for

two gallons of "red likker", Latimer looked innocent but suspected something was wrong. "All right, boys," he said, cheerfully as he lighted a candle and went down stairs with tht jug. Once there, out of sight, he turned it upside down and discovered the trick. He managed to insert the end of the whiskey barrel spigot through the wicker stuff, and with the Demi-john upside down soon filled it.

Without a change of countenance he emerged from the cellar and standing the big jug upside down on the counter said with a wide grin, "There you are, boys. I never spilled a drop either."

Well, the boys laughed heartily and acknowledged the joke was on them.

#### (F. B. Marshall of Standard wrote the following to Matthew Hamilton)

I will never forget the scare I got on Latimer's Hill on the old road just above the store. Al Sleeper was teaming from Stockton to Murphys. This was about 1865. He was a very large man, weighing about 220 pounds, and had me go with him to uncheck the animals so they could drink at the troughs.

Coming down Latimers Hill on my first trip with him, the brake rod broke. He yelled at me to jump. I did. He stayed with the team, four large Kentucky mules. One of the wheelers holding back, got his legs caught in the front wheel and was dragged to the bottom of the hill. The leg was broken and it was necessary to shoot the mule right there. Latimer's was quite a lively place at that time.

#### STOCKTON MAIL, September 26, 1892

Death of Morris Cohen, once the "Merchant Prince of Calaveras." The death is noted of Morris Cohen, a pioneer merchant of California, once widely known as the "Merchant Prince of Calaveras." He died on Thursday at his residence, No. 134 Ridley St. (San Francisco), of a complication of diseases.

Deceased was born in Alsace in 1829. He came to New York when 14 years old, and when the gold fever broke out he came to California, arriving here in January, 1850. He started for the mines with a stock of goods and brought up at Vallecitos, Calaveras County, where he soon went into partnership with L. Dinkelspiel, now of San Francisco. They put up the first brick house in Vallecitos, and soon built up a flourishing trade with the miners. Mr. Cohen was made postmaster and express agent and held those offices until he left there in 1870. He acquired large mining and water interests and accumulated a handsome fortune. In 1870 he went home to Alsace, was drafted into the French Army and was at Metz when the Bayaine surrendered. He returned to California and subsequently had stores at San Andreas and Angels. Then he came to San Francisco, went into the butcher firm of Gradwohl, Cohen and Company, and built up a large business.

#### STOCKTON MAIL, September 26, 1892

"Old Bach" from Natural Bridge, near Vallecitos was at San Joaquin County Fair dressed in high boots, patched clothes, with pick, shovel, etc.

He lived up there for 37 years without leaving home except once.

He came to California, arriving at Sacramento on August 26, 1850, and thence went to the mines.

#### STOCKTON MAIL, September 27, 1892

Cut of "Old Bach" Barnes shows him holding a card reading:

"California Pioneer," as "Old Bach" of the Natural Bridge, left Sacramento for the mines, etc.

#### STOCKTON MAIL, September 16, 1892

T. J. Matteson has retired. He sold out his business at Murphys and moved to Oakland. The stage line running from Murphys through Angels to Milton and connecting with Mr. Sperry's stages for the Calaveras Big Trees, has been sold to John Raggis, owner of the Valley Spring, San Andreas, and Angels stage line.

T. J. Matteson, the former proprietor of the line transferred, has retired from active business and moved with his family to Oakland. He sold his livery business at Murphys a few weeks ago to his son, Earnest, and bonded a gold mine, which he owned at that place, to capatalists, receiving \$20,000 cash in part payment. Mr. Matteson resided at Murphys for many years.

## **MURPHYS DIGGIN'S**

#### By GORDON NORRIS, Poet Laureate of California

The Gold Road beckons the stage coach down, (The ghosts ride high at Murphys!)
And Mark Twain lights at the old gold town, (They never die at Murphys!)
Creak of a door—and decades wheel
In the clump of boot and rough-shod heel,
In the Fiddler's Choice and Virginia Reel—
(The ghosts dance high at Murphys!)

And Angels Creek sings a golden song Where nuggets wash from the veins in throng, Where the past lies, breast to its feral earth, And the haunt of the Mother Lode calls its birth.

The blue tent houses the monte game, (Murrieta at Murphys!)

Lose if you win, it is all the same, (The chips come down at Murphys!)

Draw to the flush of life, and steal

From gambler death on a rough-shod heel,
The ore wagon creaks on a golden wheel—
(Fortune's wheel at Murphys!)

And Angels Creek, on its nugget course, Where Black Bart phantoms a whip-lash horse, Flows where the Mother Lode haunts them back From the long-dead years on a golden track.

Here Bret Harte, Beecher and Alger dwell,
(They never die at Murphys!)
And all who knew the bonanza spell,
(The lucifer spell of Murphys!)
And the old town, too, will never die,
For the past comes back on a golden sigh
Where the Mother Lode and her ghosts ride high—
(High in Murphys Diggin's!)

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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.

# WEST POINT MINING DISTRICT LAWS

(San Andreas Independent, November 21, 1857)

ARTICLE 1. This District shall be known as the West Point Quartz Mining District, bounded as follows: On the West by the San Antone District, on the north by the North Fork of the Mokelumne River, running up the channel 12 miles, including the Oliver and Perrine Districts, thence south to the main Middle Fork of the Mokelumne, thence down the said Middle Fork to the place of beginning.

ARTICLE 2. Each claim shall consist of 200 feet, running on the vein, including its dips and angles.

ARTICLE 3. Each person shall be entitled to hold one claim by location, and as many by purchase as he will work according to the following laws.

ARTICLE 4. Within one month after the location of a claim, there shall be a shaft sunk upon the part of the lead claim, at least 10 feet deep, and within three months after the date of the location, work to the amount of \$100 shall be required to be done on the claim or claims held by the individual or company.

ARTICLE 5. Each claim shall be recorded within one month after its location.

ARTICLE 6. Within every period of three months, after the expiration of six months there shall be required to be performed \$50 worth of work on the claim or claims held by the individual or company on a lead.

ARTICLE 7. Each claim shall be represented by a bona fide owner having the notice and record signed by the individual representing the claim, or by his agent duly authorized.

ARTICLE 8. Each person discovering a quartz lead shall be entitled to hold one claim for discovering.

ARTICLE 9. There shall be a recorder of the claims, elected annually by the people of the district, whose duty it shall be to make a fair and impartial record of all the claims submitted for that purpose, and to keep the books open for inspection at all times. The recorder's fee shall be one dollar for each claim, and the office shall be situated in the town of West Point.

ARTICLE 10. Upon any vacancy appearing in the office of recorder, an election may be held, after 10 days' notice having been given.

ARTICLE 11. Any of these laws may be altered or repealed at a miners' meeting regularly called for that purpose.

N. B. — It is particularly requested that attention be given to Article 5, of the above laws, and that all individuals or companies whose claims are not recorded, will have them attended to at once.

### **EARLY CALAVERAS MARRIAGES**

Following is the list of the first ten marriages solemnized in Calaveras County:

- 1. Emanuel Losaro and Johanna Butteria, married at Mokelumne Hill on October 2, 1851, by Rev. James Motter, Catholic Bishop of San Andreas.
- 2. E. Wagg and Jane Fitzgerald, married June 26, 1853, at the home of Mr. Foster by E. Gates, Justice of the Peace.
- 3. Carl Gustave Van Quifelt and Anna May Korthamps, married June 9, 1854, at Mokelumne Hill by E. Gates, Justice of the Peace.
- 4. Andrew B. Reed and Louise Else, married May 4, 1854, by E. A. Kingsley, Justice of the Peace in Township No. 3.
- 5. Carr W. Leake and Piety A. Rowland, married at Vallecito, August 15, 1854, by James M. Fulton, Minister of the Gospel, Cave City, California.
- Otto Eicehrman and Colata Vibilla, married October
   1854, by J. W. Griswold, Justice of the Peace.
- 7. F. M. Padgett and Mrs. Sarah Decker, married at Vallecito, November 2, 1854, by J. W. Griswold, Justice of the Peace.
- 8. John Cottrell and Mrs. Sarah Ann Sumers, married November 6, 1854, by H. B. Williams, Justice of the Peace.
- 9. M. L. Broughton and Theresa Ann Taylor, married at Cave City, December 28, 1854, by William C. Curry, Methodist Minister.
- 10. Frederick Penning and Careoline Tuchsher, married at Mokelumne Hill, January 1, 1855, by Benjamin D. Henry, Minister.

### **CUSTOM QUARTZ MILL**

On Mosquito Gulch a short distance below Glencoe stood the old Vance Quartz Mill. It was afterwards purchased by Mr. C. J. Garland and fitted up for a custom mill. It was powered by steam and had eight stamps and was called the Garland Mill.