A STUDY OF AN EARLY CALIFORNIA MINING CAMP
(AUBURN, 1848-1851)

by

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THESIS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN AUBURN RAVINE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China discovers gold in Auburn Ravine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsequent reports on the Auburn area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CHRISTENING THE CAMP</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early names</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When Auburn was christened</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. TO THE DIGGINGS</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. AT THE DIGGINGS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The camp</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The winter of 1849-1850</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE MINERS AND THEIR AMUSEMENTS</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The miners</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their amusements</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. GOLD CAMP JUSTICE</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Order</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County government</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. FROM PACK MULE TO STAGECOACH</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early day roads</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaming</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer express companies</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer stage lines</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. MINING ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dry diggings</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER

The river mining ........................................... 152
IX. CONCLUSION ............................................. 156
X. BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................ 162
XI. APPENDICES ............................................. 168

Appendix A - Early Settlers of Auburn ........ 168
Appendix B - California Postal Stations .......... 170
Appendix C - Principal Settlements Served
by Auburn's Stagecoach Lines During
the Early 50's ........................................... 171
DEDICATION

For many years a fountain, erected in honor of the pioneers of '49, stood in Auburn's historic Plaza. We can think of no better or fitting way to dedicate this paper than by repeating the words that were inscribed on this fountain:

TO THE MEMORY OF PLACER COUNTY PIONEERS

Lest We Forget

*The Pioneer Memorial Fountain was erected in the Plaza by the Women's Improvement Club of Auburn in 1913 in honor of the Pioneers of the early days. Over the protests of various civic groups, the fountain was torn down on November 10, 1950. See Auburn Journal, November 15, 1950. The metal plaque on which the above mentioned inscription was printed was saved. It is now housed in the Placer County Museum in Auburn.
INTRODUCTION

With the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill at Coloma by John Marshall on January 24, 1848, the great "Exodus" to California began. Men flocked to the "diggings" from every corner of the United States and most of the countries of Europe as well. Young, fussy, shabby men from New York and Philadelphia headed west to make their "pile"; prominent lawyers and jurists from Cleveland and Boston left their practices to join in the rush for the precious yellow metal. From far off China came countless Orientals, their shrill cries mingling with the quaint "lingo" of the Spanish and Mexican vaqueros, or the mixed curses of the "Yankee" teamster. The small population of the area, which was estimated by Bancroft to have been about 14,000 in the middle of 1848, of whom 7,500 were Spanish Californians and 6,500 were foreigners, swelled to 107,057, according to one estimate, by January 1, 1850.\(^1\)

Mining camps sprang up like mushrooms throughout the Mother

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\(^1\) Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California (San Francisco: The History Company Publishers, 1888), II, 158-159.

\(^2\) Osburn Winther, Express and Stagecoach Days in California (Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press, 1936), p. 9.
Lode country. Most of these camps declined as rapidly as they had risen, when the rich, but often scanty surface gold was worked out. Only a few were destined to remain in existence, growing into prosperous towns and cities, serving the needs of their citizens until this very day.

This study is concerned with one of these more permanent mining camps, Auburn. Located thirty-four miles northeast of Sacramento on Highway 40, Auburn is today the county seat and trading center for one of Northern California's richest and most productive agricultural areas. Auburn's business district is now replete with many blocks of modern buildings and fine homes. Yet, with all its modern veneer, this one-time mining camp still retains an authentic forty-nine atmosphere. Its rich traditions and history remain captured in Old Town. Here, many old buildings prominent in gold rush days are still in use. Looking at Old Town today, however, it is difficult to believe that many miners who lived here in its past could collect as much as fifteen hundred dollars in a single day, or that the historic old Plaza was the scene of some of the richest mining operations in Northern California.

Auburn's history has been neglected perhaps more than any major mining camp in California. Consequently, many of its former glories are forgotten, buried in dusty records and newspaper accounts of a by-gone era. It is
the intent of this study to present an account of the early history and development of this community which was one of the leading mining camps in Northern California.

Auburn was selected out of hundreds of possible mining camps for several reasons. It was one of the first important settlements, after Coloma, to come into existence; it, along with Placerville, shared the distinction of being the center of the richest dry diggings in Northern California; and apart from the county histories and directories, little has been written about this historic old town.

The study is limited to the period 1848-1851 which were the formative years of Auburn's long and colorful history, the period when settlement was characterized by cloth tents and crude log hovels, and the almost total absence of women. This is the period least covered by Placer County and Californian historians, and consequently the period which little information is known to the general public today.

In addition 1851 marked the dividing line between Auburn the temporary, flimsily constructed mining camp, and Auburn the permanent settlement. After 1851, the cluster of log houses rapidly gave place to commodious frame and brick buildings. Women and families were more in existence, and the settlement according to the Placer Herald, was converted, "by the enterprise of its citizens,
into a flourishing and not unsightly town.\textsuperscript{3}

Finally, the period beginning with 1852 is covered quite extensively in Auburn and Placer County's first newspaper, the \textit{Placer Herald}, which was established in that year. Almost complete files of the \textit{Herald} are available to the historically minded, either at the \textit{Herald} office in Auburn, or in the California State Library at Sacramento.

The sources of data employed in this study are limited primarily to various Placer County histories and directories; to the files of early day newspapers and periodicals; to reminiscences, letters, dictated statements, and diary accounts of pioneer citizens of Auburn and finally to interviews with surviving members of the early families in the community.

\textit{No reference is made to municipal records because there are no such records covering the period with which this study is concerned. Auburn, in the days of forty-nine, had no civil government other than that administered by miners' justice, for which no records were kept.}

I am indebted to many people for assistance during my research. First among these are Miss Caroline Wenzel, Miss Carol Dennison, and Mr. Allan Ottley of the California Section of the California State Library, whose

\textsuperscript{3}\textit{Placer Herald}, September 13, 1852, p. 4.
untiring efforts have aided me immeasurably.

A special thanks is due Mrs. May Perry, curator of the Placer County Museum, and a leading authority on Placer County history, for her many helpful suggestions.

Other individuals who have given me assistance and to whom I am grateful are Mrs. Amy Rasmussen and Mrs. C. A. Becker of Auburn, and Mr. R. C. Gross of San Francisco.

For technical advice on this problem I am obligated to Dr. Joseph McGowan, Dr. Dwight Baker and Mr. Edward A. Howes of the Sacramento State College History Department.

Again, to all the people who have helped me in this study, I give my sincerest thanks.

Leonard M. Davis
June 25, 1953
CHAPTER I

DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN AUBURN RAVINE

I. CHANA DISCOVERS GOLD IN AUBURN RAVINE

The lure of gold brought throngs of men to Coloma, among whom was a French cooper named Claude Chana. Born in Burgundy in 1811, Chana had come to America in 1839, making his home at New Orleans. After two years in that city, he went to Missouri where he resided until 1846.

In the spring of 1846 Chana joined a wagon train at St. Joseph, Missouri which was leaving for the then little known country of California. After the usual vicissitudes attendant upon such journeys, they at length reached the Truckee River.


3Loc. cit.

At Weber Canyon, Utah, Chana's party overtook and for several days kept company with the unfortunate Donner Party. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.
Following the Truckee, they crossed the summit of the Sierra, reached the head of the Greenhorn tributary of Bear River, and descended Steep Hollow by dragging fallen trees behind their wagons.\(^5\) They proceeded down the old trail to the head of Wolf Creek; thence to the site which was later Hiram Austin's place, and from there to Johnson's Ranch where they arrived in October.\(^6\) Johnson's Ranch, located on the north bank of the Bear River, was the first settlement they had seen in the country. It consisted of an adobe house and some pretensions toward cultivation.\(^7\)

On the southern side of Bear River, nearly opposite Johnson's Ranch, was an adobe house owned by Theodore Sigard, a Frenchman who had settled there in 1845.\(^8\)

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\(^5\) Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.

\(^6\) Loc. cit. Their arrival was about two weeks before the occurrence of the storm which drove the Donner Party, which was following, into winter quarters and prevented its further advance across the mountains.

\(^7\) Loc. cit. Johnson had acquired his title to the grant he occupied from General Sutter. Sutter was administrator of the estate of the original grantee who had been killed.

\(^8\) Loc. cit. Sigard was probably the first white settler in the territory now embraced within the limits of Placer County. He had traveled extensively in Mexico after leaving his native country, finally settling in California in 1839. He settled on his Bear River ranch in 1845 under terms of a land grant issued by the Mexican Government in 1844. Both he and Johnson had sown and harvested small crops of wheat in 1845.
As soon as Chana learned at Johnson's that the ranch across the river was owned by a fellow Frenchman, he very naturally went there, and being well received made it his home and worked upon the place.

Chana remained at Sigard's until the spring of 1847 at which time he went to Sutter's Fort where he was employed as a cooper. Chana remained at the Fort for seven months, after which he returned to Sigard's Ranch. It was at the Bear River settlement that he first heard the news of Marshall's historic discovery. 10

The more direct way from Sigard's Ranch to Coloma was unblazed, so Chana, who determined to visit his friend Marshall 11 to see if the stories about the discovery of gold were true, went the usual route via Sinclair's Ranch and Sutter's Fort, and then up the South Fork of the American

9 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.

10 Loc. cit. During the winter of 1847, Sigard's Ranch had become the headquarters for a number of hunters and trappers of French extraction. Consequently, there was considerable travel back and forth from the Bear River to Sinclair's Ranch and Sutter's Fort. News of Marshall's discovery of gold at Coloma on January 24, 1848, therefore, was not slow in reaching the habitations on Bear River.

11 Chana had become well acquainted with James W. Marshall during his seven month stay at Sutter's Fort. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.

12 John Sinclair had a rancho along the American River, a short distance above New Helvetia. See Hubert Howe Bancroft, op. cit., VI, 73.

13 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.
River to Coloma. At Sutter's Mill he found the people all busy digging for gold; among them were some Frenchmen who taught Chana the best methods--with tin and wooden pans. Chana came back via the Sinclair Ranch--Sutter's Fort route intending to procure an outfit and return to Sutter's Mill.

At Sigard's ranch he found a man by the name of Francois Gendron, an old trapper who had been west of the Rocky Mountains since 1832; Philbert Courteau, who came into California with Fremont in 1843-1844; and another Frenchman by the name of Eugene. Chana formed a company with these men to dig gold at Coloma. The company prepared for their trip by making bateas, or wooden pans, for washing dirt. Then gathering twenty-five Indians, all native but six who came from Oregon, and thirty-five horses, they left early in May of 1848 for Coloma. Francois Gendron, an experienced mountain man, volunteered to lead the party directly across the country to Coloma instead of down to Sutter's Fort and then up the South Fork of the

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13 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239.
14 Loc. cit.
15 Loc. cit.
American. The first night they camped at what was later called "Cox's Ranch," and the second night not far from the present site of Ophir on Auburn Ravine where Chana tried his batea and found gold. He followed up the Ravine, and, as he said afterwards, about half-way between Judge Myron's house and the old "Deadfall," washed out the first pan in the district. He got three gold-sized pieces of gold.

(The prospects looked promising, but Chana and his companions were without experience in the art of mining. They set to work in the main ravine. Soon they were visited by John Sinclair, who began to work Indians along the American River.17 Sinclair had learned through the Indians that the Chana party had discovered gold in the foothill ravines, and came up to see them. Since river gold was fine and ravine gold coarse, Sinclair decided to continue mining along the river and tried to persuade Chana to go with him to the main American River. The

16 May 16, 1843 is the date usually accepted when Chana found gold in Auburn Ravine. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 68.

17 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 239. In June, 1843 Sinclair went to the junction of the North and South forks of the American River, twelve miles above his house, and there worked fifty natives with good success. See J. Tyrohitt Brooks, Four Months Among the Diggings of Alta California (London: David Bogue, 1849), p. 94. Also see Hubert Howe Bancroft, op. cit., VI, 73.
Chana party, however, continued at work on the main ravine for two more weeks. They worked on Baltimore Ravine, just below the late Judge Myres' home for a week and although finding some good sized specimens, did not consider the ground rich. Therefore, when they heard of great strikes on the Yuba River by Sigard, they left immediately for the new mines.  

II. SUBSEQUENT REPORTS ON THE AUBURN AREA

Soon after Chana left, some Indians in the employ of Nicolaus Allgeier visited Auburn Ravine.  

18 Chana is reported to have said that they took out only three pounds of gold during the three weeks work in the Auburn Ravine region. See Myron Angell, op. cit., P. 239.

19 Chana returned to Sigard's Ranch in October, 1848 with twenty-five thousand dollars. Soon after, he bought out his fellow Frenchmen for six thousand dollars in gold. Chana's title like other claims, was found to be defective, and after long and expensive litigation, he lost all, but five hundred acres of his land. In the terrible flood of 1861-1862, the sand laden waters from the river encroached upon his lands. He was forced to build levees, the money being raised by mortgages. A few years later, the place was sold and brought only five hundred dollars. Chana moved to Wheatland where he spent his last years earning his own livelihood by manufacturing a light wine from grapes grown in the immediate neighborhood. It was at this place that he died on May 24, 1882 at the age of seventy-one years. See Sacramento Record Union, May 25, 1882, p. 3. Also see W. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, op. cit., pp. 123-124.

20 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 67. Also see W. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, op. cit., p. 124. Allgeier was born in Freiburg, Baden, in 1807, coming to America about
most significant arrivals in the Auburn vicinity, however, came late in 1848 when Joe Woods and Tuck Warner discovered the extensive gold deposits at Rich Flat.

News of the new strikes came in August, 1848 when it was reported that one man took out sixteen thousand dollars in five cartloads of dirt in the Auburn area and that others collected from eight hundred fifteen to fifteen hundred dollars a day. Most of the activity in 1849 centered in the ravines which converged into what is now the plaza.

By April, 1849, a considerable number of miners had gathered at the site of what was later to become the

1850. He entered the employ of the Hudson Bay Company as a trapper, and in this capacity spent a number of years in the wilds of British America. It was while in their service, in 1839 or 1840 that he came overland to California. A short time after his arrival here he left the service of the company and engaged to work for John Augustus Sutter. Sutter later deeded to Allgeier a tract of land one mile square, which eventually became the town of Nicolau. Here, in 1842, he built a small hut of poles, covered with tule, grass and dirt. In 1847 he built a small adobe house, near the old ferry crossing. See William R. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells, History of Sutter County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1879), p. 93.

21 Placer Herald, May 12, 1895, p. 4, hereafter referred to as Herald. W. F. Norcross, who for many years was a leading merchant in Auburn, later married Joe Woods' widow.

22 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 67. Also see Owen C. Coy, Gold Days (Los Angeles: Powell Publishing Co., 1929, p. 76.

23 R. J. Steele, and others, Directory of the County
town of Auburn, and another mining camp was added to the hundreds that were springing up, as if by magic, throughout the Mother Lode.

of Placer For the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Robbins, 1861), p. 7.

24 Placer Times, Mar. 30, 1849, p. 3. Hereafter referred to as Times. C. F. Reed reports that in early May, 1849 the only persons to be found in the camp were "old man" Wood and thirteen other white men. See Recollections of C. F. Reed, Herald, October 22, 1892, p. 5.
CHAPTER II
CHRISTENING THE CAMP

I. EARLY NAMES

Early day maps of the gold region indicate that the area between Bear River and the North Fork of the American River was called the "North Fork Dry Diggings."¹

The embryo mining camp that was later to become the town of Auburn was closely identified with the North Fork Dry Diggings² and was usually referred to by that appellation.³

¹A single account has been found which refers to the dry diggings between Bear Creek and the North Fork of the American River as the "American River Dry Diggings." See Times, May 26, 1849, p. 2. No other reference to this particular name has been discovered. It is not unlikely that it was manufactured for the then little known diggings, by the writer of the article. In any case it did not attain any popularity and was not referred to by that name again.

²Auburn was the principal settlement within the North Fork Dry Diggings; it was located at the northern terminus of the Sacramento road; and it was the trading center for the mining regions thereabouts.

³For references to Auburn as the North Fork Dry Diggings, see Times, August 24, 1849, p. 2; November 24, 1849, p. 2; Mahlon D. Fairchild, "Reminiscences of a Forty-Niner," California Historical Society Quarterly, XIII (March, 1934), 14; Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1882), p. 66; Hubert Howe Bancroft, History of California (San Francisco: The History Company Publishers, 1888), VI, 365; Letter of Moses Andrews, to his parents, December 9, 1849, California State Library (California Section), Sacramento, California, hereafter referred to as Andrews Correspondence.

Occasionally this appellation, for the sake of convenience, was shortened to just plain "Dry Diggings." See Alameda County Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1, hereafter
THE GOLD REGION IN 1848
A group of soldiers from Colonel Stevenson's Regiment arrived at the North Fork Dry Diggings early in the spring of 1849 and settled on a clear body of water referred to as Gazette; San Francisco Daily Alta California, June 5, 1867, p. 1, hereafter referred to as Alta California; John M. Lats, California Illustrated By a Returned Californian (New York: William Hologard, Publisher, 1832), p. 77. It should be noted, however, that the camp never adopted "Dry Diggings" as its official name. It was employed only as a shortened version of North Fork Dry Diggings.

4L. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, History of Placer and Nevada Counties (Los Angeles: Historic Record Co., 1924), p. 125. Organized in the summer of 1846, under the command of Colonel Jonathan Drake Stevenson, the First New York Volunteers, or Stevenson's Regiment, consisted of 767 soldiers and officers, rank and file. In September, 1846, under the command of Colonel Stevenson, a part of the regiment sailed for California on board three ships, the Thomas H. Perkins, the Loo Choo, and the Susan Drew, followed shortly after by the remainder of the contingent aboard the Brutus, Isabella and Sweden. They arrived in San Francisco in March and April, 1847. The companies were assigned to various posts and some saw action at La Paz in Lower California. They remained in active service until September, 1848 when they were mustered out. Company D, which was then at La Paz, was the last command of American troops to leave the soil of Mexico after the close of the Mexican War. Many returned to their homes in the East, but the majority remained in California, including the group that came to the dry diggings in the spring of 1849. See R. J. Cowan, "Journal of John McHenry Coleingsworth," California Historical Society Quarterly, 1 (January, 1923), 207-208.
to which they gave the name Soldier's Spring. They did not delay long, however, but soon went to Barnes' Bar on the North Fork. John S. Wood was one of the soldiers who mined near Soldier's Spring, and it was he who gave a particular section of the dry diggings, now known as Auburn, the local name "Wood's Dry Diggings." 

5. Soldier's Spring is located near the bend of the stream about one-half mile below Auburn on what is now called Forgotten Road.

6. Wood was probably from Ottumwa, Iowa, where he returned in 1855 and took up the duties of city marshall for several years. When the Civil War commenced, he joined the 7th Iowa Cavalry, and was made captain of Company A. Subsequently, he became major, by which title he came to be known in Iowa and Montana. The regiment served in the northwest Indian country, and was mustered out at Omaha, Nebraska, January 31, 1865. Major Wood was later government agent for the Blackfoot Indians in Montana; later still, he lived in Ottumwa, Iowa, and was in the employment of the Burlington and Missouri Railroad for many years. He died at Omaha, Nebraska, July 4, 1912. See W. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, _op. cit._, pp. 124-125.


There are writers who have asserted that Auburn was once known as "Rich Dry Diggings." See Owen C. Coy, _Gold Days_ (Los Angeles: Powell Publishing Co., 1929), p. 76; Joseph Henry Jackson, _Anybody's Gold_ (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941), p. 387; F. Cyril Johnson, _Scenic Guides to the Mother Lode_ (H. Cyril Johnson,
II. AUBURN

Some time between the summer and fall of 1849, a public meeting was called to give the rapidly growing settlement a more euphonious name. The name chosen was Auburn.

There are several conflicting stories behind the selection of this particular name. According to one account, the name was chosen because many members from Stevenson's Regiment in the region had come from Auburn, New York.²

Another reported that a public meeting held in

Publisher, 1943), p. 6; Hildegarde Hawthorne, Romantic Cities of California (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1939), p. 33; C. B. Glasscock, A Golden Highway (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1934), p. 86. Of this there seems to be no direct evidence. No mention of this appellation has been uncovered in the files of the early day newspapers, nor in the reminiscences, letters, etc., of the pioneer citizens of Auburn. If such a name existed, it would have undoubtedly appeared in these sources.

The only reference to Rich Dry Diggings that has been found in this study is in Myron Angell's History of Placer County. In his section on early Auburn, Angell employs the phrase Rich Dry Diggings, not as the name of the camp, but rather a sub-heading to introduce the mining activities of the area. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 67.

²Hildegarde Hawthorne, op. cit., p. 39. It was true that many members from Stevenson's Regiment had come from Auburn, New York, but it seems doubtful that this was the reason for the selection of the name, because apparently they left almost immediately for Barnes' Bar on the North Fork. It seems rather unlikely that the townspeople would adopt the name Auburn in honor of their extremely brief visit.
1849 to select a more suitable name for the town, adopted
the present name at the suggestion of Hudson M. House,9
one of the camp's leading citizens, who had come from
Auburn, New York.10

E. C. Smith provided a third version. A pioneer
of forty-nine, Smith penned the following remarks in

9 Hudson M. House, a native of Cleveland, Ohio, arrived at the Auburn mines in the early part of June,
1849. There were eight in the party with which he
journeyed to the diggings, including Samuel W. Holladay,
Charles M. Elliard, John O. Earle's brother, Morris, a
mulatto named West, and House's Negro servant, Elias.
Finding that digging was not to his liking, House soon
went into merchandising. He established and for several
years operated the famed Empire Hotel, on what is now
Washington Street. As a leading citizen of early Auburn,
House, in 1851, was appointed a member of the commission
charged with organizing the new county of Placer. The
old, familiar log cabin which housed his hotel was torn
down in 1852 and replaced by a New Empire Hotel. House
operated this famed hostelry until June 4, 1855 when fire
reduced Auburn to ashes. The Empire was entirely des-
stroyed. Soon after this House left town. The exact
date that he left or where he went is not known.
Newspapers made no mention of his departure. The reason
for his sudden exit was probably due to pressing debts,
for the Herald carried several notices of suits against
him. Material on House obtained from H. P. Van Sicklen,
op. cit., p. 39; R. J. Steele, and others, op. cit., p. 8;
Herald, December 13, 1852, p. 2; May 31, 1853, p. 3; June
4, 1853, p. 3; and Placer Press, June 9, 1855, p. 2, here-
after referred to as Press.

10 Thomas, April 28, 1859, p. 4. This story at
first thought appears reasonable. House was one of the
camp's earliest inhabitants, and he was present at the
christening ceremonies, but he did not come from Auburn,
New York. His home was in Cleveland, Ohio. See H. P.
Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 39.
reply to a letter received from the editor of the Placer Republican:

EDITOR REPUBLICAN: (Sic) After many days your letter of June 2d has reached me. I passed through Auburn June 11, '49. It was then called Wood's Dry Diggings, and again on October 8th, the same year on my way to New York. On my return in August, 1850, I was told, in a store that stood on the site where Lipsett's clothing store now stands opposite the Herald office, where good whiskey raised the boys to a jolly condition, in which they had a lively time dancing in a rough style. An Indian was looking on when one of the boys gave him a lesson in border dancing, in which the Indian fell with his hands in the fire. He got up exclaiming 'Ah-burn' and from that time the boys called the town 'Aburn.' I was not there at the time.

Still another story concerning the name appeared in a letter by a former pioneer resident:

A brief exists that Auburn got its name from Dr. Dimon, a native of New York, who had served as surgeon in the American army in the war with Mexico, and subsequently emigrated to California.

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11 Clipping extracted from a scrap book located in the Placer County Museum, Auburn, California. There is little basis for the Smith explanation. He was not there at the time, and no other record of his version has been discovered among the surviving records of the period.

12 Herald, December 28, 1899, p. 1. This is another of the numerous explanations which seem to have cropped up in the past one hundred years without any firm basis. No evidence has been found to support it, and it would seem safe to disregard it entirely.
These were the isolated explanations. The remaining accounts agree that Auburn was named after the town mentioned in Goldsmith's poem, *The Deserted Village*:

> Sweet Auburn! loveliest village of the plain,
> Where health and plenty cheer the laboring swain.\(^\text{13}\)

Evidence for this explanation appeared in the *Alameda County Gazette* for April 19, 1873:

> During that long and dry season, the dry diggings were ignored, and a hegira ensued, which crowded every bar on the North Fork from Mormon Island to the Middle Fork. The few sagacious fellows left in the ravines at Gwynn's held a meeting and rather sarcastically agreed to call the settlement 'Auburn' in complement to Mr. Goldsmith, for instead of being the loveliest village of the plains, it was just about the hilliest, roughest, unattractive looking spot in that section of the county.\(^\text{14}\)

Additional information in support of the Goldsmith poem version was offered by John Craig Boggs, who arrived

\(^\text{13}\) *Goldsmith's Poems* (Chicago and New York: Belford, Clarke and Company, Publishers, 1880), p. 23. Myron Angell, the Placer County historian, stated that Auburn was so named because one of Stevenson's regulars with a poetic bent had named it after the town described in Goldsmith's poem. See *Myron Angell, Op. Cit.*, p. 385. Also see *Louis J. Stellman, Mother Lode* (San Francisco: Harr Wagner Publishing Co., 1934), p. 191. This version seems unlikely. Stevenson's Regulars arrived at the site of Auburn early in the spring of forty-nine, but left immediately for Barnes' Bar on the North Fork. Auburn did not receive its present name until the fall of forty-nine, long after Stevenson's volunteers had departed.

\(^\text{14}\) *Gazette*, April 19, 1873, p. 2.

\(^\text{15}\) *John Craig Boggs*, son John and Isabel (Allison)*
at the diggings in September of 1849:

After I had been there a short time there was a public meeting to name the settlement and every fellow wanted it called after his home town. Finally someone got up and read "Sweet Auburn," and the men were all so captivated with the poem that they unanimously decided to call the place Auburn. 16

Samuel W. Holladay, one of Auburn's earliest

Boggs, was born at Greencastle, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, on October 18, 1825. On February 3, 1849, he sailed for California on the ship Xylon, arriving at San Francisco on the 14th of September. He proceeded to Wood's Dry Diggings, arriving at that place on September 23, in company with his partner E. M. Hall.

Boggs was undoubtedly the last of the true forty-niners who lived in or around Auburn. The Herald of December 8, 1906 reported that "Postmaster J. C. Boggs, of Newcastle, was in this city Tuesday. He was rather lonesome as he did not see a person that he knew in the 'Days of '49,' when he was in the grocery and feed business."


17 Samuel W. Holladay was born in Schenectady, New York, on April 29, 1823. In 1857 he went to Cleveland and was admitted to the bar there in 1845. Four years later the young lawyer came to the land of gold by way of the Isthmus of Panama.

Holladay landed in San Francisco, but soon went to Wood's Dry Diggings, now Auburn. He was elected the first Alcalde of Auburn and reportedly was responsible for conferring the name Auburn upon the village. Towards the close of the year 1850, Holladay came to San Francisco and took up the practice of his profession, which he
inhabitants, was also present at the meeting, and in reply to a request of Fred S. Roumagne, Deputy County Clerk of Placer County, presented a more detailed account of the christening:

In August, 1849, in conversation with William Gwynn, who was then and for many years afterwards a resident and businessman here, but now in Mexico, as I am told, and with Hudson M. House, then like myself lately from Cleveland, Ohio, and with some others, perhaps, I said to them that we ought to have some more euphonious name for our settlement that that of Wood's Dry Diggings, which it then bore, and I proposed we name it at once.

Then several different names were mentioned by the parties present. I proposed Auburn as the name I preferred; then Mr. Gwynn pronounced the first line of Goldsmith's Deserted Village, when I emphasized the thing by remarking that the red soil of the region, a bright terra cotta or brick color, would be in harmony with the name. To this all agreed, and at my suggestion that name was

continued until 1896. At the time of his death, February 15, 1915, he was oldest member of the California bar.

Material on Holladay obtained from Daggett's Scrapbook, Volume 3, p. 196; San Francisco Chronicle, February 20, 1945, p. 10; R. F. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 341; Herald October 22, 1932, p. 3.

William Gwynn was born near Baltimore, Maryland, April 22, 1822, from which place he left the 16th of December, 1848 for the gold fields of California. He arrived at what is now Auburn, but at that time Wood's Dry Diggings, early in the spring of 1849, having made the trip across the Isthmus of Panama. He was among the first to engage in the merchandising business in Auburn, his first business being carried on in a calico tent. He was Auburn's first butcher, first postmaster, and was in fact a leader in all business transactions of the then log cabin town. He was proprietor of the National Hotel, at that time, 1851, the only frame building of its
thus settled upon as the future name of our place, and so with my little brief authority I proclaimed the name of Auburn among our neighbor miners. Soon after then, in company with a friend, I journeyed to Sacramento on foot, for there was then no way of conveyance except an occasional freight wagon with ox team—miners had no use for horses and no place to keep them—and on our way down I took occasion at the refreshment booths by the wayside to speak of Auburn, to inquire the distance there, or otherwise; and when they ignored such names I informed them that it was the place formerly called Wood's Dry Diggings. On my way back some ten days later I found the name Auburn was pretty well understood by those I met on the road. This in a few words is the origin and history of the name.19

kind in Auburn. The legislature of 1851 appointed Gwynn along with Joseph Walkup, H. M. House, J. B. Fry, and Jonathan Roberts committee men of the special election to be held to elect officers for the new county of Placer. He was the leading figure in starting the Placer Herald and donated a lot of ground for the original Herald building.

The later years of Gwynn's life were spent in Mexico where he engaged in silver mining. He died there in January, 1895. Material on Gwynn obtained from Herald, February 2, 1888, p. 4; Herald (Supplement), May 4, 1895, p. 1.

19 Herald, October 22, 1892, p. 5. Also see H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34. Holladay's emphasis on the red soil of the region of the area as being partly responsible for the selection of the name supported an earlier report in the Herald which, in connection with the expected visit of Holladay to the town, reported that the name Auburn was selected by him in forty-nine, not after any other town or city, but because of the color of the soil in this locality. See Herald, September 24, 1892, p. 5.
After considering the various data cited, three points in common seem to stand out. First, it is generally conceded that a meeting was held in the settlement some time in the latter part of 1849 for the purpose of choosing a more desirable name for the village.

Secondly, most authorities agree that Hudson M. House, William Cwyn and Samuel W. Holladay were among the miners present at the meeting. Thirdly, it is usually accepted that the name was conferred when someone pronounced the first line of Goldsmith's poem:

It is difficult to ascertain who actually conferred the name, but it was probably Samuel W. Holladay. He was one of the three prominent members at the meeting; he was the alcalde of the diggings at the time and was highly respected by the miners thereabouts; the _Herald_, Auburn's earliest newspaper, has stated that he was the person who named the town Auburn; and finally, Holladay's own

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20 It is the general consensus of the present day Auburnites that the town received its name after Goldsmith's Auburn—loveliest village on the plains.

21 The _Placer Herald_ began operations as a weekly newspaper on September 11, 1852. It has been in continuous operation ever since.

22 Also see _Daggett Scrapbook_, Volume 3, p. 196.
accounts claim credit for conferring the name.

Following is a probable reconstruction of events leading to the selection of this name.

Sometime in the fall of 1849, a meeting was held at Gwynn's store for the purpose of selecting a more euphonious name for the mining camp then known as Wood's Big Diggings. Among those present were Douglas Holladay, William Gwynn, and H. M. House. Several names were suggested, many miners suggesting their own favorites, such as their home towns or cities. Finally, someone, probably William Gwynn, got up and pronounced Goldsmith's poem. It is very likely that at this point Holladay, as he claimed, gave further emphasis to the name by remarking that the red soil in the area was in harmony with the suggested title. A touch of sarcasm may also have been behind the selection, for Auburn was definitely not the "loveliest village of the plains;" on the contrary, it was "just about the hilliest, roughest, unattractive looking spot in that section of the county."
III. WHEN AUBURN WAS CHRISTENED

It is certain that Auburn was so named between late summer and early fall of 1849, but the exact date it not known. A glance at several contemporary accounts, however, may fix an approximate date.

Samuel F. Holladay, who probably suggested the name of Auburn, said that the name was conferred in August 25, 1849. This date is further substantiated by J. F. Lassen, who stated:

Positive proof can be obtained that the name Auburn was known in Sacramento City, August 11, 1849. I myself for one arrived at that time, with 9 or 10 others (per bark Phil. Home, round the horn) at the Embarkadero (old name for Sacramento City), after looking round for some time we found an old Norwegian teamster who agreed to take us for 10¢ per lb. to the best mines. He said he was bound for Auburn, about 40 miles distant; he also mentioned he could take us to the top of the hill, where we must pack our dugs down to the junctions of the river. 23

23. Herald, October 22, 1882, p. 5. Also see H. F. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34. Holladay's memoirs were not written until forty-five years after the christening of Auburn. It is not unlikely that he may have forgotten the date, in the intervening period, especially when it is recalled that James Marshall could not remember the exact date when he made his most historic discovery at Coloma.

24. Herald, May 29, 1886, p. 5. Lassen's statement was also written many years after the event when the passage of time may have dimmed his memory. Yet he is emphatic in stating that Auburn was so named in August. The fact that August 11, the date when he arrived in Sacramento, was also the date when he first heard the name Auburn, may have aided his memory.
Another pioneer of forty-nine, Mahlon D. Fairchild, reported that he arrived at the North Fork Dry Diggings on August 2, 1849. Leaving the diggings that same day, he did not return until the last week in November. The camp, by that date, was called Auburn.

The August date, however, is contrary to the diary of John A. Markle. Markle, in his entry for September 27, 1849, mentions starting out for the North Fork Dry Diggings. He does not mention Auburn by that name until his entry for November 15.

\[\text{25} Mahlon D. Fairchild, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 14. Fairchild} \]
\[\text{began writing his reminiscences in 1904 at the age of} \]
\[\text{seventy-seven. His remarks, while not fixing any date} \]
\[\text{when Auburn may have been so named, are important in} \]
\[\text{that they limit the christening to the period between} \]
\[\text{August 3 and the last week in November, 1849. This,} \]
\[\text{while not supporting the Holladay and Lucson statements,} \]
\[\text{would not refute it either.} \]

\[\text{26 Myron Angell, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 76. It is not certain} \]
\[\text{whether Markle was referring to Auburn when he mentioned} \]
\[\text{leaving for the North Fork Dry Diggings, for the Dry} \]
\[\text{Diggings included all the region between Bear Creek and} \]
\[\text{the North Fork of the American River.} \]

\[\text{27 Markle was not located in Auburn, it is not} \]
\[\text{improbable that he had no reason to mention the name} \]
\[\text{until November 15, the date he visited the camp.} \]
The recollections of John C. Boggs would tend to support the November date. Boggs stated that he arrived at Wood's Dry Diggings on September 25, 1849, and that a short time after his arrival, a meeting was held at which Auburn was selected as the name of the camp.

Additional support of the November date was provided by an unnamed pioneer who recalled that in September, 1849, the camp was known as Wood's Dry Diggings.

The Moses Andrews' correspondence for December 9, 1849 shows that the name Auburn was definitely known by that date. The first mention of the appellation in Sacramento newspapers appeared in the Placer Times for February 16, 1850.

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30 Andrews Correspondence, December 9, 1849. The Andrews letter would seemingly favor the November date, for it is apparent that the name Auburn was of fairly recent origin else why would have Andrews identified the appellation by putting North Fork Dry Diggings immediately after it in parentheses?

31 Times, February 16, 1850, p. 2. Little reference to the Auburn diggings appeared in Sacramento and San Francisco newspapers during the dry summer and fall of 1849 when scarcity of water for washing gold caused mining to practically come to a standstill. As a result, the Times reference cannot be counted as any true criterion of when Auburn was named.
From the various conflicting dates concerning the naming of Auburn, it is almost impossible at this late date to determine the exact time when the town was christened.\textsuperscript{32} But, from the evidence presented, it seems certain that the name Auburn was conferred sometime between August and November of 1849, possibly in early November.

The basis for the November date are the Markle diary and the Andrews letter, the only contemporary accounts cited. Markle, in his entry for September 27, 1849, mentioned starting out for the North Fork Dry Diggings; he did not mention Auburn by name until November 15. The Andrews letter of December 9 would seem to support the November date more so than any other, for at that time Andrews referred to Auburn by name, but indicated that it was of fairly recent origin by placing North Fork Dry Diggings immediately after it in parentheses.

This date, of course, is only supposition, and is not based on any conclusive evidence except that it is contrary to the date which, from the evidence presented, seems most likely. Additional research may uncover more substantial evidence than has been assembled here.

\textsuperscript{32} Especially when it is recalled that most of the accounts cited in preceding pages were written many years after the actual event when memories were dimmed by the passage of time.
CHAPTER III

TO THE DIGGINGS

A road between Sacramento and the embryo mining camp on the North Fork existed from an early date.\(^1\) It was over this trail that most of the miners made their way to Auburn and other mining settlements of Placer County.

Its accessibility from Sutter's Fort rendered it easy to obtain supplies from the store at that point, and the prospector with rocker, pick and blankets, could easily walk from the Embarcadero to the North Fork in a single day.\(^2\)

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\(^1\)This early highway, hardly more than a trail, came into existence almost as early as did the camp, for it was formed by the innumerable miners and their beasts as they picked their way over the most convenient route to the North Fork. In those days when the only means of travel was by foot or team it was necessary to have watering places at convenient distances along the route. The general course of the road, therefore, was determined by the availability of good camp sites where water could be obtained. The road, of course, was not paved, necessitating the changing of the course of travel along the way so as to avoid wet places where the wagons and animals might mire and stall in the mud. This would require the wagons to travel over a course in a general direction of several hundred feet in width. The thoroughfare was forty-five miles. See H. P. Von Sicklen, editor, "Personal Reminiscences of Samuel W. Holladay," Publication of the Society of California Pioneers for 1941 (1941), p. 40. The distance between the points today is only thirty-four miles.

\(^2\)Gazette, May 19, 1873, p. 1.
Merchandise from Sacramento to Auburn was brought over this road at ten dollars a hundred pounds during good weather and thirty and forty dollars a hundred during the rainy season. Supplies were generally cheaper on the North Fork than on the Middle Fork due to the greater facility with which teams reached it from Sacramento. All supplies from Auburn had to be taken on men's backs or on pack mules to the mining camps in the canyons and on the river. James Delavan expressed astonishment at the heavy loads carried by the miners—over one hundred pounds.

John A. Markle, a pioneer of Placer County, recorded in his diary the account of his trip from Sacramento to Auburn. Markle and party had arrived at Sacramento on Sunday, September 2, 1849 via Truckee River, Donner Pass, Bear River and Sinclair Ranch where he remained suffering from poison oak.

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3. Letter of Jonas Winchester, to his wife Susan B. Winchester, November 19, 1849, California State Library (California Section), hereafter referred to as Winchester Correspondence.


5. Loc. cit. Also see Herald, May 29, 1856, p. 5.

Wednesday, September 26, 1849--By this time I am much better of the poison, Lorin Robbins and I agree to go to the mines together.

Thursday, September 27th.--This morning we got some provisions, and about 4 o'clock P.M. loaded them on an ox wagon and started for the North Fork Dry Diggings. We traveled with the wagon awhile, but it being slow we started ahead and got to the Blue Tent at 10 o'clock, where we waited until the wagon came up; we then got our bed and slept at the root of an oak.

Friday, September 28th.--Today we wandered along until we came to Halfway House, where we got dinner. Four miles more brought us to the Oregon Tent, where we stayed all night with some New Yorkers who had come around the Horn.

Saturday, September 29th.--Seven miles this morning brought us to the Miner's Hotel, where we cooked dinner. We then started ahead of the wagon, and eight miles brought us to another boarding tent kept by a Mormon. Being lost from our wagon, and not knowing when it would come, we called for our supper, and got it by paying two dollars each.

Sunday, September 30th.--We waited until 9 o'clock this morning and the wagon did not come, so we started on. Four miles brought us to the Dry Diggings, our place of destination but no wagon there. It arrived, however, about 4 o'clock. We then selected an oak, cooked supper, made our bed and slept.

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An important feature in these entries, besides indicating the length of time to make the trip, was the description of the different way stations between Auburn and Sacramento. These old places are no longer standing, and it is only through this written record that a knowledge is retained of them.

The Blue Tent was a general stopping place on this route to the mountains. A blue tent was first pitched there, and the spot had been called by that appellation ever since, even though a log house soon replaced the original tent. A small stream of pure water trickled by the door down into the adjoining meadow. The house was owned and occupied by a western farmer with his family. He kept a bar and small shop, and his wife provided meals for those who called. This man had arrived in California before the gold discoveries, and acquiring the language of the Indians, he pursued a friendly policy towards them, employed them to dig gold for him, superintended them in person, and is said to have acquired in this and other ways some $200,000. See Theodore T. Johnson, op. cit., p. 142. The Halfway House was kept by Mr. Wilkin, or Wilky as he was often called, assisted by his amiable lady. They were from Scotland, having been in the United States about seven years, most of which time they had lived in their wagon or a tent. First they had lived on the extreme frontier of Missouri, after which they crossed the Rockies to Salt Lake, then into Oregon, and finally down to California. They had spent the summer in the mines, and after commencement of the rainy season had reached the site of the House where two of the mules became mired; the others strayed, leaving them no alternative but to remain for the winter. They constructed temporary accommodations for travelers which soon developed into the prosperous and popular Halfway House. See John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 133. The Miners' Hotel later became known as the famed Franklin House. See R. J. Steele, and others, Directory of the County of Placer for the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Robbins, 1861), p. 1. The boarding tent, kept by a Mormon was known as the Mormon House. This place was established by Mr. Harmon in 1849, and was, according to the Alta California, the first hotel between Sacramento and Auburn. Harmon had emigrated from Salt Lake City early in '49, with his family. See Alta California, September 13, 1851, p. 2.
Way stations were an important link between Sacramento and Auburn. The Early highway, hardly more than a trail, was difficult to travel by the cumbersome ox teams. It took at least two full days for a team to make the forty-five mile journey, often longer, depending on the condition of the road and the weight of the load being carried. As a result, it was necessary to stop overnight along the route. These public houses were of great convenience to the traveling public, providing food and shelter for the weary traveler.9

Many travelers, however, did not bother to stop at the inns. This was particularly true of teamsters. They had their own stopping places, at which they occasionally paused for rest and to graze their animals. S. Weston provided an excellent description of one of their camps:

Auburn, April 13th. First Night's Encampment.--Our journey from Sacramento City to this place occupied less than three days. With the exception of a few places where we had to cross the water, and one hill quite steep, the road is very good, but the accommodations are meagre enough.--There are four or five shanties, two of which are large round tents that are

9Meals were quite expensive at these way stations, one traveler reporting that he had to pay two dollars for his supper. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 76. S. Weston paid three bits, or 37½¢ for a pint of milk. See S. Weston, Four Months in the Mines of California (Providence: Published by E. P. Weston, 1852), p. 8.
located near the best places for grass and water; but our teamsters paid but little attention to them—they have stopping places of their own selection, at which they occasionally stopped for their beasts to rest and graze.

When the first night overtook us, we encamped under the branches of a large tree, a short distance from one of the shanties. Each traveler was obliged to cook his own supper,—This was a hard case, entirely new business to most of us, but we had to do it or go with empty stomachs, but to cook a regular supper was impossible, so the writer concluded to make a sort of milk gruel, and with a little hard bread to make it answer for a night’s meal. So he purchased at the shanty a pint of milk for which he paid three bits (37½ cents), and soon after commenced the trail of his skill in the art of cookery.

He made a fire against the tree, around which at different points two others had been made by our teamsters, over which they were busily cooking their suppers, and had placed on it a skillet of water. Soon it boiled, when he stirred in a little Indian meal, some salt, and poured in a portion of the milk. In a short time it was deemed sufficiently cooked; but just as the writer began to put himself in motion to remove it, the burned stocks separated and over went the porridge into the fire nearly extinguishing it. Instead of being thrown into a fretful humor by the mishap, he calmly considered that one branch of the art of cookery consisted in knowing how to prevent such accidents; so he immediately remade the fire and had better success on the second trial.

By this time most of the company were making preparations to lodge for the night. Some pitched their tents, in which they took shelter, while others spread their blankets upon the ground and slept in the open air. The writer spread his blankets under one of the baggage wagons, but soon finding the ground quite damp, refolded them and went to the above mentioned shanty, where he obtained the privilege of
sleeping during the night upon a bench, and a comfortable night's rest. 10

Such were the rigors of travel on the highways in forty-nine.

10 S. Weston, op. cit., p. 5.
CHAPTER IV

AT THE DIGGINGS

I. THE CAMP

The sites of mining camps received apparently little of the consideration governing the location of settlements. In the rush for gold, nothing was thought of save the momentary convenience of being near to the field of operation. And so they sprang up, often in the most out of the way spots, on the sandy flat left by retreating river currents, along the steep slope of a ravine, on the arid plain, on the hilltop, or in a hollow of some forbidding range, with lack or excess of water, troublesome approach, and other obstacles.

Auburn was situated in a particularly poor location. The site of the village, some forty-five miles from Sacramento, near the junction of the North and Middle Forks of the American River, was in a concentration of small gulches or ravines, which formed into a larger one, Auburn Ravine. The site was described by one contemporary as being "just about the hilliest, roughest,

\[1\text{Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Company, 1932), p. 365.}\]
unattractive looking spot in that section of the country. Unattractive or not, these ravines were rich in gold and many miners, in the summer of forty-nine, flocked there with pans, crevicing knives and rockers.

It was a happy set of men who gathered at the diggings that summer:

All young, strong and healthy, as a rule, and removed from care and trouble except such as arose from their immediate surroundings, for they were beyond the telegraph and seldom got a letter.

One of these youthful gold seekers was C. F. Reed. His reminiscences provided what may well be the earliest description of the camp. Reed arrived at the mines early in May, 1849. At that time the only persons to be found in the settlements were "old man" Wood and thirteen other white men. They, with Wood's squaw wife, constituted the

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2*Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. As late as September 1851, Auburn was pronounced as "the dirtiest most ill-looking, woe-begone village or settlement it had ever fell my lot to visit." See L. M. Schaeffer, Sketches of Travel in South America, Mexico and California (New York: James Egbert, 1860), p. 177.


4*Recollections of C. F. Reed, Herald, October 22, 1892, p. 5.

5 Possibly John S. Wood, for whom the camp at one time was called Wood's Dry Diggings.
entire population of the diggings. The only store in the place was a structure made of pine poles and covered with blue drilling. At this solitary store, Reed purchases $186 worth of supplies on credit and commenced mining. By night he had enough gold to pay his bill and still have an ounce left over. Since whiskey, at that time, was eighteen dollars a bottle, he threw down the last of his dust—purchased a bottle, and treated the boys of the camp.

Another early arrival was Samuel W. Holladay, who commenced mining at the site of the present day plaza on June 10, 1849. Holladay described the camp as then consisting of a few miners' tents and two stores under cotton awnings. Six of these two stores—a frame covered with cotton sheeting—was kept by J. W. Wadleigh. Wadleigh sold everything at $1.00 per pound or per bottle—flour, pork, molasses. An ordinary bottle of pickles though, commanded a price of eight dollars. Pickles were the chief anti-ascorbatic of the mining region which accounted for the high price they commanded.

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6 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 33.

7 loc. cit., A man named Fox was his clerk.

8 The merchants of forty-nine sold everything by the bottle, box or pound. See Andrews Correspondence, April 2, 1850.

9 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 33.
Wadleigh's Indian vaqueros drove cattle in from the Bear River region so that the miners could have fresh beef.

Hiram R. Hawkins passed the spot in the first days of July. At that time, according to his recollections, the only persons at work there were two Chileans, panning in Rich Ravine a short distance above where the American Hotel later stood, and a white man with a rocker upon the main Auburn Ravine near the site of the later day bridge on the turnpike. About the middle of the month,

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11 R. J. Steele, and others, Directory of the County of Placer For the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Robbins, 1861), p. 7.

12 In forty-nine the Americans classed as Chileans all the citizens of the other South American republics. They fell into this error because all the ships arriving from South America were cleared at Valparaiso, where they took on board flour and beans. As the flag covered the cargo, whenever a ship from Chile carrying passengers, dropped anchor in the port of San Francisco, the miners shouted 'Here are some more Chileans for you!' although frequently most, if not all the passengers, belonged to other nationalities. See Valeska Barri, The Course of Empire (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1931), p. 52.

13 The site of the old American Hotel, built in 1857, is now occupied by the Shanghai Restaurant.

14 The site of this turnpike bridge was just below the Shell Service Station at the Four Corners in Auburn. Statement made to the writer by Mrs. O. A. Becker, 103 East Street, Auburn California. Mrs. Becker is the granddaughter of Captain Alden Radcliffe, who came to Auburn in 1852. She still resides at the old Radcliffe residence, which was erected in 1859, and which is, to the best of her knowledge, the oldest residence still standing in the community.
William Gwynn and Hudson M. House started trading posts here.  Beef could be purchased at these stores in July for thirty cents per pound; fresh pork, fifty cents; and lard, fifty cents. At this time the settlement was still known as Wood's Dry Diggings. 17

The opening days of August brought little change in the physical appearance of the settlement. Charles D. Fairchild, who arrived there on the 2nd of August, reported that the place then consisted of only three or four tents and no more than a half dozen men. 13 Later in the month, however,

15Gwynn originally conducted his business in a calico tent, later replacing this flimsy structure with a more permanent log building. See Herald, February 2, 1852, p. 4. He continued in the merchandise business at Auburn until 1852, when he was succeeded by his father, John R. Gwynn, and H. T. Holmes. See Reminiscences of H. T. Holmes, A Dictated Statement of His Recollections, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, p. 1. Also see Herald, February 2, 1895, p. 4. Hudson House operated his business in a large log cabin which served as both a saloon and a boarding house. See Herald, December 18, 1862, p. 2.

16John M. Letts, California Illustrated by a Returned Californian, (New York: William Holdredge, Publisher 1852), p. 77. Good work horses were worth from $150 to $500 a piece in July, 1849; working cattle from $250 to $400.

17John Letts, who likewise arrived in Auburn during the month of July, described the village as a "place of three tents, set on the main road leading to the Oregon Trail, which it intersects twenty miles above." See John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 77.

the first log house was erected, and by the end of September the diggings had several other stores, including one kept by Walkup and Wyman and others by Dutch Phillip, and Elliott and Bailey. Julius Wetzler and Robert Gordon also commenced trading posts that fall.

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19 *Alta California*, June 5, 1857, p. 4. H. F. Burr and his partners, according to one anonymous writer were the first persons to erect houses in Auburn. See Anonymous Manuscript Relating to H. F. Burr and the Early History of Placer County (no date given), Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley, hereafter referred to as Burr Manuscript.

20 *Herald*, September 30, 1899, p. 5. Also see Recollections of John C. Boggs, *Herald*, November 16, 1907, p. 1; R. P. Van Sicklen, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34; Myron Angell, *op. cit.*, p. 385. John Craig Boggs, who arrived at Auburn on the 28th of September, recalled that at that time Joseph Walkup was putting up a log house to be used as a store. See *Herald*, September 30, 1899, p. 5. Walkup, along with his partner Samuel B. Wyman, continued in the merchandising business until 1851. From that time, however, they devoted their principal energies to the development of their property near the present site of Lincoln, as ranchers, cultivating land and raising and dealing in stock. See Myron Angell, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

21 Shortly after Gwynn and House had established their businesses, Julius Wetzler, in company with Captain John A. Sutter, started a trading post under the name of Wetzler & Company. See Myron Angell, *op. cit.*, p. 385; *Gazette*, April 19, 1873, p. 1; *Sacramento Union*, May 1, 1873, p. 3. Robert Gordon, who had come to Auburn from Ireland in forty-nine, followed the miner's life for a short period then turned to the often more lucrative merchandising business. He pursued this occupation at the same "old stand" until his death on January 3, 1877. See *Herald*, January 13, 1877, p. 5. The old Gordon building erected shortly after the fire of 1855, is still in use today.
Until the fall of forty-nine, Auburn remained a sparsely settled place. The "considerable number of miners" that had gathered there by April of that year did not stay long because of the scarcity of water. Water, in the ravines converging at Auburn, was plentiful for panning in the winter but with the coming of summer, these ravines

29 As late as September, 1849, the population of the diggings was estimated to be only about a dozen miners. See F. I. Vassault, "A Story in Transition," The Overland Monthly, XVII (January, 1891), p. 4. The population of the dry diggings during the early months of forty-nine is extremely difficult to estimate at this late date. There are no official records to refer to, the first State census not taking place until 1850. As a result, figures are limited exclusively to rough estimates by the miners themselves, which do not tell the full story. Their computations neglected to include the wide expanse of country on all sides of Auburn—rich in gold deposits—and crowded with miners who made Auburn, not only their trading center, but also a place to gather for a drink and a friendly bit of conversation when the lonely miner's life became too unbearable. The Times for May 5, 1849 reported that a considerable number of miners were employed at the dry diggings between Bear Creek and the American River. See Times, May 5, 1849, p. 3. Auburn, at the crossroads of these diggings, was both a trading center and social center for the miners employed therabouts. No record was kept of the arrivals and departures of these miners to and from Auburn. They came and left as they saw fit. Some stayed only long enough to replenish their supplies before striking out for their claims or to the rivers; others delayed at the camp for days, enjoying the company of their fellow miners. Who these early miners were, how long they stayed at the diggings, and when they left is almost impossible to determine today. For a partial list of the earliest inhabitants of the camp, see Appendix A.

30 Times, May 26, 1849, p. 2.
dried up and water became scarce. This was particularly true during the unusually long and dry summer of 1849 which caused the diggings to be largely ignored in favor of the rivers where a plentiful supply of water was assured. That summer a regular hegira took place which crowded every bar on the North Fork from Mormon Island to the Middle Fork.\(^{31}\) One miner commenting on this exodus wrote:

> Auburn is a desolate place and will be until a supply of new diggers come in. The old heads are crowding towards the mountains. Log cabins are deserted and I am left along in this wilderness.\(^ {32}\)

With the arrival of winter, however, a large population began to accumulate at the settlement on the North Fork. The centralty of Auburn, its accessibility and proximity to the North Fork coupled with its rich gold deposits, marked it as a good trading point and a desirable place to pass the winter. Quite a large community began to gather during the winter of 1849-50.\(^ {33}\) Among these newcomers were a number from Otsego County, New York.

\(^{31}\) *Gazette*, April 19, 1873, p. 1.


\(^{33}\) Some idea of the tremendous influx of miners to the dry diggings that winter may be seen by comparing the small figures for the summer of forty-nine, referred to on the preceding pages, with those extracted from the first
who came by sea around Cape Horn and brought with them a large amount of goods which they sold informally from their cabins.  

Many stores were established that winter, and by the spring of 1850 Auburn had become an important trading center of an extensive mining district as well as a thriving mining camp. The Picayune reported that the population of Auburn for the same year was 1,500. See San Francisco Picayune, October 21, 1850, p. 2. Both sets of figures are very high and were probably obtained during the winter months when the gold-seekers along the rivers sought the sanctuary of the dry diggings.

34 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 365. One of them was William M. Gates afterwards a prominent lawyer in the state of Nevada.


36 The principal traders at that time were Bailey & Kerr, Disbrow & Willment, Walkup & Wyman, Parkinson & Leet, Wetzler & Sutter, William Gwynn, H. M. House, and Post & Ripley. See R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 7.

These pioneer merchants operated the principal trading posts for a large number of miners congregated at Horseshoe Bar, Smith's Bar, Oregon Bar, Dead Man's Bar, Murderer's Bar, and the less important mining localities for miles up and down the North Fork, as well as for a wide expanse of country on all sides, which abounded in dry diggings. See Placer Times and Transcript, September 15, 1851, p. 1.
II. WINTER AT THE DIGGINGS

Few prospectors took time to build cabins in the spring or summer of forty-nine. Precarious tents, brush huts, and cloth houses which then comprised the camp were more than sufficient for their simple needs. There was no need for more permanent structures, or so they thought at the time. After all, were they not going to get a "pile" and leave for home by fall? Furthermore, they had never spent a winter there and did not know when the rainy season began or how severe it could be. The hot, dry summer in which the thermometer seldom went under ninety-eight degrees proved to be deceiving. Consequently

37 Tent and brush huts were the principal means of shelter for early miners. The brush huts were made of four-corner posts covered with leafy brushwood, the sides at times with basket-work filling. Some miners erected a sort of brush tent with a ridge-pole upheld at one end by a tree and supporting sloping sticks upon which the brush was piled. See Hubert Howe Bancroft, op. cit., VI, 389.

38 The forty-niner was a restless type. Wherever he made camp, in ravine, river bed or valley, he heard the cry: "Big strike farther on!" See Evelyn Wells and Harry G. Peterson, The '49ers (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1923), p. 59. The tent or brush hut was suited to his restless nature. It was easy to move and easy to tend, and when the dirt floor beneath became too littered, the forty-niner moved his abode to another site, thereby cleaning house.


40 Winchester Correspondence, August 5, 1849. The temperature often reached as high as 104° in the afternoon.
only the most temporary shelters were constructed, and in many instances none at all. Many miners lived in the open with the barren ground as their only bed, and the stars above as their roof. Jonas Winchester, who mined at the North Fork above Auburn, was such a miner. His simple camp, described below, illustrates the simplicity of the miner's camp in forty-nine:

Leaving San Francisco with only a change of clothes, and our blankets, we entered upon the threshold of our nomadic wanderings, and the bare ground has since been our bed, and will doubtless be so for a long time to come. An oak tree, which is our home, partially shelters us at noon from the burning rays of the sun. My poncho spread upon the dirt,—for grass or green things there is none save the trees which are scattered over the hills and in the ravines like an orchard—the blankets upon that, my coat for a pillow, and the comforter for covering, this is our luxurious resting place, our beautiful bed chamber, after the work of day is over. A few nails driven into the tree, in addition to those branches upon which are within reach, furnish pegs to hang our clothes and accoutrements upon. A little carpet bag of Moccasin's and my small valise contain all our goods and chattels, in dress, toilet, and treasure, neither worth the stealing and therefore, left entirely unprotected during our

From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. mining operations were suspended by all and a siesta taken after dinner; it was not deemed prudent to work in the middle of the day during such excessive heat. Loc. cit. The variation for the region was seldom less than 30° every day and often 50°. At sunrise, the thermometer was from 50° to 60°; and at 2 p.m. from 96° to 104°. Yet, this great change was not very inconvenient, for the air was dry and pure and it was only necessary to draw on an extra blanket towards morning. See Winchester Correspondence, August 6, 1849.
absence.44

This was the setting as fall made its appearance at the diggings. Most miners who had vowed to strike it rich and leave for home by that date found that they were now unable to keep that vow. It became increasingly apparent that they would spend the winter of 1849-1850, not with their families and friends in the east, but rather at the dry diggings on the North Fork. The cooling weather and threatening skies served notice that their flimsily constructed shelters were no longer adequate, and that preparations for winter were in order.

John Letts, who spent the winter in the various mining camps on the North Fork described the hasty preparations that characterized mining camps of the region:

The middle of October finds the miners in a transition state. There was not a drop of rain fallen during the entire summer, and the earth, six feet below, is as dry as on the surface; one cannot move without being enveloped in dust; and vegetation is as crisp as if it had just been taken from the oven. There has been no haze to shield the earth from the sun, and at night the stars have twinkled with unwanted brilliance; but now the sun has grown dim and pale, and the stars have fled to their hiding place. Miners are admonished that it is time to prepare for an untried winter, and on every hand is evinced a disposition not to be taken unawares. Here on the side of the mountain is a habitation, three logs high covered with canvas, the crevices well 'mudded', all the light used being admitted through the door. There is a cave.

44 Winchester Correspondence, August 5, 1849.
walled and roofed with rocks, the
canvas closing the entrance being the
only indication that it is a tenement.
An army tent is also seen, which is well
secured, as if in momentary expectation
of the approaching blast; dirt has been
thrown well over the foot, to prevent the
winds from searching out the occupant.
In front is a tree, under which lies a
camp kettle and frying pan, and near by
are a few dying embers, the smoke curling
up and mingling with the foliage. It
seemed hard that one accustomed to the
luxury of a comfortable home should be
doomed to spend the winter in this
forlorn condition. Climbing up the side
of the mountain, are seen mules heavily
laden with provisions and mining uten-
sils, which are destined to some
favorite in the mountain gorges. Trade
begins to improve, miners are laying in
their supplies for the winter, and
merchants find their stocks exhausted
and are driven to town to replenish.

The mass of miners, however, made very little pre-
paration for winter, either for shelter or provisions. As
the first rains fell, most of them were still living in
tents, shanties or rude hovals. Consequently, they were
at the mercy of the elements. Forks and tin dishes
rusted, flour became wet and caked, coffee was a sodden
mass. Morning found the miners still and soaked in
blankets that didn't have a dry fiber. The miner's lot
was not a very happy one that winter. John Letts
effectively described the miserable conditions that

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42 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 119-120.

On rising in the morning the bottle was our first consolation. A few large sticks would be thrown together and set on fire, around which would gather a dozen strange looking specimens of humanity, one with a red flannel shirt, part of a glazed cap, and torn unmentionables; another with a woolen blanket that could boast of having soaked up during the previous night all the rain that had fallen in the vicinity; another with an Indian rubber poncho and a hat that had been used both sides out. All hovering around the fire, some with pieces of pork on the ends of sticks others with something in a frying pan, covered with a tin plate; one is stirring flour and water together while his companion is trying to turn the cakes.44

The first rain of winter, a light shower, fell on the 8th day of October, 1849.45 These showers increased in intensity during the succeeding days, and on the 27th of October, a deluge burst upon the camp.46

Snow, rain and very cold weather continued through winter to March, 1850.47 Auburn was described by one

44 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 122-123.

45 Winchester Correspondence, October 24, 1849. Also see Mahlon D. Fairchild, op. cit., p. 3. John Markle, however, lists October 3 as the beginning of the rainy season. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 77.

46 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 78.

47 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40.
disgruntled prospector as being the "rainiest place on the coast." A glance at Markle's diary for the 13th and 23rd of December provides some idea of the extent of these rains:

Sunday, December 16th.---The weather for the last week has been variable. Monday and Tuesday were clear and cold. On Tuesday night it commenced raining and continued until Friday, occasionally ceasing for a few hours on Friday morning. It commenced snowing and continued to snow until night, when it ceased. Considerable snow fell but the ground was so wet from the rain that it melted away.

Sunday, December 23d.---It rained all of last week with the exception of one day, when it was beautiful and clear, giving us a change to get out or the cabin where we were pent up to our dissatisfaction.

The effects of that first winter were put into verse by Hiram R. Hawkins, a portion of which is reprinted below:

O' don't you remember '49 Billy Cwynn
Forty-nine when the floods came down
And smashed in the top of your Calico shop
And did it exceedingly brown.

In the interval when no rain fell, rough log houses

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49 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 78.
50 Herald, February 8, 1895, p. 4.
replaced the flimsy tents and other crude shelters. Markle's diary shows the day-by-day account of the erection of one of these hastily constructed cabins:

Thursday, November 1st.—Today we commenced to build our cabin. The day clear, and a little cold.

Friday, November 2d.—Still at work on the cabin. It rained some little through the day, and night it poured down. The rain came through our tent; our bed clothes became wet, and our sleep was not as pleasant as might have been.

Saturday, November 3d.—This morning the rain continued to pour down; the fire all out, our bed wet; and still getting wetter. Robbins looking at these things got the blues bad enough for both of us so I laughed it off without trouble.

Sunday, November 4th.—This morning it was clear and we went to work on the cabin, as we thought it necessary to do so. In the evening it began to rain again and rained all night; but we were a little more comfortable then on the previous night.

Monday, November 5th.—Rained all day. Messrs. Willeck and Whigham arrived here from Sacramento City. This morning Sampson made arrangements to cabin with us. Daddy Blue, Dodge and Quinch in a sweat about the matter.

Tuesday, November 6th.—Today it was clear and Sampson, Robbins and myself went to work upon the cabin.

Wednesday, November 7th.—Today it rained by showers and we worked at intervals.

Thursday, November 8th.—Clear today and we got our cabin all ready for the roof.

On Saturday morning Markle left for Sacramento and did not return to Auburn until Friday, November 16th. It is from this point that his account is continued:
Saturday, November 17th.—By this time Robbins and Sampson had built the chimney and got the clapboards ready, and by noon we had part of the roof on. In the afternoon it rained.

Sunday, November 18th.—Today the weather was clear and cool; so we dried our bed clothes and other things.

Monday, November 19th.—Today we worked at the cabin and finished the roof. It rained all day; but at night we felt as if we had a shelter.

Tuesday, November 20th.—Today was clear and warm, and we finished the cabin.

Wednesday, November 21st.—Today was clear and pleasant, and we built a large fire in the cabin and dried it thoroughly.

Thursday, November 22nd.—Today we moved into the cabin and commenced to lead a bachelor's life.51

Several large public houses were also constructed that winter to accommodate the ever increasing number of miners who were reaching the diggings. These commodious log buildings marked the beginning of the extensive hotel business which has characterized Auburn from its earliest days.52 They were built of logs and roofed with

51 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 73.

52 From its earliest days, Auburn has been blessed with a number of fine hotels. This was due first to the fact that during winter months, the rising rivers forced miners on various bars to seek refuge at Auburn; secondly to the fact that Auburn, then as now, was the trading center for the surrounding country; and thirdly to the establishment of the county seat at the settlement in 1850 which brought many visitors to town on official business. With the establishment of a railroad terminus at Auburn in the late 1850's, a fourth incentive was provided. In later years, the village on the North Fork gained considerable recognition as a health resort, adding still further
shakes split from pine trees; within each was a great fire
place, a bar, gambling tables, a kitchen and a boarding
house. These buildings were very commodious and lucky
were the miners who were able to warm themselves before
their fires and lie down for sleep in their warmth.

Probably the first and unquestionably the most
famous of these public houses, was Misenk's house's
Empire Hotel. Located on what is now Washington Street,
the Empire was described as a "homely, but good, old
California log cabin." Its familiar fire place, with
huge pine logs, was a favorite gathering place for the
early day residents of the camp. A large sign with the
letters "EMPIRE" spelled out adorned this log edifice.

William Gwynn also kept one of these hostleries.

impetus to the already thriving hotel business.

55 Herald, December 13, 1852, p. 2. In 1852 the old
familiar log cabin was torn down and replaced by a new
Empire. Loc. cit. This splendid edifice was consumed in
the fire of June 9, 1855, See Herald, June 9, 1855, p. 2.
A third Empire was started soon afterwards but was not
completed until 1857. See Press, June 20, 1857, p. 2.

54 L. M. Schaeffer, Sketches of Travel in South
America, Mexico and California (New York: James Egbert,
1850), p. 177.

55 G. C. Weld, "Administration of Justice in Califor-
nia Illustrated in the Trial, Conviction, and Punishment
127-128.
The upper story of his log cabin, which served as a boarding house, was little more than a loft or attic. Its floor was rough clapboards laid on sleepers. Here the miners could lie down in their blankets for a night's rest. Beneath was a spacious bar-room and restaurant, kept by a Frenchman named Prinaud. Still another of these pioneer hotels was the Auburn House. This old building, with its well seasoned boards, was completely destroyed in the disastrous fire of 1855 which leveled most of Auburn.

In 1851, when Gwynn constructed Auburn's first two story hotel, the National Hotel, the old establishment was converted into a store. See Sacramento Daily Union, June 26, 1851, p. 2. A picture of the National Hotel may be seen in an early day wood-cut of Auburn on p. 59.

Herald, June 9, 1855, p. 2. The Auburn House was located opposite the latter Temple Saloon. Between 1850 and 1852, many of Auburn's most famous hostelries were constructed. The Traveler's Rest, the Mansion House, the Crescent City Hotel, and the Stage House, later known as the famed Orleans, all flourished during that period. But of all the above mentioned hotels, none were more popular than the Empire and the National, which were the snow places of early day Auburn.

The National and Crescent City Hotels, and the Auburn House were totally destroyed in the destructive fire of 1855 which leveled most of the town. See Herald, June 9, 1855, p. 2. Although gutted by fire, the Orleans was completely rebuilt. Rebuilding of the Empire was commenced, but this once stately building remained an unfinished and dilapidated structure until 1857 when it passed into the hands of a Mr. Ergantz, who made it ready for occupation. See Press, June 20, 1857, p. 2. The Traveler's Rest, one of the town's oldest hotels, kept for many years by Bishop & Long, closed in 1856, remaining only as a private residence of Mr. Bishop. See Press, March 6, 1858, p. 2. The Union Livery Stable was erected on the site of the Crescent
As the rains continued without a letup, Auburn's log cabin hotels did a thriving business. The miners in the immediate neighborhood had no other place to spend the winter. The road to Sacramento became practically impassible, and this thoroughfare was described by one contemporary as "two roads, one two feet below the other, while another termed it a "bottomless sea of mud."\(^5^8\)

Jonas Winchester furnished an interesting picture of travel on this thoroughfare that winter:

I left Sacramento on Saturday, 24 Nov., the weather having cleared off Thursday, the day after my letter was closed. Mr. Woods, attached to our camp, had been sent down with a horse and had got through with great difficulty. We packed 150 pounds of flour, beans, bread, etc., on each animal, and started on our return to Camp. That day we traveled 18 miles by taking cattle paths across the plains, succeeded in getting past many of the deep slaws and mudholes. As night came on, we were still following one of these trails in ignorance of our distance from the traveled road, and far from any tent of human habitation. Gradually, it not only became dark, but the trail began to run out, leaving us in an open plain, the ground covered with rains, and soft and miry. Twice our animals got down to their bellies

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City Hotel, at the corner of East and Sacramento Streets, in 1855. See Herald, September 15, 1855, p. 2. Of these pioneer hotels, only the renowned Orleans is still standing today.

\(^5^8\) H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40.

\(^5^9\) Pioneer, November 10, 1877, p. 2.
in mire, and could be extricated only by taking off packs and saddles, and with extreme difficulty, as they sank into their knees at every step. Two hours of the night were spent in this way. At last we had to turn about and retrace, the path, and at 9 o'clock found ourselves on the bank of a stream swollen by the floods of water that had poured down for three weeks. We halted under an oak tree, tied our animals, built a fire, spread our blankets on the ground and went supperless to bed under the open sky of a cold November night. Notwithstanding the barking of hordes of prairie wolves all around us, we slept very well though towards morning I felt a little uncomfortable from the heavy, frosty air. We were up at daylight, the ground covered with a heavy frost, and our top blanket almost wet through by the dew. Taking a lunch of hard biscuit and bologna sausage, we started on our way. I had a pair of Indian rubber boots, with long legs, that I borrowed from Norcross (who remained in Sacramento) and was therefore enabled to wade the water and mud with comparative dry feet. But they were heavy, and soon made by ankles sore, so after 10 or 12 miles, I took them off, hung them across the mile's back, pulled off my stockings and went barefoot 14 miles--reaching camp at 8 o'clock at night.--Was not this quite a performance for tender feet, on the 25th of November? 60

Each succeeding day saw the roads become progressively worse until they became hardly more than quagmires of mud. It required almost a week to complete the round

60 Winchester Correspondence, December 8, 1849.
trip from Auburn to Sacramento.\(^{61}\) Fraighting became extremely dangerous, and rates rose accordingly. Teamsters who had charged ten cents per pound that summer\(^{62}\) were now asking and getting fifty cents.\(^{63}\) The roads became so bad that many travelers were compelled to leave their supplies along the side of the road. One such traveler reported that after making half one journey, he observed bags of provisions strung up on the limbs of trees, extending along the road for miles.\(^{64}\) Finally, after a series of heavy rains, the road became entirely impassible.

Provisions became very scarce and very high. John Craig Boggs reported that he and his partners Colonel Thomas B. Kennedy, who jointly operated a store in Auburn that winter, sold pork at $1.25 a pound and received the same for flour; a barrel of sauerkraut, which had cost them $10 was sold for $105.\(^{65}\) A grocery order of December

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\(^{61}\) H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40.

\(^{62}\) \underline{Herald}, May 29, 1866, p. 5.

\(^{63}\) Recollections of John C. Boggs, \underline{Herald}, September 2, 1905, p. 1. Also see Winchester Correspondence, November 19, 1849; History of Sacramento County With Illustrated Descriptions of Its Scenery (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1880), p. 214.

\(^{64}\) \underline{Pioneer}, November 10, 1877, p. 2.

\(^{65}\) \underline{Herald}, September 2, 1905, p. 1. The location of
12, 1849 which cost $247.65 could be purchased for $35.50 in 1862. Also, as the severity of winter increased, prices rose correspondingly. One writer reported that prices seemed to stabilize at two dollars per pound, the rate charged for flour, meal, pork, hard tack and beans which provided the bill of fare available in the diggings with but a single exception. William Gwynn had the forethought to lay in a stock of dried apples, and a few gallons of molasses. He mixed these, stuck the mass into dough, gave the whole the benefit of fire, and then cried "pies for sale here, Boggs' business was on the site of the building later occupied by R. C. Snowden. See Herald, June 5, 1909, p. 1.

66Herald, January 23, 1882, p. 5. Also see Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 80. Moses Andrews mentioned selling flour in Auburn during December at $1.00 per pound and potatoes at $1.50; pork which sold at 35c per pound in Sacramento was sold by Andrews in Auburn at $1.00 a pound. See Andrews Correspondence, December 9, 1849. Prices were equally severe at the junction of the North and Middle Forks, just above Auburn. Teaming went from $10 a hundred pounds to $40 and $40 and later refused at any price; flour was selling for $1.25 a pound, hard biscuit $1.00 to $1.25; pork $1.50 to $2.00 and but a few of these articles were to be had at any price. See Winchester Correspondence, November 19, 1849.

67Herald, January 23, 1882, p. 5.

68Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. The profits of the Auburn merchants, while admittedly high, were minimized by the high costs of freighting in goods from Sacramento. They occasionally paid as much as one thousand dollars per ton for freight. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 139.
Very cheap indeed—half a dollar in gold dust for a quarter section.  

Boots were particularly scarce and costly in Auburn, selling from twenty to thirty-five dollars a pair.  

The scarcity of supplies, brought about by the impassible condition of the roads, resulted in a great deal of sickness occurring in Auburn during the winter of 1849-1850. Scurvy, Chronic diarrhea and typhoid were prevailing complaints.  

Many died, their only requiem being "the singing of the wind through the pine trees, the solemn monotone of the ceaseless rain and the howl of the coyote."  

Dr. Kelly, who had died suddenly from "congestive chills," was placed in a coffin made of shakes through which the face of the dead man could be seen. It was

69 Gazette, op. cit., p. 1.

70 Loc. cit.

71 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40. These boots had originally cost Holladay three dollars.

72 Loc. cit.

73 Pioneer, November 10, 1877, p. 2. Also see H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40. Dysentary was also very prevalent on the North Fork. Most sickness was caused mainly by exposure, badly cooked food, and from the lack of fresh vegetables. See William Kelly, A Stroll Through the Diggings of California (London: Simms and McIntyre, 1852), p. 33.

74 Pioneer, November 10, 1877, p. 2.
placed upon the benches in the center of the saloon, where men were constantly coming in to drink. The visitors when seeing the ghostly company, imbibed silently and walked away. It was evident, according to one witness, that "hard hearts did not always beat beneath rough garbs." 75

Death, according to one writer, was hastened by ways other than mere physical ailments; as he put it:

Home sickness had a large influence in hastening death with many, and indeed the surroundings were dismal enough in companionship with rough men, who could not be delicate nurses, with not a female to gladden the sight of the poor invalid, whose mind was constantly haunted by visions of wife, mother or daughter, whose soft and sweet attention could along light the way toward the end of the pilgrimage so near at hand. 76

By March, 1850, winter began to vanish. Prices, while still high, had decreased somewhat from previous months because of improved transportation facilities brought about by clearing weather. Supplies became more plentiful and sickness became a thing of the past. By May, 1850 flour, which had cost 60¢ a pound, could be

75 *Pioneer*, November 10, 1877, p. 2.

76 *Loc. cit.* While it is rather unlikely that death was brought about by these reasons, it is entirely likely that the uncomfortable conditions which surrounded the sick were made still more uncomfortable by acute home sickness and the lack of the feminine touch.
purchased by the miners for 55¢; pork was reduced from 30¢
a pound to 25¢; sugar from 30¢ to 40¢ and tea from $1.50
to $1.00 per pound.\textsuperscript{77}

The magnitude of these early day prices may be
visualized when it is realized that the hired worker was
paid but five dollars a day, and that he had to board
himself.\textsuperscript{73}

Apart from those who struck it rich, the wisest
forty-niners apparently were those who turned to saloon
keeping or merchandising where the compensation was not
only more certain but higher. One writer, many years
later, estimated that during the season of forty-nine,
"Messrs. Gwynn, Bailey, Julius Wetzel, Walkup and Wysan
took in more gold in one week than all of Front Street
do today (1873)."\textsuperscript{79} And so passed the winter of 1849-1850
at Auburn.

Auburn experienced a continued growth between
1850-1852. By the fall of 1851 a noticeable change had
begun to take place in the appearance of the camp.

\textsuperscript{77}Josselyn Correspondence, May 12, 1850. At this
time beans could be purchased at 40¢ per pound; dried
apples, 65¢; potatoes, 60¢; coffee, 40¢; fresh beef, 20¢
to 50¢; bacon and hams, 50¢; salted salteratus, $1.25; salt, 50¢.
 Vinegar sold at $1.00 per quart and mackerel No. 3 at 25¢
each. This, according to the writer, was about the extent
of the type of provisions then available in the camp.

\textsuperscript{73}Andrews Correspondence, April 2, 1852.

\textsuperscript{79}Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.
The men who had rushed to the mines expecting to make fortunes in a few weeks and return to the East were beginning to change their ideas. Many of these men had discovered that there were better ways of making livings than by mining, which was both precarious and exhausting. Professional men returned to their professions; storekeepers left the placers and re-entered trade. People began to think of their town as a permanent community. Auburn was undergoing a transition from a temporary mining camp to a permanent community. The Sacramento Weekly Union offered a preview of what was soon to take place in Auburn:

This flourishing mining town has increased in population one-third since the first of January, and is no doubt destined soon to become one of the most important inland towns of the State.\(^3\)

By the end of 1852, Auburn had indeed become one of the leading mining camps in Northern California. The Herald, in its second issue, reviewed briefly the progress of the town since its establishment in the summer of forty-nine:

"It was first located in the early part of 1849. Like most towns which at that time sprang into existence, neither taste in the order of architecture or regularity in

\(^3\) Sacramento Weekly Union, March 27, 1852, p. 2.
One optimistic Auburnite proudly stated that "Auburn now seems to have taken a new start, and we have some buildings now in progress of erection here which might be an ornament to your own fair city. See Sacramento Weekly Union April 10, 1852, p. 2."
laying it out, seems to have been consulted. The past year, however, has materially changed its appearance. A few of the log cabins first erected still remain, but they are rapidly giving place to commodious frame buildings. From a cluster of log cabins it has been converted, by the enterprise of its citizens, into a flourishing and not unsightly town. Its hotels, the Empire, National, Crescent City, Auburn House, and others, under the superintendence of gentlemen of experience, are admirably conducted and afford accommodations equal to any of their class in the State. 81

81 Herald, September 13, 1852, p. 4. In 1852 William Gwynn and other public spirited citizens led a movement for the establishment of a newspaper in Auburn. The result of this movement was the establishment of the Placer Herald in September, 1852 by Tabb Mitchell, Richard Rust and John McElroy. The Herald has been in continuous operation ever since, and according to its present owner-publisher, Douglas P. Campbell, is the oldest continuous California newspaper operating under the same name.
Auburn is one of the oldest mining towns in the State. It is the seat of justice for Placer County, and is situated on the west bank of the North Fork of American River, within three miles of the junction of the Middle and North Forks. The streets and town lots of this settlement have been considered of great value for gold, and in many instances houses have been built for the same object. At present it is the principle trading post for the large number of miners congregated on North Shore Bar, Smith's Bar, Oregon Bar, Dead Man's Bar, Maud's Bar, and the less important mining locations for miles up and down the North Fork, as well as for a wide expanse of country on all sides, which abound in dry diggings. Litterly considerable attention has been attracted to this place, consequence of the discovery of immense veins of gold-bearing quartz. Several crushing mills have recently been erected for this purpose, and we learn that there are indications of veins, at a distance into the hillside, and farther down, many of which are nearly all white with the precious metals. River, which at present empties into Feather River just above Norden, is soon to be turned into a great river by means of a grand thirty-five miles long, and when this great work is completed, which will be before the next twelve months, the entire amount of water will pass through Auburn, and thence down to the American River. It will be carrying a new river in California, and looking up one after already exists. This will have a most important effect on Auburn.
CHAPTER V

THE MINERS AND THEIR AMUSEMENTS

I. THE MINERS

It was a community of young men that gathered in Auburn during the days of forty-nine. There was scarcely a gray head to be seen.

All young, strong and healthy, as a rule, and removed from care and trouble except such as arose from their immediate surroundings, for they were beyond the telegraph and seldom got a letter.1

The universal costume was a red or gray flannel shirt, old trousers, high boots that were pulled up over the pants legs, and a dilapidated slouch hat.2 Miners allowed their appearance to deteriorate into picturesque disreputableness because "they were so far from feminine civilization and because they were living a life that was hostile to neatness and floppery."3 "A stranger, commented John Eagle, "would have concluded that the miners of California never shave; never put on clean


2Letter of John H. Eagle to his wife, June 28, 1852, Huntington Library, San Marino, California, hereafter referred to as Eagle correspondence.

3Loc. cit.
vests; clean dickeys, or clean boots."  

Tenderfeet were surprised to find men of culture, learning and dignity in the ragged ranks of miners—physicians, lawyers, clergymen, printers, editors and correspondents. Among the latter were George K. Fitch of the Bulletin, and Gilbert C. Weld of the New York Journal of Commerce. Together with Rev. P. C. Ewer, they founded the Sacramento Transcript in the spring of 1850. This impressive list was further distinguished by the appearance of an ex-governor—Governor Shannon of Ohio—who began mining at the diggings in September, 1849.

Cooking, at the diggings, was simple and was usually done in turn by members of the company, many of whom were not excelled in the art of cookery. One miner told of the time he attempted to bake a gingerbread. Everything went alright except for one slight oversight—that of putting in mustard in place of ginger.

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4 Eagle Correspondence, June 28, 1852.

5 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40.

6 Loc. cit.


8 Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1882), p. 78.
Sundays were observed by suspending work, sometimes by singing church hymns, by visiting and comparing notes, by washing and mending their clothes. Whether their patches bore the brand 'Genesee' or 'Galligo' was a matter of equal indifference to them and to society there.*

Holidays, with the exception of Christmas, were seldom observed. John Parnell told of celebrating Christmas Day, 1849. He and his partners, Hall and Robbins, procured a quarter of venison and a bottle of old Monongahela, and returned to their cabins where they made a pot-pie. After it was cooked, they ate, drank and were merry until

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9 The Rev. Mr. Fitch of the Episcopal Church was reported by one source to have been the first clergyman to preach in what is now Placer County. This was in June, 1849. See Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. If this was true, he would undoubtedly have preached in Auburn, the principal settlement in the County. The first known church services in Auburn took place on the hill southwest of town, where the old B. C. Snowden residence stands. This was in December of 1851. See P. T. Vassault, op. cit., p. 15. Auburn's first church, the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in June, 1852, by Rev. James Hunter, P.C., and Rev. J. D. Blain, P.E. See J. R. Steele, and others, Directory of the County of Placer For the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Robbins, 1861), p. 20.

10 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 35.

11 Loc. cit.

12 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 73.
evening. They topped off their celebration with a tarfy pull. Another group celebrated the birth of Christ by holding a small party at Netzler's store. The menu consisted of grizzly bear steaks and "toasts to absent dear ones, drunk in bumper of cider." A group of

13 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.

14 Large numbers of grizzly bears infested this section of the country. S. Weston told of the excitement caused in Auburn during the month of April, 1850 when a large bear of this species leisurely passed through the southern part of the village. A few days later another which was said to have weighed better than eleven hundred pounds was killed a short distance from town. When disabled so that it could not walk, it reportedly bounded about, tearing up the ground, bushes and small trees with strength that filled with astonishment those who captured and killed it. See S. Weston, Four Months in the Mines of California, (Providence: E. F. Weston, Publisher, 1854), p. 3. On still another occasion a party of sportsmen came across the trail of a huge grizzly bear near the Mountaineer House, on the Auburn road. One of the party dexterously slipped a noose over his neck, and the bear followed his captor about as meekly as an "Irish porker does his master when attempting to drive him to market." The bear finally freed himself of the rope, and ran over the prairie so rapidly that his enemy gave up the chase. See Sacramento Daily Union, October 14, 1851, p. 2.


15 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.
twenty-five Negroes in the vicinity observed the holiday by engaging in a free-for-all fight. They kept it up all day, helped out from time to time by a liquid treat from the miners. None of the participants were seriously hurt, and the amusement was reported to have been immense.

This was about the extent of the holiday season at the Auburn mines.

Little reference to women appeared in contemporary accounts during the period 1848-1851. A great number of miners of all shapes, sizes and descriptions might be seen but seldom a fluttering skirt or a brightly colored sunbonnet.

A story, told of the excitement caused by the finding of a lady's bonnet, will demonstrate this point:

The scarcity of ladies in California, is the theme of much conversation. There is an anecdote almost universally told in connection with the subject; it is as follows; At a certain point in the mineral regions, part of a lady's hat was discovered, which caused so much excitement and joy, that it was immediately decided to have a ball on the spot, in honor of the event. Invitations were immediately distributed throughout the country, and on

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16 On New Year's Day, January 1, 1850, John Markle and his partner Robbins took their plates, knives and forks and went to Hall and Martin's tent for a pot-pie, especially cooked for the occasion. The feast was said to have been "glorious and good, and was not without a little of that stuff which makes a person happy for a short time." See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 79.
the appointed day, three hundred miners assembled, each dressed in a red flannel shirt and accompanied by a bottle of brandy. In the exact spot was driven a stick, five feet high, on the top of which was placed the hat, and around it wrapped a flannel blanket. It was said to represent, as nearly as possible, a female form. By the side of this was placed a miner's cradle, or machine, in which was placed a smoked ham, also wrapped in a flannel blanket. At the close of each January the president of the meeting would rock the cradle while the secretary would pour a bottle of brandy down the back of the lady's neck. The ball lasted two days at the end of which time the ground was surveyed into town-lots and called Auburn.17

It was not until the waning days of forty-nine that the settlement's first ladies, Mesdames McCormick and Elliott, arrived at the diggings.18 Two years later a woman's presence in Auburn was still more than enough to create a stir. Mrs. Harriet Grandel, who arrived in Auburn at that time was quite surprised at her reception.

We had some strange experiences coming up from Sacramento, she said. When we had been about a day on the road we met a party of miners returning from the mines. They had been up there a year, and when they saw us they nearly went crazy. You see they had never expected to see one again. Nothing would satisfy them but we must camp right there, and I should


cock dinner for them. Of course I did it, and they wanted me to take a share of their gold dust, but I wouldn't do that. 19

Women remained few in numbers until well into the fifties. The census of 1852 lists only 345 women in all Placer County out of a total population of 6,602. As late as 1855, there were only about a half dozen families in the little community. 20

Since women were so heavily outnumbered, there

p. 1. Myron Angell in his History of Placer County states that Eliza Elliott was the second white woman in Auburn, having arrived at the diggings in the spring of 1850, and remaining there until 1864 when she moved to Nevada. She died at Silver City, Nevada on March 11, 1872. See Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1892), p. 409. No further information regarding Mrs. McCormick has been found. She was probably the first feminine resident of the camp.

3. Weston wrote that when he mined in the vicinity of Auburn, during the early days of 1850, that one could see near the northern suburbs of the camp a grave with a rude pine slab with the following inscription upon it: "HARRIET FOSTER, DIED, FEB. 9, 1850, Aged 15 years." Whether this youthful female was among the pioneer ladies of Auburn or merely a traveler who died while passing through the camp can not be ascertained at this late date. This fact is merely set down as among the earliest evidences of feminine arrivals at the bachelor's haven of Auburn. See S. Weston, Four Months in the Mines of California (Providence: E.F. Weston, Publisher, 1854), p. 9.

20Herald, November 26, 1852, p. 2.
21Herald, January 1, 1859, p. 2.
were only few old maids to be found in the Mother Lode. It was no difficult task for young ladies to obtain husbands. The divorce rate, on the other hand, was reported to have been high in the mineral regions, for the ladies realizing how easy it was to get a husband refused to stay with undesirable mates.22

The selection of husbands frequently depended upon their financial status. One account told of a woman of Scottish extraction in Auburn who had accepted one suitor, but upon discovering he was not as wealthy as she thought, sent him away to sell his mining claim. While the husband-to-be was gone, another person arrived on the scene with five thousand dollars in cash and the lady married him.23 She was severely criticized for her hasty actions by the Press.

While virtuous women remained few until the mid-1850's, a less undesirable type of woman, the professional prostitute, began to appear much earlier. Charles A. Tuttle expressed his disgust concerning these newcomers in


23Ibid, p. 435-436. Also see Press, May 18, 1858, p. 2.
a letter to his wife in the East:

We have few females in this country.
There are none within many miles here now.
The cities are however filling up with
prostitutes.\footnote{It is very likely that Tuttle was referring to the
cities of Sacramento and San Francisco. The professional
prostitute began to arrive in California about 1850, but
did not appear in the Placer County mines until later.}
I almost dread to have you
walk their polluted streets. I sometimes
fancy that the purity which now clutters
around you will be dimmed by breathing
the atmosphere they inhale. Whenever
sun up calls me where I see them I turn
away in disgust. What sets so lovely
on a woman as virtue, and can be in a
brute without it. His finer feelings
are blunted and the delight of conjugal
love he can never experience.\footnote{Letter of Charles A. Tuttle to his wife, November
27, 1850, in possession of his grandson, Fred F. Tuttle,
Jr., Auburn, California, hereafter referred to as Tuttle
Correspondence.}

Commenting on the scarcity of respectable women
in 1852-1853, the Herald's editor wrote:

It was rare that real ladies would
be seen on our streets—not only because
they were few in numbers—but because of
the much greater abundance of females
who would not justly be classed.\footnote{Herald, January 1, 1859, p. 2.}

Probably the most infamous of these notorious women
in and around Auburn during the early 1850's was Madam
Hunter, the proprietress of the "robber's den" in Dutch
Ravine.\footnote{Press, May 16, 1854, p. 2. Also see Chester
Barrett Kennedy, op. cit., p. 435-436.} She was a perfect giantess, as is indicated

\footnote{Press, May 16, 1854, p. 2. Also see Chester
Barrett Kennedy, op. cit., p. 435-436.}
from the dimensions of her coffin, which was six and one half feet long by three feet three inches wide and two feet and two inches high. Her dying request was that her grave should be leveled and smoothed and that no tablet should mark the spot where she was buried.

When the moral and social condition of the mining camp was evident in perfunctory and solid improvements, many of the young villagers returned to their old homes in the East for their wives, families or sweethearts. Then ladies, old and young, and children thronged the streets, bringing back to the miners the realities of their eastern homes, and the surroundings of their earlier years.

II. THEIR AMUSEMENTS

Since there were no families homes in Auburn during the days of forty-nine, miners had the choice of staying in their own rude and lonely cabins or tents or visiting a saloon or gambling house. The latter, as one miner explained in a letter to his absent wife, "were the real 'public houses' of California."\footnote{Eagle Correspondence, December 25, 1852.}
They were the only places where the
tired miner could be sure of finding
music, diversion and the congenialty
that arises from the presence of a
crowd.

Consequently, overindulgence was to be expected.

One prospector believed that all sickness in the region
was due to drinking and dissipation, of which there was
"any quantity of the latter and lots of the former." 29

Many miners in the region reportedly went on
periodical sprees which would last usually from two to
three days. John Lett's, California Illustrated By a
Returned Californian provides an excellent description
of one of these sprees which took place in the neighbor-
hood of Auburn:

Occasionally the miners of the entire
region of country would get on a spree,
go to some drinking establishment, all
get tight, and have a merry row. They
would keep it up during the day, and at
evening one perhaps would propose going
home. This would be favored by some,
but generally met by a proposition to
have another round, which would invari-
ably carry; then some one would be accused
of not having treated; he would acknowledge
the soft impeachment, and another round
would be ordered. They would all drink
to friends at home in general, then to
some particular personal friend. Some
one would propose going to the dry
diggings (Auburn) the next day,
prospecting. Well, all in favor of
going with Price, tomorrow to the dry
diggings, will form on this side--
opposed on the other; opposed are in

29 Eagle Correspondence, December 25, 1852.
30 Winchester Correspondence, August 6, 1849.
the minority, and must treat. Some would get mad and start for their tents, but having, at this particular time, very vague ideas of localities, instead of going down the river, they would go up the side of the mountain and vice versa; others would start, but by some mysterious movements, the earth would take and fly up and hit them in the face. The balance of the party would take the last drink and start, all wishing to go to the same place, but each having his own peculiar ideas as to the direction.

Most early establishments in Auburn operated jointly as stores, saloons, gambling establishments and boarding houses. The bowl "flowed freely" in these places. As late as 1853, it was reported that a large proportion of the town's business houses were "constituted of saloons of every grade and character," and that "no class of public houses uniformly drew so large assemblages, or were so profitable to their owners as were the saloons and gambling resorts." Drinks were dispensed at these early emporiums at fifty cents a piece. A bottle could

32 Rev. J. S. Hink, op. cit., p. 32.
34 Herald, January 1, 1859, p. 2.
be purchased for an ounce of dust, or sixteen dollars.\textsuperscript{35}

Nothing created so much good feeling as when Banks &
Sweezy opened a saloon in the spring of 1850, and put
drinks down to twenty-five cents.\textsuperscript{36}

Saloons were frequently centers of trouble as is
often the case when men gather to drink. One of the
first duels in Placer County took place in an Idaho
saloon—Walkup and Wyman’s.\textsuperscript{37} Several men were playing
poker in the saloon. Two of them, Lieutenant Martin and
P. W. Thomas, got into a quarrel; whereupon Martin grabbed,
a butcher knife off the counter and charged at Thomas.
J. C. Boggs intervened and took the blade away. Thomas
then challenged his adversary to a duel, which took place
the following morning on a lot later owned by W. A.
Shepard. Martin’s shot missed Thomas, and the latter’s
pistol did not go off. Thomas then got another revolver
from his second, first informing the second that if this
pistol did not go off he would kill him. Thomas’ second
attempt was a success in that it went off, but a failure
in that it blew a hole in a nearby tree instead of through
Martin. The duel ended on this note.

\textsuperscript{35} Recollections of John C. Boggs, \textit{Herald}, January
18, 1908, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Herald}, May 15, 1893, p. 4.

\textsuperscript{37} Recollections of John C. Boggs, \textit{Herald}, November
15, 1907, p. 1.
Gambling, along with drinking, shared top billing on the amusement list of forty-niners. Many gambled their days wages away every night at Auburn's gaming tables. The earliest gamblers in the diggings were disgruntled prospectors who dispaired of success with pan and rocker and turned to the more remunerative job of dealing monte. 33

The Herald described the Auburn gambler of the gold rush period in this fashion:

Its professed votaries constituted no inconsiderable portion of the gentry of the country. They were distinguished by their gaudy attire, by their boasts of gentility and their superior personal prowess and bravery. 40

The tendency today is to think of the gold camp gambler of forty-nine as a dishonest rascal, always dodging a persistent sheriff or an irate citizenry. This was not always the case. There were some decent and highly respected card men such as Dick Goodell. He was described as a "gambler, but a very good fellow." When he decided to go east in fifty-one, a farewell dinner

33 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34

39 Ibid., p. 35. Charles E. Eliard, who arrived at the diggings on June 10, 1849, was one of these miners turned gambler.

40 Herald, January 1, 1899, p. 2.

costing about five dollars per person was given in his honor by the townspeople. 42

Gambling tents were often the scene of fist fights, shootings and disappointed hopes. One incident will demonstrate a typical fight. A dispute had developed over a gaming table in the El Dorado Saloon between Samuel Tate and John Golden. 43 The latter drew his pistol and fired it at Tate, the bullet passing through his coat but otherwise doing no harm. Tate then drew a long knife and plunged it into the shoulder of Golden up to the hilt. Golden retained sufficient strength to fire his pistol. The ball went through Tate's hat, passed through the canvas wall of the saloon, and struck the breast of a person by the name of J. W. Smith, who was conversing with a friend on the outside of the building. The wound inflicted was pronounced fatal as was the one which Golden received.

Disillusion also came from the gaming rooms. Two young men, bound for Downville to seek their fortunes, were held over at Auburn by a storm. They sought to relieve

42 Among the guests were mesdames McCormick and Elliott, the town's only representatives of the fairer sex. During the course of the meal, the gallant Dick proposed a toast--"to the ladies of Auburn--few but fair". A good time was reported to have been had by all.

43 Sacramento Weekly Union, February 14, 1852, p. 4.
boredom by trying a "whirl with the tiger."44 By the
storm's end, they had lost all their funds and sadly
announced their intention of returning to Sacramento to
earn a new grub stake. This gloomy picture ended on a
happy note, however, for they were advised to prospect
along the way which they did. Two miles out on the
Sacramento road they washed out a pocket of nuggets and
were back in Auburn the same evening with $930 in gold.
Whether they were able to withstand the temptation of
the gaming tables this time is not known.

Gambling also had its brighter moments. Court, on
one occasion, being held in Post & Ripley's round tent, which
also served as a gambling establishment. A man named
McDermitt was dealing monte. While a case was progressing,
the Justice in his own Court interrupted the proceedings
to bet on a hand. When informed that he had lost, the
Justice accused McDermitt of cheating, and quite a heated
argument ensued before the trial was continued.45

On another occasion a preacher who had to be in
Sacramento at a certain time found himself stranded in


Auburn without a cent to his name. A miner named Jim Crawford, desirous of helping the preacher, picked up a hand organ that Jake Kaiser had brought across the plains and started to play it in a local gambling hall which was conducted in a tent. The gamblers, despairing of Crawford's particular brand of music gave him four or five dollars to quit. With this stake, Crawford commenced betting and ran it up to thirty dollars. The money was then given to the preacher, and he was able to reach his destination at the appointed time.

Dancing was a popular form of entertainment in the mining camps of California, and Auburn was no exception. A building, situated on the site of where Lipsett's clothing store later stood, served the miners of Auburn as a dance hall. Here good whiskey raised the boys to a jolly condition, in which they had a lively time dancing in a rough style, commonly referred to as "border dancing." The men had to dance with each other, however, for at that time there were no ladies in Auburn.

Not until 1853 were women numerous enough in Placer County so that balls could be given. Chester Barrett Kennedy tells of a ball held at Spanish Flat, near Auburn,


47 Clipping extracted from a scrapbook in Placer County Museum, Auburn, California.
in 1853, in which the ladies were in such a minority that they were danced to exhaustion. 68

Bull and bear fights were a popular form of entertainment during the gold rush days. They were held in Auburn on what is now the court house grounds where a large log fence was erected, within which a bear would be pitted against the biggest bull that could be found. The miners made bets on the outcome of the fight, and everybody had a good time.

The camp of Ophir, about two miles distant from Auburn, once advertised a bull fight which turned out to be quite a burlesque of that sport.50 The miners rigged up an old ox, decorated its horns, and put a man dressed in women's clothes on its back. Then they led it up the trail to Auburn, with about thirty miners following. Since an entertaining time was promised, some two or three hundred persons met at Ophir the next day to see the bull fight. Unfortunately they had selected an ox that was gentle and would not fight. But the day was not wasted.

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48Chester Barrett Kennedy, op. cit., p. 440. The scene of these early balls, cotillions, and parties was usually at one of Auburn's leading hotels—the Empire, the American, the Orleans, or others.

49Statement by Mrs. Amy Hasmussen, great-granddaughter of John R. Gwynn, early Auburn resident, and father of William Gwynn, Auburn, California.

for the crowd retired to Ophir's leading saloon and had a good time for the remainder of the day.

Although bull and bear fights enjoyed great popularity throughout the Mother Lode, it was considered by many in the Auburn diggings as cruel and inhuman. John R. Gwynn was among those who actively campaigned against it. Gwynn was not alone. His efforts to eliminate this form of entertainment were supported by the newspapers. The Placer Press ran the following editorial on December 29, 1855:

On Christmas Day, the birth of the Saviour of mankind was celebrated in this town by the refined and religious ceremony of bull-fighting. We are happy to announce that this barbarous and inhuman sport was not so well attended as exhibitions of this kind have usually been at this place. There was a considerable crowd of Digger Indians present, and to their scale of civilization, or rather non-civilization, such sport is well adapted.

The managers, conductors, and troupe of these disgraceful shows are Mexicans, a class who in no instance, are found engaged in any respectable avocation, and whose only occupation among us is the keeping of bawdy dance houses, gaming halls, highway robbery, burglary and assassinations.

Instead of encouraging their degrading exhibitions, our citizens should devise some means either by stringent legal enactments, or the strong arm, to drive from among us this dangerous and disagreeable portion of our population.52

51 Rasmussen statement.

52 Placer Press, December 29, 1855, p. 2.
Prize fights, which were popular in most sections of the mining country, did not seem to attract much attention at the dry diggings on the North Fork. Only one account of such a contest in the early years of the town's history has come down to us. That event occurred on September 23, 1852 between Thomas Mitchell of Illinois, and Louis Irons of Ohio, with the winner receiving two hundred and fifty dollars.53

These were the principal means of entertainment in Auburn during the days of 1849-1851.

53Herald, September 18, 1852, p. 2.
CHAPTER VI

GOLD-CAMP JUSTICE

I. LAW AND ORDER

Auburn, from its very beginning, was inclined to be an orderly town.

The men of 1849, here of their own choice were the most generous, honest, mutually helpful and enterprising men I've ever heard of.

There were a few exceptions, of course, men whom we regarded as mean and small and timid but they usually took a short look, ventured nothing, and returned to the States.

In contrast to a sister dry digging, which gained unenviable notoriety as the scene of the first mob tribunal, together with the significant appellation of Hangtown, (now Placerville), Auburn remained by Mother Lode standards, an unusually well behaved community.

One forty-niner summed up Auburn's enviable reputation for law and order in this manner:

During the winter of 1849-50 Auburn, although not exempt from lawlessness and violence, still sustained a far more enviable reputation for law and order than any of the precincts in the southern mines. The rights of menum and tum were duly respected, because if the

violater were caught, he knew he would have to swing on a limb of the nearest oak or pine. Auburn was very fortunate in having so many of its pioneer residents men of intelligence and opposed to ruffianism and rascality. And their influence went far towards giving it the reputation it has always borne of being one of the most quiet places in the State.

The peaceable nature of the region was manifested when John Letts, upon leaving the mineral region for the States, tried to dispose of his firearms. He found this to be a difficult task.

"Our firearms we found it difficult to dispose of; they were entirely useless, and our friends accepted them merely as an act of courtesy. My revolver, I had carried across the Isthmus, and kept during my stay in California, and when I disposed of it, it had not the honor of being discharged."

To say that Auburn was entirely free from crime, however, would be stretching the truth. With all its respect for law and order, the village had its lawless element, but in comparison with most gold camps, Auburn was a peaceable community.

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2*Gazette*, April 19, 1873, p. 1. Also see Daggett Scrapbook, Vol. 3, p. 196. Sam Holladay had this to say about the caliber of men in the diggings: "We had men of dignity and learning in that camp that winter. Physicians, lawyers, clergymen, printers, editors, and correspondents." See H. P. Van Sicklen, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

3John M. Letts, *California Illustrated by a Returned Californian* (New York: William Haldredge, Publisher, 1852), p. 120.
Probably the first large robbery within the Auburn district occurred on the plains between the Auburn Ravine and the crossing of the American River, and was in the fall of 1849. Several miners who had worked on some unnamed ravine north of the North Fork with good success for several months prepared to return to San Francisco. Near Auburn they were attacked and their gold laden pack mule was stolen. A party of miners was organized at Sutter's Fort, and the robbers were pursued throughout the length of California before the chase was abandoned, and the despoiled miners returned.

The first formal town officer was appointed in July, 1849 when Samuel W. Holladay became Auburn's first alcalde by popular vote of the miners. It was from the Spanish and Mexicans that the Americans obtained knowledge of the term alcalde. The true alcalde, according to the Spanish definition, was the judge of the town and ex-officio mayor of the council. One of his most interesting and primary duties was the arbitration in all minor disputes.

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5Herald, October 22, 1893, p. 5.

Previously to Holladay's appointment there was no local magistrate to hear criminal cases, which occasionally arose, nor to settle disputed mining claims. He gave this reason for his appointment:

Our settlement was singularly peaceful and orderly and property was generally safe. But that summer a theft was perpetrated. A Spaniard was accused, and by a speedy and informal process I was elected Alcalde. I appointed a sheriff. A jury was selected and sworn in, and after a fair and decent trial the Spaniard was acquitted and honorably discharged. 7

Holladay conducted trials according to justice and prescription as is indicated by this one case. 8

Two men accused of the theft of groceries were found with the stolen goods in their possession and brought to trial before Alcalde Holladay and a jury of twelve miners. The prisoners pleaded not guilty and demanded counsel. A man named Poland of Ohio, being at work nearby was sent for, and being a skillful lawyer consented to defend them.

Both men, after long litigation, were found guilty, and after an appeal by the counsel for the defense was

7 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34.

denied, they were sentenced to receive seventy-five lashes and ordered to leave the camp. This was reported to have been one of the very first trials to have been held in Auburn.

Holladay continued in his capacity as alcalde until April, 1850 when he left the diggings. 9

Much larceny was committed in California gold camps during the wet winter of 1849-1850, which brought starvation and sickness to inaccessible settlements. Provisions became scarce at Auburn although some of the larger companies had plenty for their own use. These stocks of supplies must have tempted many a hungry miner to thievery, but theft was seldom reported at the diggings. There is only one case recorded that winter regarding stealing of provisions. A tent was robbed of its stores while the owners were absent prospecting. 10 A slight snowfall preserved the tracks of the criminals which resulted in their speedy arrest. They were tried, convicted and punished by the lash.

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9 As far as can be determined, Holladay was the only alcalde in Auburn's history. No reference has been found mentioning the appointment of an alcalde prior to his election. Shortly after he left the diggings, Auburn became a part of the newly formed Sutter County, which brought civil law to the district. See California Statutes, 1st Session (1850), p. 62.

10 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 40.
There have been few resorts to the tribunal of "Judge Lynch," so frequently employed in the gold fields. The first subject of the summary code was an Englishman named Sharp. He was an ex-ship captain, who murdered a man in the vicinity of Auburn on Christmas Day, 1850 by shooting him through the chinks of his cabin. He surrendered himself to the sheriff, but was taken from his custody by a mob, tried by a lynching jury and hung upon a large oak tree on what was later the site of Norcross' jewelry store.

On another occasion, as a result of the dispute between Samuel Tate and John Golden, a shot passed

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R. J. Steele and others, Directory for the County of Placer for the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Hobblus, 1861), p. 9. While this was the first lynching reported at Auburn, it was not the first hanging. The first legal execution by this method took place sometime during the spring of 1850, according to J. G. Boggs. Two men, one named Scott and another Van, got into a fight on Rich Flat. Scott murdered Van and fearing arrest left town but was followed by M. P. H. Love and E. B. Houst, Deputy Sheriff. They traced him into Prairie City in El Dorado County. There, they arrested him, brought him back to Auburn, where he was convicted and sentenced to be hung. Scott tried to break away and almost succeeded with jail breaking implements furnished by friends on the outside. It was estimated that some two thousand people assembled at the execution. See Herald, January 18, 1850, p. 1.
through the canvas wall of the El Dorado Saloon and struck a passerby named J. W. Smith. The wound inflicted was fatal, as was the one Golden received. The Union believed that the "prospects were that Tate would be speedily lynched by the populace."  

Lynchings, however, were the exception in the Auburn diggings, not the rule. No further examples of unauthorized hangings were recorded until February, 1853, when the Herald reported that one Aaron Bracy, a Negro who had murdered James Murphy, was dragged from the jail and subsequently hung by a lynch mob.

Auburn has been blessed throughout its history with an unusually fine group of lawyers and jurists, the former arriving as early as 1849. The original attorneys of Auburn were miners first and lawyers second, for only after the gold fever began to abate did men return to their normal professions. Gordon Mott, P. H. Thomas,  

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12 Sacramento Weekly Union, February 14, 1853, p. 2. No follow up to this story appeared in the Union or other Sacramento or San Francisco newspapers, so it is not known if Tate was lynched or not.

13 Herald, February 20, 1853, p. 2. Mrs. O. A. Becker recalled her grandmother, Mrs. Alden Radcliffe, telling how Bracy was dragged past her house, down East Street to an open field, opposite the present Veterans Memorial Hall, where he was lynched.
and R. C. Poland were lawyers who prospected for gold in forty-nine.\footnote{Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 319. Also see Herald, November 15, 1907, p. 1; Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1; W. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, op. cit., p. 259. Mott remained in Auburn until 1853, and then moved to Marysville. He was afterwards one of the judges in Nevada Territory, and also a member of Congress from that territory. Thomas was a native of Maryland, but came to California from New York City. He was admitted to the bar in New York, Thomas spent most of his time in conversation in the saloons and on the streets, read but little, and depended on absorbing his law during the session of courts. His large acquaintance gave him a good practice. Material on Mott and Thomas obtained from Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 319.}

Within the next twelve months Mott became county judge and Thomas a justice of the peace.\footnote{William H. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells, History of Sutter County California With Illustrations Descriptive of Its Scenery (Oakland: Thompson & West, 1879), p. 33.}

II. COUNTY GOVERNMENT

When California was first divided into counties in 1850, Auburn came within the large, unwieldy Sutter County, with the governmental seat located at Oro, two

\footnote{California Statutes, 1st Session (1850), p. 62. The original boundaries were as follows: "Beginning on the Sacramento River at the northwest corner of Sacramento River at the northwest corner of Sacramento County, and running thence up the middle of said river to a point due west of the mouth of Honcut Creek; thence due east to the mouth of said creek; thence down the middle of Feather River to the mouth of Bear Creek; thence up Bear Creek to a point six miles from the mouth; thence in a direct line to the junction of the north and middle forks of the American River; thence down the north fork to the junction of the south fork; and thence in a westerly direction, following the northern boundary of Sacramento, to the place of beginning." See California Statutes (1850), p. 62.}
miles from the junction of the Bear and Feather Rivers. It was, however, a mere paper city created for some reason by Thomas Jefferson Green, a state senator. When selected as the county seat, Oro was a rock-strewn meadow void of human habitation.¹⁷

Oro enjoyed the honor of possessing the county seat for but a short time. There was not a house nor a building in the town for any purpose, much less for holding court, the transaction of county business, and the preservation of public records. Some preparation had to be made by the owners of the "paper city" to enable the first term of court to be held at the county seat, so a rough zinc building was hastily erected, without glass or shutters for the windows, or doors for the entrances.¹⁸ Only one brief meeting was held in this crude edifice. The hot May sun beating down upon the zinc building made it so warm that

—lawyers, jurors and witnesses, with a spontaneity of action that would astonish nothing but a salamander, rushed out of, and fled that building, never again to return.¹⁹

¹⁷ Chamberlain and Wells' History of Sutter County describes fully the difficulties attending the selection of the first county seat. See William H. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells, op. cit., pp. 92-93.


¹⁹ Loc. cit.
ORIGINAL SUTTER COUNTY BOUNDARY 1850
Before its abrupt adjournment, however, the first Court of Sessions wrote into the record an entry which stated that since there were not proper and necessary accommodations for the various county offices, said offices would be held at kept at Nicolaus, until such accommodations could be made ready at Oro.

It was not long after this before people demanded removal of the county seat:

The mass of the population being in the nearer vicinity of Auburn, upon the North Fork of the American, and among the various dry diggings adjacent, the removal of the county seat was demanded.

Four ambitious precincts vied for the honor of being the new county seat—Auburn, Nicolaus, Ophir, and Miners' Hotel (Franklin House).

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20The first meeting of the Court of Sessions was held on June 10, 1850, at Oro, the county seat. It was organized with Gordon N. Mott as Chief Justice, P. W. Thomas, and T. H. Rolfe, Associate Justices; and T. B. Reardon, Clerk. See William H. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells, op. cit., p. 35. Also see Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 33.


22R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 7. Also see Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 93.

23Loc. cit.
Up to this time, voting was very informal. Ballot boxes were nailed to trees so that miners and travelers might vote from horseback. These receptacles were open. One might readily examine or count the votes of others, if inclined to do so—even tamper with them as happened occasionally. In some instances precincts with hardly a score of citizens would cast several hundred votes and send in the returns as a good joke.24

Auburnites advocated more advanced ideas to win the county seat. Voters from all over Sutter County came to Walkup & Wyman's store to declare their choice for a county seat. After the balloting was completed, Auburn was declared the winner, but only after invoking several dubious methods, that would have even put the Tammany Hall politicians of a later period to shame. According to one authority, more votes were cast during the election that there were all the men and women, Spaniards, Sonoras, bucks and squaws in Sutter County.25

24Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 95.


At a time when all Spaniards, Mexicans, Negros and Indians were classed as slightly below human status, with the Chinese not even considered in the human race, they could hardly expect the franchise which was reserved solely for white males. Yet, enough votes were cast to account for more than their entire number.

Boosters with extra saddle horses were dispatched by Auburn's energetic politicians to Coloma, Millertown, Rock Creek and numerous way stations to bring voters to Auburn, where free refreshments awaited them; those methods brought dozens of additional voters.27

Mr. Steele, the Placer County historian, summarized the election in this way:

The favorable location of Auburn, its preponderance of population, and the inexhaustible powers of voting possessed by its citizens and partisans, decided the contest in its favor by a majority considerable exceeding the entire population of the county.28

Surprisingly, there was no audible voice of protest over the questionable methods employed by the citizenry of Auburn to win the "prize plum." In fact, the transfer


28 R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 7.
of the governmental honors from Nicolaus to Auburn was made a gala occasion, followed by feasting and dancing in the new county seat. Auburn's city fathers seem to have had a way with men. They fed and entertained both the voters who brought them victory and the vanquished as well. Citizens of Nicolaus proved to be good losers and sent a delegation to congratulate Auburn, bearing with them the county seal and other symbols of authority. They dined with Auburn's politicians and even drank their health.

Nicolaus, previous to the coup d' état, had been a prosperous and growing place. It was named for Nicolaus Allegier, a Swiss. He was a friend and fellow countryman of Captain Sutter, who gave him a square mile out of his vast domain to establish a townsite. Nicolaus at one time rivaled Marysville, but its fortunes declined, and after the removal of the county seat, its population and importance dwindled. See Louis J. Stellman, op. cit., pp. 185-186.

William H. Chamberlain and Harry L. Wells, op. cit., p. 38. A great dinner was given by the leading business men of Auburn. Fifty or sixty, comprising merchants, mechanics, miners, lawyers and doctors sat down to a generously supplied table, around which, after the门外汉 had been satisfied, wine and wit, mirth and laughter, circulated, as freely and unembarrassed as if in their native homes. Jim Crawford, a resident of Auburn, and a great mimic, full of rough humor, was especially enjoyed. For more than a half hour he played on the fiddle and sang the "Arkansas Traveler", pausing to tell stories connected with it. It was thought that when he told the story of the cross-eyed man that his crbs would not be able to resume their natural position in his head.
The first county courthouse at Auburn was a wood and cloth tenement, occupying the later day site of Mrs. Roussins' residence on Court Street. The jail was a small but secure structure of logs upon the rear of the same lot. A new courthouse built in 1852 replaced the inadequate wood and cloth structure.

31 R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 8.
32 Loc. cit.
33 The need for a more permanent courthouse was immediately perceived, and on October 23, 1852 the Herald carried official notice that sealed proposals for the erection of a new courthouse for the county of Placer would be received at the county clerk's office until the 11th day of November A.D., 1852. See Herald, October 23, 1852, p. 3. The new courthouse was completed in December, 1853 and served the needs of Placer for many years. See W. B. Lardner and M. J. Brock, op. cit., p. 153. Auburn's first permanent courthouse was a well built wooden structure of two stories of plastered walls. Leading from a door on the east side out of the court room on the second floor was an iron bridge which led to the top of the jail building, built by H. T. Holmes in 1857. The clerk's office and treasurer's office occupied the upper part of the jail building. The jailer's rooms and kitchen was on the next floor below; and the cells and jail proper a half story and sub-basement, was at the bottom. The main courthouse was about 40 x 60 feet in size with a small bell tower on top of the building. By 1891, however, this edifice had outlived its usefulness. The report of the Grand Jury of that year described it as "a disgrace to modern civilization and a reflection on an intelligent community." See Herald, November 21, 1891, p. 5. A bond election was held and passed on the 25th day of July, 1892 and work on the third, and present, courthouse commenced. The laying of the cornerstone took place on the 4th of July, 1894. See Herald, July 7, 1894, p. 5. This stately edifice still serves as the governmental seat of the county of Placer.
With the removal of the county seat to Auburn, the various county officers along with a large segment of the legal profession of the area, packed up their belongings and removed to the settlement on the North Fork. Otis L. Bridges, James S. Christy, H. O. Ryerson, R. D. Hopkins and Hugh Fitzsimons were among the town's leading barristers in 1850. Benjamin A. Myron began practicing in 1851.  

During the year 1850 there had been a continuous growth of population in the mining area, particularly in the Sierra Nevada between the American and Yuba Rivers and in the mines along the Trinity and Klamath Rivers. Early in the session, the people of Trinity requested that their county which had been attached to Shasta County, be organized as a separate county with the seat of justice in Trinidad. A bill to this end was introduced and passed both houses but was later withdrawn when it became superseded by a more comprehensive county boundary bill. In a similar manner a petition from residents of Yuba County was presented to the assembly requesting the division of

34 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 316-319.
35 Loc. cit.
that county. Still another petition asked the subdivision of Sutter County as the result of this agitation an act was passed providing for the organization of Trinity County and the creation and organization of three new counties—Klamath, Nevada and Placer. Auburn retained its governmental seat during the change.

37 Legislative Journal 2nd Session (1850), pp. 1104, 1114.
38 Ibid, p. 1081.
39 California Statutes (1851), p. 516.
40 Loc. cit. The act creating the counties of Nevada, Placer, Trinity and Klamath also provided for the holding of a special election for the organization of the county, and appointed Joseph Walkup, R. B. House, J. D. Frey, William Swynn, and Jonathan Roberts commissioners of said election. The election was held on the 28th day of May, 1851, and upon canvassing the vote, the following officers were declared elected: H. Fitzsimmons, county judge; Samuel C. Astrin, sheriff; R. D. Hoppin, district attorney; James T. Stewart, clerk; Alfred Lewis, assessor; Douglas Bingham, treasurer. Horace Davenport, of Hartsilake, contested the seat of Fitzsimmons; Horace R. Hawkins, of Deadman's Bar that of Stewart; and Abraham Pronk of Horse Shoe Bar, that of Bingham. Upon a rehearing by the commissioners, fraud in the returns was shown, and the contestants were declared entitled to their respective offices. The proceedings of the commissioners were, however, declared void by the district court, and Fitzsimmons held his seat as judge, while Stewart appointed Hawkins as his deputy, and Bingham's death occurring on the very day of the trial, Pronk was appointed treasurer by the Court of Sessions. See R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 8. Also see Reminiscences of H. T. Holmes, A Dictated Statement of His Recollections, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California, p. 4; Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 97.
ORIGINAL PLACER COUNTY BOUNDARY 1851
What passed for civil law at Auburn during the early days of county government did not always meet with the approval of the town's citizenry. The conduct of some justices and barristers of the period often left much to be desired. Many would have gladly preferred to return to the days of Sam Holladay's miner's court where justice, while sometimes on the rough side, was administered fairly and justly.

Two of the methods employed by some county officials will serve to show the type of justice that frequently prevailed in Auburn during the earliest days of its civil law. One of the more notorious justices of the peace elected in 1850 was Jack Smith of the Auburn district. It was said that he was capable of doing "anything for money." Sometimes he urged white men to jump claims of some colored men who were taking out a great deal of gold just below Auburn on the ravine. However, when the Negroes sought protection from him, he ordered them whipped, forced them to put up fees in advance for the jury and then kept the money.

One lawsuit involved a certain Douglas Frey, who had hired men from San Francisco to work at his mine and was sued by these miners for wages. With Mr. Frey pleading

\[41\text{Recollections of John C. Boggs, Herald, January 13, 1903, p. 1.}

\[42\text{Loc. cit.} \]
his own case, various types of evidence were being presented to the Judge and jury by the opposing lawyers when Frey asked the Court to instruct the jury as to the nature of legal testimony and what could be accepted. The Judge indignantly replied, "Take your seat sir, the jury are intelligent men, they ought to know it themselves." 

Auburn's citizenry did not warmly receive antics such as these as may be seen from the following letter which appeared in the Union:

Much indignation is expressed by our inhabitants generally at the way in which justice has been dealt out by our courts of late; and it has been proposed to call a meeting of the citizens and take the administration of the laws into our own hands. But, it is hoped, that the wisdom and good sense of some of our Judges will return to them, and render this course unnecessary. Justice as now rendered, reminds one of the fable of the monkey and cat.

The proposed meeting was held in Auburn on April 4, 1852 at which time a committee of five citizens was appointed to investigate into "judicial proceedings, election affairs, etc." of the county.

43. Sacramento Weekly Union, April 10, 1852, p. 4.

The committee, following their investigation, submitted a series of resolutions for the purpose of organizing a Vigilance Committee. A committee of five was appointed, empowered to select forty others and more if necessary, to co-operate with them in bringing to justice "those characters who were disposed to set at naught both law and order." 47

That very afternoon, the newly formed Committee commenced operations. A person suspected of having taken another's property was arrested and searched. 48 Two stolen watches were found on his person. He was committed to jail to wait the next term of the Court of Sessions. No other accounts of the Committee's actions have been recorded. It is assumed that it was short lived, and that before long, justice was once again restored to the courts, which on the whole were just and a credit to the community then as now.

These accounts of early day civil justice are not

46 Sacramento Weekly Union, May 15, 1852, p. 2.

47 Loc. cit.

48 Loc. cit.
meant to belittle the civil law of the time, but rather to show that the establishment of such law was not without its problems and shortcomings, a point that is usually overlooked in county histories and directories. During flush times of the gold rush, some dolts and wicked men presided on bench and bar, but for the most part early day barristers and jurists of Auburn were men of integrity, possessing as broad and enlightened intellects as any in the States.\footnote{For a detailed account of court justice in early Auburn, see the Docket of Justice P. W. Thomas, May 22, 1850, to February 1, 1851, Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.}
CHAPTER VII
FROM PACK MULE TO STAGECOACH

The discovery of gold in California had brought thousands of men to the Pacific Coast, most of whom had entered the promised land through the port of San Francisco. They had arrived at the threshold of their dreams, but the actual scene of operations was still far across the vast, practically reedless, Great Valley of California.

Enterprising forty-niners soon solved this problem. The mining from Mariposa on the south to Plumas in the North was easily accessible by the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers, almost to the threshold of the Mother Lode. All sorts of boats were pressed into service by the gold-seekers. River towns naturally developed as bases for supplying various mining regions. Sacramento City, as the state capital was then called, existed from the very beginning and supplied the middle region of the Mother Lode. Later Marysville developed in the north and Stockton in the south to supply the mineral regions, but Sacramento remained the base town for Auburn and Placer County mines.
I. EARLY DAY ROADS

Having landed at Sacramento, the miner outfitted himself for the diggings and then proceeded to the Placer County mines by the road between Sacramento and Auburn which had existed from an early day. Most diggers of forty-nine were forced to shoulder their packs and picks, and trudge along the hot, dusty road to their place of destination. Fortunate was the miner who could obtain a seat on the slow, plodding ox teams which traveled the road between Sacramento and the dry diggings on the North Fork, and more fortunate still, if a tent could be found to shelter him from the intense summer sun.

Teamsters, in the spring of forty-nine, brought merchandise over this meandering thoroughfare, charging ten dollars a hundred pounds in good weather and thirty and forty dollars a hundred during the rainy season.

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1 The Sacramento-Auburn road is described fully in Chapter III.

2 For detailed accounts of the miners' trek to Auburn, see Sacramento Daily Union, May 3, 1851, p. 2; Transcript, June 15, 1850.

3 Winchester Correspondence, November 19, 1849.
The rough, dirt road, difficult enough to traverse during the dry summer season, was made almost impassable when winter rains began.

We learn from those direct from the dry diggings on the North Fork that the roads are altogether impassable for teams; and for packing, it required all the vigilance of the driver to keep the animals on their feet. To get up and down the high hills which are always found close in proximity to the streams, it is altogether impossible for four-legged animals to 'propel' at all.⁴

William Gwynn, H. M. House, and Walkup & Wyman, who owned the main stores in 1849 and 1950, did most of the teaming.⁵ Auburn's merchants freighted most of the supplies from Sacramento before the construction of the railroad. The round trip usually occupied three days, one day in going down light and two days in coming back loaded.⁶

James Gordon, one of the best known teamsters on this road, drove into Auburn regularly twice a week for eleven years with a four-horse load of goods for his

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⁴ Times, November 24, 1849, p. 2. For similar accounts see Times, December 9, 1849, p. 2; January 5, 1850, p. 2; Sacramento Weekly Union, March 13, 1852, p. 1. Travel over the Sacramento-Auburn road during the winter of 1849-1850 is described on pp. 26-30.

⁵ H. P. Van Sicklen, editor, "Personal Reminiscences of Samuel W. Holladay," Publication of the Society of California Pioneers For 1941 (1941), p. 40. Three or four yoke of oxen were usually needed to pull each heavily loaded wagon up the winding road to Auburn.

⁶ Loc. cit.
Well do I remember, recalled John R. Atkinson, with great anxiety with which consignees awaited teamster Gordon's arrival and how pleasantly his safe arrival was greeted as dust-covered in summer and mud-bespattered in winter he halted his leaders before the store doors.

A favorite camping site of early day teamsters was along Dry Creek, about one mile above Roseville, near the point where Highway 40 crosses the railroad tracks. The teamster made camp here his first night out from Auburn, and continued on to Sacramento in the morning. After loading his wagon at the capital city, he began the return trip, stopping once again at the Dry Creek site when darkness overtook him. The third day saw his arrival back in Auburn.

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7 Newspaper clipping found in a scrapbook in the Placer County Museum at Auburn, California.

8 Loc. cit.

9 According to Mrs. Amy Rasmussen, great-granddaughter of John R. Gwynn, a pioneer merchant of Auburn.

10 Loc. cit. The Rasmussen account differs slightly from that of Samuel W. Holladay. Both agree that the round trip took three days, but Holladay stated that it took one day in going down light and two days coming back loaded, while Mrs. Rasmussen said that her great-grandfather camped at the Dry Creek site his first night out. Possibly the difference depended upon what time the teamster left Auburn for Sacramento.
From Auburn all supplies were taken on men's backs or pack mules or horses over rough, narrow trails to mining camps in the canyons and on the river.\footnote{James Delavan, Notes on California and the Placers How to Get There and What to Do Afterwards (New York: R. Long and Brother, 1850), p. 91. Theodore T. Johnson tells of seeing miners continually departing for the canyons of the Middle and North Forks with one month's supply of provisions, consisting of seventy-five pounds of pork and seventy-five pounds of pilot bread, which were slung in sacks on each side of a horse, and for which they paid respectively at the rate of $150 and $125 per hundred pounds. See Theodore T. Johnson, Sights in the Gold Region and Scenes By the Way (New York: Baker and Scribner, 1849), p. 151.} The arrival of one of these lumbering pack trains was an event of great importance to the more isolated mining communities beyond Auburn, for it meant not only fresh supplies, but also news of the outside world.

Generally there were between forty and fifty mules in a train, each carrying between three hundred and five hundred pounds. The sturdy little animals could and usually did travel twenty-five to thirty miles a day without becoming weary. Usually mules obtained all their feed from natural pasturage along the way. However, for three months out of the year, November, December and January, barley supplanted their meager diet. It was given once a day, about seven or eight pounds per mule.
They seldom drank more than once a day. Mexican mules were preferred as they were stronger and tougher than were their American counterparts. The average life for the hard working pack mule was about sixteen years.¹²

Those who turned their energies from searching for the illusive yellow metal to the more certain and lucrative business of operating mule trains were among the wisest gold-diggers. Samuel W. Holladay, who commenced mining at Auburn on June 10, 1849, told of being offered $250 a month to take command of one of Littell's mule trains, but concluded that he had better not since he did not know anything about mules.¹³

Wagon roads from Auburn were able to reach Bear River and Illinoistown, later called Colfax, by the fall of forty-nine.¹⁴ The discovery of gold and subsequent rush to Bird's Store and El Dorado Canyon, on the divide between


¹³ H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 35.

¹⁴ Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1888), p. 332.
the North and Middle Forks, occurred in the spring of 1850. Teamsters drove wagons as far as Kelley's Bar on the North Fork, letting them down the canyon with ropes or by attaching logs behind their wagons to act as a drag. Winding trails soon facilitated the passage of pack animals. Similar trails were cut from Oregon and Spanish bars on the road from Coloma, through Fudd's Valley to the same points of destination. Teamsters hauling merchandise from Sacramento and Auburn brought wagons up the divide as far as the Forest House in Foresthill in the summer of 1850, transferring their freight at this point to mules or men.

By the end of the first decade there were five main wagon roads centering in Auburn, with many laterals leading to all parts of Placer County. They included a highway from Sacramento to Illinoistown through Auburn; a branch to Grass Valley and Nevada City; a third road extended northeast to the mining camps along the Forest Hill ridge; a fourth turned west, passing down Auburn Ravine to Ophir and Virginia Town; still another ran along the ridge above the American River to Folsom and Sacramento.

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16 *loc. cit.*

17 *loc. cit.*
and connected with roads coming down from El Dorado County.13

Tremendous difficulties were encountered in transforming treacherous, thread-like pack trails into roads. Roads could be carved out of sheer canyon walls and hacked out of earth and rock with little more than pick and shovel, only through a great expenditure of money and labor. Since the county government was financially unable to raise sufficient funds for the enterprise, the work was done by private enterprise and brought the toll road into being.

The North Fork Hill Road, between Auburn and Foresthill, was one of these early toll roads.13 This highway led down into the canyon of the North Fork of the American River where the traveler crossed the river by means of a crude ferry, later replaced by the North Fork


13This artery was the first road built on the Forest Hill Divide. See Herald, December 5, 1903, p. 1.

20Charles Rice ran the "Mineral Bar Ferry" at the North Fork crossing. He also operated a store at the ferry where a general assortment of goods could be purchased. See Herald, October 2, 1852, p. 3.
Bridge, a famous covered toll bridge of the period. From the river, the road climbed another steep and winding trail up the opposite canyon wall and continued along the ridge.

Transit over this narrow, winding artery far above the river was extremely hazardous, and was reported by the Herald as being "dreaded by the travelers."\(^{22}\)

Construction and maintenance of toll roads such as the North Fork Hill Road involved a great deal of expense. In 1855 for example, it cost the owners of this thoroughfare twelve thousand dollars to improve the grade.\(^{23}\) Costly expenditures such as this were in addition to the every

\(^{21}\) W. F. Brittain, R. N. Snowden, B. C. Allen and Henry Hubbard announced their intention to apply to the Court of Sessions for a license to construct and maintain a toll bridge at or near New York Bar, on the North Fork on February 19, 1853. See Herald, February 19, 1853, p. 3. This was not the first covered bridge in the vicinity of Auburn however. That honor, as far as can be determined, goes to Messrs. Bartes & Campbell, and Hoyt & Turner, who in the fall of 1850 at an expense of twelve thousand dollars constructed a bridge across Bear River. See Sacramento Weekly Union, March 13, 1852, p. 1.

\(^{22}\) Herald, November 10, 1855, p. 2.

\(^{23}\) Loc. cit.
day expenses involved in keeping the rough, dirt road in operation. Consequently, toll rates were quite high. The Herald carried the following toll rates which went into effect on the 9th day of March, 1854:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six animals with loaded wagon</td>
<td>$1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six &quot; light &quot;</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four &quot; loaded &quot;</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four &quot; light &quot;</td>
<td>1.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two &quot; loaded &quot;</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two &quot; light &quot;</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or 2 horses &amp; buggy</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saddle horses, each</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loose animals, each</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. TEAMING

Massive freight wagons rumbled over rough highways such as the North Fork Hill Road with their cargo of goods.

24 Herald, March 11, 1854, p. 3.

25 The solitary teamster operating out of Auburn was a prize target for the scattered bands of Indians in the vicinity, who had a strong craving for mule and oxen. S. Weston tells of a teamster traveling alone, who was attacked in mid-day, April, 1850, about half way between Auburn and Kelly's Bar, some eight miles distant. The stealthy foe concealed themselves behind some trees where they waited until he came up, then showered a volley of arrows upon him. Three struck him, one in the head, another in the shoulder and a third in his thigh, which brought him senseless to the ground. The Indians attempted to rob him but just then some travelers came into view who frightened them away. See S. Weston, op. cit., p. 7.

About the same time, another teamster was surprised by Indians when about fifteen miles above Auburn. Two arrows from their bows struck him and he saved his life only by a precipitate flight. They carried off his coat which was left in his wagon with six hundred dollars worth of dust in the pocket. They also robbed his wagon of the valuable goods it carried and killed several of his oxen.
drawn by half a dozen of the fattest, sleekest mules ever seen. The freight wagon, of native California manufacture, was a broad-bottomed affair from forty to forty-eight inches in width, the sides rising with a slight divergence from a right line four, and sometimes seven and eight feet, head and tail ends sloping at an angle of forty-five, forming a box from sixteen to twenty feet in length and shaped very much like an old-fashioned bread trough. 28

Within this wagon was stacked merchandise ten and fifteen feet high. Hard working mules maintained a steady gait of three or four miles an hour, set to the music of a dozen sets of bells and the regularly timid crack of the mounted driver's whip.

See Transcript, May 9, 1952, p. 2. Apparently, the Indians in the neighborhood of Auburn, little skilled in the ways of war, confined their raids mainly to the solitary teamster or miner, relying on the "ambush" and superiority of numbers to overcome the white man's firearms for which their bows and arrows were no match.

28 Sacramento Daily Union, June 13, 1858, p. 1. These wagons cost from three to five hundred dollars, and mules, which later replaced the oxen employed in the days of forty-nine, brought between three hundred and six hundred dollars per pair. Thus, the stock of the six mule teamster would be worth about twelve hundred dollars. The weight of these massive wagons was from 2,200 to 2,300 pounds and could hold, or draw from 5,000 pounds to 9,500 pounds. The freight wagon would last about four years, but after the second year, repairs on them were estimated from twenty-five cents to one dollar per day.
Competition was keen among early teamsters. Freight rates of fifty cents per pound charged in forty-nine, were reduced to five and six cents per pound by 1851.\textsuperscript{27} Low rates charged by the teamsters led one miner at the Auburn mines to remark-

Provisions of every description in all parts of the mines are reasonable, if not cheaper, than ever before. One great cause contributing to this is the unprecedentedly low rates charged by teamsters for freight to every portion of the mining districts.\textsuperscript{28}

Freight rates had been reduced still further by 1855. One and one-fourth cent per pound was charged for heavy freight going to Auburn and one-half cent for light freight.\textsuperscript{29}

Teaming prospered and increased manyfold with the increased growth and development of Auburn and Placer County during the fifties. Roads, that radiated out of Auburn in all directions, were choked with huge freight wagons making their hazardous way to various mining camps. On one Tuesday morning in 1859, by way of illustration, twenty-eight loaded wagons were counted passing through

\textsuperscript{27}Sacramento Daily Union, September 29, 1851, p. 2. These rates of course rose during the rainy season. During the winter of 1851-52, freights went from five and six cents to ten cents per pound. See Sacramento Daily Union, January 6, 1852, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{28}Sacramento Daily Union, September 29, 1851, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{29}Alta California, October 27, 1855, p. 2.
Auburn on their way to the mining regions to the North - all within two hours time. 30

III. PIONEER EXPRESS COMPANIES

The gold-seeker who came to California in forty-nine was, generally speaking, interested mainly in two things; news from home, and transporting the precious metal he obtained safely.

At first there were no facilities to satisfy either of these desires. His letters from the "States" arrived at infrequent, uncertain intervals after passage around the Horn or via the Isthmus of Panama. The gold that he found he kept in a belt about his waist until he could sell it or take it personally to San Francisco. His fortune, and not infrequently his life, was at the mercy of highwaymen. A large part of his time was devoted to the safekeeping of his gold, and even after he had transferred the precious metal into cash, he had no means of getting it back to the States.

The establishment of United States mail service in California in 1849 did little to alleviate the

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30 Herald, July 25, 1859, p. 2. Carefully collected statistics show that one hundred and fifty tons of freight per day found their way into Placer and Nevada Counties during 1859. See Herald, August 6, 1859, p. 2.
situation. Handling of the mail was slow and irregular; post offices were few in number. Sam Holladay told of walking from Auburn to Sacramento in 1849, from where he journeyed to San Francisco to inquire if there was any mail for him.31

There was no regularly scheduled United States postal service to Auburn before March, 1851,32 and of the state's sixty post offices in that year, only twenty-six were located in the mining regions.33 Auburn did not have a daily postal service before June, 1858.34

Mining camps were linked with banking and business houses at Sacramento and San Francisco by pioneer express companies which began to operate in 1849 and 1850.35

31J. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34.

32The first public evidence of United States Mail service to Auburn was a notice which appeared in the Union announcing that a weekly mail service between Sacramento and Auburn would be conducted once a week. See Sacramento Daily Union, March 20, 1851, p. 1. William Gwynn was reportedly Auburn's first postmaster. See Herald (Supplement), May 4, 1850, p. 1.

33See Appendix B for a complete list of the California postal stations as of July 30, 1851.

34Herald, June 2, 1858, p. 2.

35According to Bancroft, the establishment of the
We scarcely know what we should do if it were not for the various express lines established, enabling us to hold communication with the mines, with the present defective mail communications from the towns throughout California, or the remote portions of the Placers north and south. Our enterprising express agents, however, supply the deficiency, and by the promptitude with which they attended to the transmission of letters and packages, and the fidelity with which they conducted all business entrusted to them, are justly entitled to the confidence and support of the community.36

It is not definitely known just which express line was the first to commence operations in the Auburn region. But the first to advertise was Gregory's Express.37

**GREGORY'S EXPRESS**

This Express having been in successful operation between the United States and San Francisco, will hereafter run a light express wagon to each of the Forks of the American, Yuba and Feather Rivers, having their

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First express in California was announced by its founder, C. L. Cady, in the *Alta California* for July 24, 1847. Cady's offered weekly service between San Francisco and Sutter's Fort, but was a short-lived organization. See Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of California* (San Francisco: The History Company Publishers, 1883), VII, p. 150. In the spring of forty-nine, however, with the beginning of large scale movements of population into California, demand for improved transportation facilities naturally increased. Small companies sprang up to fast that the *Alta California* on January 17, 1850 commented: "There are so many express companies daily starting that we can scarcely keep the run of them." See *Alta California*, January 17, 1850, p. 2.

36*Alta California*, July 25, 1850, p. 2.

37*Transcript*, May 23, 1850, p. 3.
office in J. Street, Sacramento City, after the arrival of the first boat from San Francisco with the Letters, Papers, and Parcels, by each Pacific Steamer.

Gold Dust insured through covering the risk of the Isthmus. (m25 3 rm)  JOSEPH W. GREGORY, Proprietor
Office at Sheldon, Kibbe & Almy's, J Street

The second express company to be established in Auburn of which there is any direct evidence was Hunter & Co. The first notice of this firm appeared in the advertising columns of the Sacramento Daily Union for September 27, 1851.

These were the pioneer express companies in Auburn and in Placer County.

38 The transcript carried a notice stating that a Mr. Jas. S. McDowell had started an express between Sacramento and Nevada and points in between. See Transcript, August 1, 1850. Also see Transcript, August 15, 1850, p. 2. No mention was made whether this express served Auburn, and it is not known if such were the case.

39 Alexander Hunter, of Placerville, was one of the leading spirits in the establishment of the express in El Dorado and Placer Counties, continuing so until 1854 when he sold out to Wells, Fargo & Co. See Ernest A. Witte, op. cit., p. 52.

40 Sacramento Daily Union, September 27, 1851, p. 3. The Auburn office of Hunter & Co. was at Walkup & Wyman's store. A. S. Grant was the agent.

41 It is difficult to say with any finality that Gregory's Express and Hunter & Co's. Express were the first firms of their kind to commence operations in the region serviced by Auburn. Ravages of fire, so common during the gold-rush days; the practice of rarely preserving
The importance of early day express companies to the miner cannot be overemphasized. Contemporary advertisements show that they provided a large number of services for him such as the forwarding of gold, packages, and letters to and from any point in the regions which they served; the insurance of all valuable matter to its destination; the drawing of bills of exchange on all the principal cities in the Union; the collection of notes, bills and accounts; and probably the most important of all as far as the miner was concerned, the transporting of his gold with full insurance coverage against all risks.42

Previous to the advent of express companies, the miner had to safeguard and protect his gold as best as he could. He carried it on his person, hid it under a loose plank on his cabin floor or buried it in some secret spot.

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letters; and the fact that many of the companies, particularly the smaller ones, did not bother to advertise, have all combined to make sure that many companies of which there is no evidence today did in all probability exist. It is not impossible that other companies may have preceeded Gregory and Hunter. The position of Auburn as the trading and transportation center of the Placer County mines would appear to substantiate this possibility.

42Herald, September 11, 1858, p. 3.
near his claim. Danger of theft was a constant source of annoyance. The task of transporting his hard-gained wealth to the banks of Sacramento and San Francisco presented still another obstacle to be surmounted before he could enjoy the fruits of his labor.

Express companies changed all this. Now his gold could be transported with full insurance coverage or purchased direct by the company itself. The Herald, of November 12, 1853, commenting upon the flourishing express business at Auburn stated:

The Expressmen of our town are now reaping a golden harvest. Thousands of dollars worth of dust are bought every week. Upon the rivers, especially, they make heavy purchases every few days.\textsuperscript{44}

Express franks indicate that many firms were operating in the Placer country in the early fifties.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43}On one occasion a miner named Edmund Brookie buried $700 near Ophir, two miles from Auburn. When he went to look for it a few days later, he found that it had been dug up. The Herald suggested the propriety of the miners leaving their money at one of the express offices where no one would be able to prospect for it when the owners were absent. See Herald, March 19, 1853, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{44}Herald, November 12, 1853, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{45}Two of these express companies became more prominent than the rest, the James Adams & Co. Express and the fabulous Wells, Fargo & Co., Adams & Co. commenced operating in California in November, 1849, while the Wells, Fargo organization did not enter the picture until 1852. By that date, however, both had established offices in Auburn. See Herald, September 11, 1852, p. 3. During the early 1850's
much of which operated out of Auburn, the express center of Placer County.

A keen but friendly rivalry developed among early day companies for the honor of being the first into town with the express. E. M. Hall of Adams & Co.'s Express undoubtedly held a record of some kind for bringing the election returns of Placer County from Sacramento to Auburn. It took that hardly gentleman but one hour and fifty minutes to complete the forty-five mile race. 46

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these two concerns controlled and shared most of the express business in Auburn, Placer County and California. Then in 1855 the panic led to Wells, Fargo & Co. emerging as the leader in the express field. On "Black Friday," February 23, 1855, Adams & Co. in San Francisco did not open its doors; the firm had failed. The intense excitement brought by the failure of the parent bank spread throughout the State. Two days later the Auburn branch of Adams & Co. stopped payment. An armed crowd immediately assembled and compelled them to reopen their safe. See Sacramento Union, February 24, 1855, p. 2. At 10 A.M. the concern was closed out.

Wells, Fargo & Co. stood a heavy run, having been prepared for the rush for several days, and henceforth, controlled the express business of Auburn as well as that of the entire state. A letter written by John Q. Jackson, the Auburn Wells, Fargo agent, describing the rush upon that company's office at Auburn has been found and is now in the Wells, Fargo Bank and Museum located on Montgomery Street at Market, San Francisco, California.

46Herald, September 10, 1863, p. 2. Four horses were used on the dash.
On another occasion, Hall, now with Langton's Express, Palmer of Wells, Fargo & Co., and Brooks of the Pacific Express were engaged in a race to see which firm would be the first in town with dispatches from the States. The fast riding Hall arrived in Auburn forty-three seconds ahead of his competitors Palmer and Brooks. Brooks touched the steps of the sanctuary ahead of Palmer, but became jammed in the door. Palmer passed him but stumbled over a chair. While he was picking himself up, Brooks came into the winner's circle.

IV. PIONEER STAGE LINES

The development of stage coach lines paralleled the development of express companies. Most miners forty-nine shouldered their packs and trudged along hot and dusty roads to the diggings on the North Fork and beyond. More expedient means for travel to and from the mining regions was desirable. Stagecoaches, the most colorful and exciting phase in all the history of gold rush transportation, answered this need.

47 *Herald*, February 9, 1855, p. 2. The Auburn newspapers served as a sort of unofficial score-keeper in these spirited but friendly contests, announcing in their columns which firm came in first with the express. See *Press*, September 29, 1855, p. 2; October 20, 1855, p. 2; February 2, 1856, p. 2; May 3, 1856, p. 2. *Herald*, March 27, 1858, p. 2; April 3, 1858, p. 2.

48 *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 3, 1851, p. 2.
Stage lines in Placer County centered in Auburn, the chief distribution point for the mines. William Gregory seems to have established the pioneer line in Auburn and in the County in the summer of 1850. The *Sacramento Transcript* carried the first mention of this pioneer line:

**IMPORTANT TO MINERS**

and the Traveling Community in General.

**STAGE CAR LINE OF THE WEEKLY STAGE,**
From Sacramento City to Auburn.

This line of Stages offers great facilities to the traveling community. Its cheap, speedy and comfortable accommodations make it to the interest of all who wish to travel in this direction to go in this line—it being the nearest route to the North and Middle Forks of the Yuba, Deer Creek and the North and Middle Forks of the American River.

The stage leaves Sacramento City, from the Humbolt hotel, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings at 7 o'clock. Leaves Auburn on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, at 7 o'clock A.M.

The Auburn and North Fork Express Line of stages was the second to appear. It proudly announced to the traveling public on September 5, 1850 that it had fitted

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49 Before the arrival of the stagecoach upon the scene, the massive freight wagon of the teamster offered the principle means, other than by foot or pack mule, by which the miner could transport himself and his supplies to the dry diggings at the North Fork. J. P. Lucan tells of paying a teamster ten cents per pound to take him to the Auburn mines. See *Herald*, May 29, 1886, p. 2.
up two first rate coaches to run from Sacramento to Auburn, or any point on the North Fork of the American River to the junction. 50 Stages left the Missouri and Crescent City hotels in Sacramento every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings at six o'clock, returning from Auburn every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

The fare to Auburn was ten dollars, but the return trip, down hill most of the way, was only six dollars. 51 As of August 13, 1850 these rates were increased to twelve dollars to Auburn, and eight dollars from Auburn to Sacramento. 52

Pioneer lines were welcomed with enthusiasm by foot-sore gold seekers, regardless of the fare charged.

50 Transcript, September 3, 1850, p. 2. L. Sharp was the proprietor of this pioneer line.

51 Loc. cit.

52 Transcript, November 15, 1850, p. 4. By 1855, however, the rates charged by the stage companies had been reduced drastically. As of Saturday, August 4, 1855, the California Stage Company charged the following rates of fare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Fare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento</td>
<td>Auburn.........</td>
<td>$2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illincistown...</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grass Valley...</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nevada.........</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Return rates were the same. See Herald, August 11, 1855, p. 2.
One unknown writer at Oregon Bar, near Auburn, on the North Fork, wrote of the influence the introduction of stagecoaches had upon the miners of Auburn and Placer County:

What a change has taken place, and what change has been taken from this place, since my first visit one year since. Then the digger packed his plunder, either on his back, or had it transported by teams, and fortunate was he if this point was reached in three days from the "Embarcadero." Now he throws his pick, shovel and blankets into a comfortable coach, and seating himself, is swirled over the plains, and rolled over the hills (not upset) reaching this place in a few hours, indulging, (by the way), if he chooses in a milk punch, concocted by fairy hands, or demolishing a quarter section of as excellent pie as a New York pastry cook could furnish.53

It required ten hours for a stagecoach to drive to Auburn from Sacramento.54 Every few miles on the road could be found the well kept inn where wearied travelers could stop for rest and refreshments.55

54 Sacramento Daily Union, May 3, 1851, p. 2.
55 Loc. cit., Also see Sacramento Weekly Union, June 12, 1852, p. 2.
Auburn had become the stagecoach center of Placer County by 1852. Commenting on the thriving stage business at this time, the Herald wrote:

Of all the mining towns of the State, there is certainly none better accommodated with stages than Auburn, six lines leaving daily for the different parts of the country, and five stages arriving. These lines have greatly added to the business of our city; which our citizens duly appreciate; and from what we learn several new lines will be established, by another season, thus opening new facilities to the traveling public, and increasing the business prospects of Auburn.

Almost all stages, which were drawn by four or six horses, required expert drivers or "whips" as they were then called to guide the coaches over the rough.

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56 Among the stagecoach lines operating out of Auburn during that year were: United States Mail Lines, Ophir and Auburn Mail Stages, Brown and Parrish's Mail Pilot Line, Sacramento-Ophir and Auburn Daily Accommodation Line, Charlie Green's Pioneer, People's Accommodation Line (Gold Hill, Ophir and Auburn), Auburn and Yankee Jim's Daily Express Line, and the Auburn and Illinois Town Stage Line. See Sacramento Daily Union, January 20, 1852, p. 1; May 3, 1852, p. 1; May 12, 1852, p. 2; May 27, 1852, p. 2; May 31, 1852, p. 2; Herald, September 11, 1852, p. 3; November 20, 1852, p. 3. For a list of the principal settlements and way stations served by Auburn's stagecoach lines during the early fifties, see Appendix C.

57 Herald, September 25, 1852, p. 4. On one Tuesday morning in 1854 over 120 passengers were reportedly to have arrived in the stages from Sacramento alone. See Herald, April 9, 1854, p. 2.

58 The first vehicles used in California by the pioneer stage proprietors were wagons and omnibuses. In the summer of 1850 the first standard coaches from the East arrived. See Oscar Osburn Winther, op. cit., p. 97.
winding roads of Placer County. The whips of the Far West, although remembered principally for their picturesque qualities, were dependable men. The average stage driver displayed "a dash, skill, and gallantry that drew the admiration of travelers from all nations and has been so frequently described in the writings of tourists and travelers." Though the whip was often profane, he was usually gentlemanly and accommodating to his passengers.

Travel on early-day stagecoaches was accompanied by numerous accidents. The files of the Herald and Press disclose numerous mishaps that occurred on various lines serving Auburn's traveling public. A typical mishap occurred to the Nevada stage while descending the hill entering Spanish Flat. When the lead horses became unmanageable, the whole team soon started down the slope with fearful rapidity, and when almost on the flat, the stage upset and was dragged a considerable distance until it was smashed to pieces. Of the thirteen passengers, two jumped before it upset, but the rest were not so lucky. A wide assortment of minor bruises, shock and scratches was reported.

59 Oscar Osburn Winther, op. cit., p. 97.
60 Hubert Howe Bancroft, op. cit., p. 132.
61 Press, October 13, 1855, p. 2.
Accidents such as this became so frequent that the editor of the Placer Press, suggested rather sarcastically the propriety of the stage companies building their coaches with two sets of wheels, one above and the other below, so that when they turned over they could go right on.62

Prior to 1854 staging operations in Northern California were conducted by numerous competitive concerns, most of which were comparatively small, for their routes were usually confined to local regions. On January 1, 1854, however, the stagecoach lines of Northern California merged under the name of the California Stage Company.63 After that the staging business of Auburn, Placer County and Northern California was largely controlled by this firm.

From the days of forty-nine to the present time, Auburn has maintained its position as the great thoroughfare through which has passed the travel and freight of upper Placer County.


63 Herald, January 14, 1854, p. 2. Also see Sacramento City Directory for the Year A.D. 1860 (Sacramento: S. B. Cutter & Co., 1859, p. xviii.)
CHAPTER VIII

MINING ACTIVITIES

Although much of the early prosperity of Auburn came from its position as the supply and transportation center of northern Placer County's rich mineral regions, the town's economy, as in all of the gold camps within the Mother Lode, centered chiefly around its mining activities. Auburn owes its birth and early development to its mines.

I. THE DRY DIGGINGS

Early miners had confined themselves to the bars and beds of the rivers where water to wash the auriferous earth was at hand and plentiful, but it was soon found that some of the richest deposits were in the bottoms of ravines, that were entirely dry during summer, and some on high slopes or elevated flats where there was comparatively no water at any season. In the latter cases it was necessary to carry gold-bearing earth to the nearest stream where it could be washed, or pile it up and wait for winter rains to fall upon the dry water courses and provide temporary streams. Diggings of this kind were called dry diggings.  

Auburn, situated where Auburn, Baltimore, Rich, Secret, Dutch and Miner's Ravines converged in what is now the plaza in Old Town, shared with Placerville, the distinction of being the center of the richest dry diggings in California.²

The mines were confined almost exclusively to the beds of numerous ravines and to the flats at their heads; among the latter, Spanish Flat, half a mile from town, and Rich Flat at the head of Rich Ravine, were among the most important and yielded abundantly for many years.³

²Theodore H. Kittell, op. cit., p. 79.

³R. J. Steele, and others, Directory of the County of Placer for the Year 1861 (San Francisco: Charles F. Robbins, 1861), p. 1. Spanish Flat is situated about half a mile from Auburn along the route of the old Grass Valley road, while Rich Flat is located near the old winery at the head of Sacramento Street, about a quarter of a mile from the plaza in Old Town. See Goldie Brewer, editor, The Story of the Gold Discovery Centennial (Auburn, California: Auburn 49er Association, 1943), p. 34. For many years these two area yielded large amounts of gold. Two claims on Spanish Flat sold in 1852 for $1,500. See Herald, December 11, 1852, p. 2. One day's work in 1853 paid a company of four men $312. See Herald, April 9, 1853, p. 2. In May, 1853 a Mr. Hillman and three others took out over twenty-four ounces. See Herald, May 14, 1853, p. 2. A three hundred dollar lump of pure gold was found on the Flat shortly thereafter. See Herald, November 5, 1853, p. 2. Rich Flat also continued to yield abundantly for many years. The Flat was so rich that a miner's committee limited claims to twenty-five feet square. See Goldie Brewer, op. cit., p. 34. It was estimated that in 1849-50 over one million dollars was taken from it. See Herald, January 13, 1903, p. 1. Worked over several times, Rich Flat, in 1852, was still averaging an ounce per day to each miner working there. See Herald, March 12, 1852, p. 2. By the end of the decade, however, both Spanish and Rich Flats were pretty well exhausted. The Placer County
Auburn Ravine, the largest, extending from the center of Auburn down to the Sacramento Valley was described as having——

probably yielded more gold than any other of equal length and breadth in California. There was scarcely a foot of it which did not 'pan out' ounces of dust or lumps. And such beautiful gold too! and such monster 'nuggets' too."

The tools of early day miners were simple, consisting of a crevicing knife, a pan, and a rocker or cradle. The long tom was introduced to the diggings in the latter part of forty-nine. The knife was used only in picking gold from cracks in the rocks where lack of water as in Auburn produced coarse gold. Thousands of lumps of gold, according to one prospector, were dug out of crevices in the Auburn area.

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Directory For 1861 describes them as they appeared at that time: "Both are now considered worked out. Spanish Flat is now a fertile garden spot, and Rich Flat is an unsightly desert of quartz boulders." See R. J. Steele, op. cit., p. 8.

4 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. Auburn Ravine paid rich dividends for many years. It was not considered exhausted until 1857. See San Francisco Evening Bulletin, August 3, 1857, p. 1. Baltimore Ravine was equally rich. In December, 1852, two pieces of gold-bearing rock were taken out of the Ravine, one worth seventy dollars and the other fifty-eight dollars. See Herald, December 18, 1852, p. 2. Seven days later a piece of ore worth $107 was found. See Herald, December 25, 1852, p. 2. Three years later the rich Ravine was still yielding abundantly. In November of that year Jeremiah Brown took our fifty-eight ounces. See Press November 17, 1855, p. 2. One month later Hastings & Co. reported taking out $200 in five weeks. See Herald, December 8, 1855, p. 2.

5 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.
A second means of extracting gold during the earliest days of Auburn's existence was by panning. Panning was a simple process. The prospector would take hold of the sides of the pan with both hands, then squatting down lower it into the water. Then, with a kind of oscillating and slightly rotary motion, he moved it about and beneath the surface for a few moments. Then, after drawing it to the edge of the pool, he would throw out the largest stones, and assist in dissolving the dirt by rubbing it between his hands. The washing was repeated several times, and if there were any gold, it would gradually settle to the bottom of the pan.

At the Auburn mines, the red soil was washed in pools of the ravine formed by the rainy season, or in some little mountain rivulet, often several hundred yards from the spot where the earth was obtained.\(^6\)

It was said that the "faces, hair, brows and eye-lashes of the miners in the dry diggings became continually plastered with the red clay in which they worked and washed."\(^7\)

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Since panning was a simple process, it was very popular among early diggers, many of whom had never seen a flake of gold until their arrival at the mines. James Delavan noting these inexperienced diggers wrote—

I found here, many individuals very little calculated to rough it on miner’s fare, and undergo the miner’s toil—many of whom had never handled anything without gloves,” and whose delicate digits were exceedingly reluctant to form acquaintance with the pick-ax or shovel. These poor homesick fellows had left traces of their mal du pays wherever they had stopped; and on the blazed trees would be discovered their dolorous Jeremias, inscribed with red chalk: (California! O California! would that we never had sought thee! Land of fair promises, and disappointed homes! How dreary! How desolate!).

The newcomers plunged immediately into mining, however, and soon overcame their shortcoming. They imitated

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8James Delavan, Notes on California and the Placers How to Get There and What to Do Afterwards (New York: H. Long and Brother, 1856), p. 31. One gold digger told a story of what he considered to be the biggest burlesque of mining ever witnessed in the dry diggings. The tenderfoot concerned was an ex-governor, Governor Shannon of Ohio, who mined at Rich Flat in September, 1849. It is evident from the following description that the one-time governor was not dressed for the back-breaking labor of the miner: “There was about a dozen of ’em there working away, and in their midst was a very tall man with a stovepipe hat on, a white shirt with a tall white collar coming up on each side of his chin, the kind they used to wear then, and a pair of kid gloves in his hands. He'd thrown his coat and vest off, an' was workin' a rocker as if salvation depended on it. His shirt was splattered all over with muddy water, but he didn't care a cent about that; he was washing out gold an' that's all he cared about. When I got nearer I found out who it was. It
the old-timers' use of pick and shovel, and pan and cradle and it was not long before they were old-times themselves.

When the miner found a likely looking spot in the lowest part of the ravine, he dropped his pan and pick or shovel, and removed the loose earth and stones lying on top. Then he commenced digging a small hole, usually about the size of his hat, whence a pailful of dirt would be taken and washed. If found to be rich, a "claim" would be immediately staked off.

S. Weston, who spent four months in the mines of California, described the panning process at Auburn:

The precious metal is separated from the dirt by a very simple process. In a small way it is done by a tin pan, into which the dirt is placed with about the same quantity of water, which by a steady rolling motion of the vessel is kept in a state of solution until this gold all sinks to the bottom, which it very soon does, it being so much the heaviest; when the top is poured off and the shining ore is secured.9

Early wooden pans called bateas were introduced by

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was Governor Shannon of Ohio. I'd known him when he was governor back East, an' I was practicing law there. It was the biggest burlesque of mining I ever saw." See F. I. Vassault, "Story in Transition," The Overland Monthly, XVII (January, 1891), p. 4.

93. Weston, Four Months in the Mines of California (Providence: E. P. Weston, Publisher, 1854), p. 5. Weston mined in the Auburn district during the early days of 1850.
Mexicans and Chilians. However, the cradle or rocker soon replaced them. The rocker was the first effective appliance superior to the pan. It was used in all parts of the mines since its size and weight rendered it portable and easy to transfer from place to place. The cradle, so called because it resembled a babies' cradle, processed auriferous dirt more rapidly than the pan. This instrument resembled a box or rocker. In the head was tightly fitted two aprons made of thin boards about eighteen inches in length and fourteen in width. On the top over the aprons was a sieve into which the dirt was placed by one person while another constantly rocked the cradle, at the same time supplying it with water. The motion of the cradle kept the dirt in a state of solution while passing over the aprons and escaping through an opening at the foot of them and passing off through an aperture at the foot of the cradle. Across the aprons and at the bottom of the cradle, two narrow strips were nailed to catch the gold which always sank to the bottom.

The earliest rockers were very crude affairs. C.

10 It was a batea that Claude Chana used to wash the first gold taken from the Auburn vicinity. See Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 87.
F. Wood recalled that when he first arrived in Auburn in May, 1849, an Indian squaw was engaged in burning out the butt of a tree to be used as a rocker. The cradle or rocker, while much more advantageous than the pan, had its limitations. Since it was not designed to catch smaller particles of gold dust, miners lost almost one-half of the gold in the processing. The Virginia rocker, an improved type, solved their problem.

Although these rockers cost one thousand dollars each and required six men to operate, they were supposed to process one to three pounds of gold a day, or twice what the old type rocker could wash. Hearing of these miraculous machines, Jonas Winchester and a friend named Devoe, who mined on the North Fork just above Auburn, journeyed to Mormon Island and procured several, three for a mining company in the area, and two or three for themselves. This introduced the Virginia Rocker on the North Fork. Winchester and Devoe had planned to hire workers to operate their rockers, but winter came and put a stop

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12Winchester Correspondence, September 23, 1849.
13Loc. cit., The Virginia rocker was introduced on the American River at the Mormon Island diggings by a Mr. Brinsmade.
14Winchester Correspondence, September 23, 1849.
15Loc. cit. Also see John N. Letts, California
to their plans.

It soon became apparent that a more expeditious method for washing gold from large quantities of earth was desirable. Men were not satisfied with the slow, one man system of pan or cradle. They wanted an implement to utilize profitably the efforts of individuals organized into companies. The "long tom" was the answer. The tom varied much in size depending on the number of men intending to use it. It was commonly an oblong box or trough about twelve feet in length, open at the top and usually at both ends. It was about eight inches in depth, and at the upper end from one foot to two feet in width, but increasing to nearly double that width at the middle, from where its sides were parallel to the lower end. The bottom of this broad portion was made of strong, perforated sheet iron. Under the perforated iron portion was placed a riffle-box, similar in principle to the bottom of a cradle but larger. Several men would shovel dirt into the tom at the upper end while another miner would let water in by wooden troughs or through canvas hose. The force of the water would carry the dirt off, leaving the residue of stones and coarse gravel which was thrown.

Illustrated by a Returned Californian (New York: William Holdredge, Publisher, 1852), p. 120.
out by shovel.

Sometimes thirty to fifty feet or more of sluice boxes were attached to the tom at the upper, and dirt shoveled in along the entire length, to be carried down to the tom by the force of the water.

Toms were particularly adapted to nearly level ground or where there was not sufficient fall to allow the still more efficient mode of gold washing with sluices. Sam Holladay ran a tom during the winter of 1849-1850 in the ravine immediately in front of H. M. House's big store and hotel. 16 This was the earliest mention of that device in the Auburn mines. "The Long Tom," wrote G. Cuming Weld, the California correspondent of the New York Journal of Commerce, "brings forth full wages where a common rocker would scarcely pay. 17

Within the next two or three years both the tom and cradle had been largely replaced by the more effective and permanent sluice. The sluice was an extension of the

16 H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 46.

17 Transcript, April 1, 1850, p. 2. At New York Bar, near Auburn, five men in Evan's Company took out, with one tom, the sum of $1,550. See Herald, October 2, 1852, p. 2.

18 The sluice was merely an open trough, usually made of three inch boards—a bottom and two sides—and from twelve or fourteen feet in length and from twelve to forty inches in width. The sides of these troughs were secured from spreading by cleats nailed across the top and from splitting at the bottom by similar cleats on the under side.

Frequently a continuous line of sluices, from fifty to several hundred feet in length, were worked with great success.
tom, and was either constructed of boards, or as a simple, inclined ditch, with rocks instead of wooden riffles for retaining the gold.

Another technique called "coyoting" appeared at the commencement of the rainy season. Coyoting consisted of digging holes or pits in the ground, generally into the base of hills or mountains, sometimes penetrating to the depth of fifty or one hundred feet. The gold-bearing dirt would then be carried to the nearest water where it would be washed. Coyoting did not prove too popular during the early days at Auburn. It was not widely employed until quartz mining began in Placer County during the fifties and sixties.

Water in Auburn Ravine was plentiful enough for washing until about the first of July. Then work

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19 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 103.

20 In 1852 coyoting or tunneling was attempted at the head of Rich Ravine, but the labors of those engaged in this branch of mining were so unsuccessful that the enterprise was soon abandoned. See Sacramento Weekly Union, March 27, 1852, p. 1. A week later Messrs. Carpenter and Freeman commenced coyoting into the same hill, and after penetrating thirty feet struck a lead which averaged $3.50 to the pan. The company reportedly refused thirty thousand dollars for their interest. It was hoped that this was but the commencement of rich coyote diggings in the vicinity. See Sacramento Weekly Union, April 10, 1852, p. 2. Apparently this hope was short lived for nothing further was reported on the subject.

21 H. P. Van Sicklen, editor, "Personal Reminiscences
closed except for a little "dry digging" which consisted of picking about in the ravines for nuggets or collecting earth and packing it on man or mule back to the nearest water for washing.  

J. C. Boggs recalled that when he arrived in Auburn on September 28, 1849, upon asking for a drink of water he was told, "Water's too scarce, take whiskey." In company with his partners, he pushed on a mile and a half above Auburn where water was located. Making their camp at a place later called the Lime Kiln, they began mining on nearby Little Baltimore Ravine. Boggs reported that after about an hour's work, he found a lump of gold worth twenty dollars. All the dirt they dug had to be packed on mules to the Lime Kiln for washing.

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of Samuel W. Holladay," Publication of the Society of California Pioneers for 1941 (1941), p. 34. Also see Herald, November 17, 1907, p. 1.

22 Loc. cit.


24 Loc. cit.

25 The difficulty of getting gold-bearing dirt to water or water to the claim caused a miner named Jenkins, who had a claim at the head of Missouri Gulch, to construct a crude ditch or flume to his claim. This did away with the laborious task of getting his dirt to water. One day, however, the water flowing over the crude flume abruptly stopped. Going back over it, foot by foot, Jenkins found that a portion of it had caved in. Whatever the cause,
One writer reported that at times drinking water became so scarce it had to be collected by the process of holding a cup at a point where it "oozed out," drop by drop, from the hillside. No one could take more than his cup full, and a long line of thirsty men awaited their turn. Occasionally an enterprising peddler would appear with water for sale and would get a good price for each gallon sold. Later water was brought in by ditches and such distribution was avoided.


26Burr Manuscript, p. 2.

27Loc. cit.

28A pressing need for additional water was evidenced in 1851 when numerous veins of gold-bearing quartz were discovered in the Auburn-Opitir, Secret Diggings, and Gold Hill district. Several crushing mills were erected which required a constant supply of water. The solution to the water problem lay in the construction of water ditches which could convey water from the Bear and American Rivers to the rich quartz regions.
Work on the first, and most important of these mining ditches, the Bear River Water and Mining Company canal, commenced in May, 1851. A news item concerning the importance of this ditch appeared shortly thereafter in the **Placer Times and Transcript**.

Bear River, which at present enters into Feather River just above Nicolaus, is soon to be turned from its original course by means of a canal thirty-five miles long, and when this great work is completed, which will be before many months, the entire volume of water will pass through Auburn, and disengage in the American River. It will be creating a new River in California, and taking up one that already exists. This will have a most important effect on Auburn, as nearly all Placer County is highly auriferous, and when water becomes plenty, a large population will doubtless resort there to labor in the Placers.

The first water to be carried over the Bear River Ditch to the extensive mines of Auburn, Ophir, Secret Diggins, and Gold Hill took place on June 18, 1852. An

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29 *Sacramento Daily Union*, May 3, 1851, p. 2. For subsequent reports on the progress of the canal, see *Sacramento Daily Union*, June 19, 1851, p. 2; December 4, 1851, p. 2; January 24, 1852, p. 2; February 7, 1852, p. 3; February 23, 1852, p. 2; March 27, 1852, p. 4; April 14, 1852, p. 2; April 17, 1852, p. 4.

30 *Placer Times and Transcript*, September 15, 1851, p. 1.

31 *Sacramento Weekly Union*, June 28, 1852, p. 4.
unknown miner, writing under the name Tarantula, described the arrival of the first Bear River water at Auburn:

Placer Co. Correspondence, dated Auburn, June 18, 1852.

Our first and great event is the arrival of the Bear River water, which having been promised for the last twelve months, took us rather by surprise yesterday. The first appearance of anything unusual was evinced by a general outburst of the frogs, which occurring about noon, when usually silent, excited some surprise amongst the Auburnians. The duck and drake, too, in front of the bakery, were observed to be unusually excited. An undefined noise of mighty waters was now heard in the distance; some, however galloped into town with mud and alarm on their countenances, exclaiming, "The river is coming, clear the way!" It reached the town from three points about the same instant. Rushing thro' the big ravine, it made a clean sweep of the slaughter house, carrying away two butchers, who then in the act of killing a two-year old steer for veal. They, however, escaped by seizing hold of the tail of an old ox, which not being too fat to exert himself, managed to reach the bank. The wasted water rushing like a cataract down Rich and Baltimore Ravines, soon reached what is termed "Middle Row," and carrying it bodily off, showed what a great improvement its absence made in the appearance of the town. It is believed that many houses cannot but be improved by the cleaning they have received, especially the Court House. About two or three hundred pigs which were wallowing in the mire, were suddenly overtaken by the current, and although they may have escaped eventually, the inhabitants have no wish to see them back again. The water being now surcharged with all kinds of possible things, such as old rockers, long and short toms, red and blue shirts,
unpaid notes and old boots, elections and soap, cigar ends and empty casks, made its way down the ravine, towards Ophir. But about this time some parties above had reduced the torrent to a harmless stream, fearing that the "dirt" would be too rapidly washed out for the interest of the Company. Indeed some lumps were laid bare by the current; one weighing from two to three tons, and entirely composed of granite.

Believe me, Sir, Yours, &c.

Tarantula, 30

Completion of this ditch gave life and vigor to every branch of business, facilitating the miner in his operations and aiding the business men in their transactions. Hereafter, Auburn was assured of a continuous supply of water for mining. An extensive system of flumes soon developed.

When water in the ravines was exhausted, the miner had several alternatives. He could throw up dirt in piles to be washed when the rains came; 31 he could pick

30 Sacramento Weekly Union, June 26, 1852, p. 4. For a complete discussion of the Bear River Canal, see Herald, September 23, 1852, p. 4.

31 When Mahlon D. Fairchild first arrived in Auburn on August 2, 1849, he described the mining activities then going on. "The men were casting gravel from the beds of ravines to be washed in rockers later when the rain brought water, there not then being a sufficient quantity for that purpose." See Mahlon D. Fairchild, "Reminiscences of a Forty-Miner," California Historical Society Quarterly, XIII (March, 1934), p. 14,
up his dirt and pack it to the nearest water; or he could content himself crevicing for the large lumps of gold that were to be found in the area.

Markle's diary offers an excellent description of these three alternatives.

Sunday, October 7th.—Today we were wandering around in the Dry Diggings, and I succeeded in picking out a lump worth from three to four dollars; I then gathered up about a gallon of dirt, carried to the water and washed it, and found about two dollars more.

Thursday, October 11th.—Today we dug and threw up dirt to pack to the water. Robbins found another lump worth nineteen and a half dollars; clear in the evening and no rain.

Friday, October 12th.—Today we bought a horse and packed dirt to a well that we dug; weather clear and cool.

Saturday, October 13th.—Today we packed six loads and got twenty dollars. Weather clear and warm.

Saturday, October 27th.—Since Monday last, we have as usual been packing dirt. The weather, as last week, without any rain.

Monday, October 29th.—Today we washed what dirt we had packed and concluded to throw up dirt to wash, when the wet season sets in—as we have concluded to winter here.

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32 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1; H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34; Myron Angell, History of Placer County (Oakland: Thompson and West, Historic Record Co., 1882), p. 78. According to one contemporary, the only water available during the summer months was a spring in Big Ravine, probably Auburn Ravine. See Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. J. C. Boggs reported that he had to go a mile and a half above Auburn to find water. See Recollections of John C. Boggs, Herald, November 16, 1907, p. 1.

33 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.
Tuesday, October 30th.—Throwing up dirt today. In the evening it began to rain. 34

However, few miners stayed in the dry diggings during the unusually long and dry summer of forty-nine.

The dry diggings were ignored, and a hegira ensued which crowded every bar on the North Fork from Mormon Island to the Middle Fork. 35

One lonely writer commenting on this exodus wrote:

Auburn is a desolate place and will be until a supply of new diggers come in. The old heads are crowding towards the mountains. 36 Log cabins are deserted and I am left alone in this wilderness. 37

The drought usually lasted until October, when rains and cold weather made mining difficult, and in many instances

34 Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 77-78.
35 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1.
36 It was a wide-spread belief among miners, few of whom had any knowledge of geology or mineralogy, that the gold in the streams and gulches had been washed down from some place where it lay in solid beds, perhaps in mountains. Many a prospector set out to search for this El Dorado of El Dorados. See Hubert Howe Bancroft, op. cit., p. 96.
impossible. A steady tide of migration now made its way out of the mountains to the coast. A great many, however, remained in the gold fields, wintering at various dry diggings. Auburn was the natural gathering place for miners along the North Fork and adjacent areas. The village was described during the winter of 1849-1850 as being "crowded with miners who had come off the streams." 38 Gulches all around the settlement were occupied. Efforts proved remunerative for those who cared to work, but many preferred to occupy their time in idleness, waiting for the rivers to fall.

Amos Piatt Josselyn effectively described the lot of the river miners in the dry diggings that winter when he wrote—

"We are working a small creek about three quarters of a mile west of Auburn and expect to remain there until the river falls so that we can work there which will be about six weeks. There is a great many here laying still just waiting for the river to fall. They prefer doing nothing rather than work for $1 or $10 per day but we think it better to be making a little than to be idle and on expenses for it costs something to live here." 39

38 Pioneer, November 10, 1877, p. 2.

39 Josselyn Correspondence, May 12, 1850.
Mining in the Auburn area was very uncertain but very exciting. Gold was in larger particles than along the river, but there was a much greater uncertainty in obtaining it, some toiling for weeks without making a dollar, and others sometimes finding pieces worth from fifty to five hundred dollars without any physical exertion. The prospector never knew when a shovel full of earth might uncover one of these rich nuggets.

As each sank his mattock or shovel in the ground and hauled it up he looked sharp as if expecting to find large lumps of the yellow ore. The writer saw a person pick up a piece worth about six dollars which rolled from his shovel as he hauled up the earth, and noticed the effect his success produced in his countenance—he did not look very ill-natured as he placed the shining ore in his purse.

40 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 77. Sam Holladay told of expensive lumps, up to twenty ounces pure, being found near the center of Auburn where the ravines converged. See H. P. Van Sicklen, op. cit., p. 34. Gilbert C. Weld reported seeing a lump of gold, found at the Auburn diggings, which was estimated to have contained 132 ounces of pure gold. The size of the lump was said to have been sixty-one cubic inches. See G. C. Weld, op. cit., p. 156. The Times mentions the finding of two large nuggets, one weighing forty ounces and the other twenty-five pounds, at the dry diggings on the North Fork. See Times, June 26, 1849, p. 3. For other references to the finding of large nuggets at Auburn, see Alta California, July 12, 1849, p. 2; Times, February 15, 1850, p. 3; Transcript, April 1, 1850, p. 1; Sacramento Weekly Union, January 10, 1852, p. 2.

41 S. Weston, op. cit., p. 7.
Gold seekers thoroughly covered the ground in and around the village. One prospector recalled that "the ground has the appearance of having been thrown up as a molten state, perhaps during a volcanic eruption and dropped into the earth," while another reported that "the earth in almost every direction appeared as if it had been rent asunder by an earthquake." Streets and town lots were dug up, and in many instances houses were undermined in the relentless search for gold.

The miners in the village of Auburn, near the North Fork, are doing remarkably well. The ravine running through the town is being dug up even to the doors of the stores. Six men working a lead in front of Mr. House's store took out one morning last week $600 in coarse gold and averaged $100 dollars each daily, for the last week.

The ground under this store is undoubtedly very rich, as the largest day's work was only interrupted from the fact that the proprietor of the store claimed a right to the ground on which the building is situated. He can be said to have a safe of gold under his store, and can employ his leisure moments in digging, until a customer calls him off.

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42 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 77.


44 Alta California, May 9, 1850, p. 2. Also see Placer Times and Transcript, September 15, 1851, p. 1. "Under houses, hotels and stores, the dirt yielded big nuggets and some smaller ones. The proprietor in the rainy season could dig under cover, and make good wages and when not digging sell pork and flour for two dollars per pound."
The advantages to the merchant with a claim directly under his place of business were manyfold:

First, nobody could jump his claim, he being in continual possession; second, although it rained most of the time, he and his lead were in and out of the wet; third, he could transact business in his hotel, at the bar, and in the intervals could jump into his "coyote hole," dig a pan of earth, climb out, and wash it out in the foaming stream in front of his house; fourth, after the gold was all dug out, he had a deep and spacious cellar under his house, and as dry as a nut, for the long dry summer set in.

Gold cropped out of almost everywhere in the embryo mining camp; it was kicked up in the streets by a mule, found under a cabin floor, or in a backyard. It was not uncommon to take a stroll and come back with a nugget or

See Gazette, June 10, 1875, p. 4. As late as 1856 it was reported that a person mining under Palmer's Blacksmith Shop in town took out $123 in four pans of dirt. See Press, August 30, 1856, p. 2. For other references to such activities, see Herald, August 4, 1855, p. 2; August 30, 1856, p. 3; August 7, 1875, p. 3; February 10, 1877, p. 5.

45 Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. Many years later, a forty-niner, commenting on the richness of the gold-bearing dirt within the city limits of Auburn, stated: "If the ground on which the county seat of Placer stands today, were sluiced over and down to the bed rock, which is very shallow, we firmly believe that many hundreds of thousands of dollars would be realized. See Gazette, June 10, 1875, p. 4."
There are no statistics available on Auburn's gold production during the period with which the study is concerned. It would appear, however, from contemporary accounts that the average yield was higher than the State average. The Times, in May, 1849, estimated the daily average for the North Fork Dry Diggings to be twenty-eight dollars per man. By the end of the month, it was reported that many miners were averaging one hundred dollars a day, but that in most cases the average yield was from one to two ounces. Since gold brought sixteen

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46 One evening in forty-nine, after a winter shower, a Dutchman kicked up a solid shining lump worth four thousand dollars. See Gazette, April 19, 1873, p. 1. That same winter another miner, camped in the west ravine, while coming out of his tent saw a lump uncovered by the rain. At sixteen dollars per ounce, it was worth sixteen hundred dollars. See Gazette, June 10, 1873, p. 4. For years afterwards, it was not uncommon to read in the Herald accounts of gold being found in the streets, particularly after winter showers. As late as 1861, a Chinese named Ah Bah found a lump of gold worth about two thousand dollars in the track of an old road. See Herald, November 23, 1861, p. 2. For other such accounts, see Herald, February 6, 1875; February 10, 1877; September 4, 1830; March 8, 1890; March 7, 1891.

47 Times, May 5, 1849, p. 3.
dollars per ounce in forty-nine, it would appear that the average daily yield was between sixteen and thirty-two dollars. The State average for that year was sixteen dollars.  

The expenses involved in a day's mining were many. It cost a minimum of two dollars a day for provisions, and when a lead panned out, it was often days before a new one was discovered. During these intervals, the prospectors' expenses continued, but his income ceased. It was, therefore, necessary to have a rich paying claim in order to average a good daily wage. John Letts made quite an extensive study of this problem in the mining region of which Auburn was an integral part.

A man could place his machine almost anywhere and get two dollars per day; this, however, barely pays for the provisions consumed, and unless a lead will pay at least five or six dollars, it is not considered worth working. A miner finds a lead that pays six dollars, he exhausts it in six, or say ten days; his expenses are two dollars per day, leaving him, at the end of the ten days, forty dollars.

49 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 102. Also see Herald, May 13, 1895, p. 4.

50 Rodman W. Paul, California Gold (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1943), p. 349. Paul's figures were compiled from the reports appearing in contemporary newspapers, trade journals, books and federal and foreign reports.
He now spends a week, perhaps more, before he finds another lead that will pay; his expenses have reduced the amount in hand to twenty-six dollars. If he goes any considerable distance, he must hire a mule to carry his provisions, machine, &c., which will cost him one ounce ($18) per day; two days exhausts his fund. 51

Only a relatively small percentage of the gold-seekers became wealthy.

II. THE RIVER Diggings

About one or two miles north of Auburn, the North and Middle Forks of the American River joined. Here, a large number of miners congregated to try their luck, returning to the "dry diggings" only when the rainy season drove them from the rivers. Jonas Winchester describes the camp in this way:

We camp on the high bank of the river, and on the edge of a slope, whereon are located a considerable number of tents--a population of a couple of hundred persons who work within a mile. There are four or five stores here kept in large tents. Flour is $50 a barrel--pork 70 cts a lb.--hams 75 cts., and $1, sugar 36 cts.--and all other things in the same proportion. 53

51 John M. Letts, op. cit., p. 102.

52 Jonas Winchester Correspondence, August 5, 1849, op. cit., p. 4.

53 loc. cit.
Winchester and his friends boarded with a Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds of Texas for twenty dollars a week, and, according to Jonas, "they were fed as well as at any place in the States, with the exception of potatoes which were 50 cts. a lb. when any could be obtained, which was seldom." 

River mining necessitated a type of mining different from that employed in the dry diggings. Often it became desirable to turn the rushing mountain torrent out of its natural channel, so that the glittering gold, lying in the river's bed, could be obtained. To do this, a race, in many cases, had to be dug; at others, a flume had to be built, of sufficient capacity to take in the entire amount of water running in the river. This being done, a dam had to be constructed across the river. After the dam was completed, the river was turned into the race. Then river mining really commenced in earnest. Men began to remove boulders, wheel out rocks, fix toms or sluices, and take out the precious metal, if any.

If the rains were late in commencing, every possibility was presented to work out the river claims to

54 Jonas Winchester Correspondence, August 3, 1849. This reference to Mrs. Reynolds seems to be the earliest account of the appearance of a feminine resident in Placer County. It is very likely that she was the first of her sex to arrive in Placer County.
advantage. If, however, the rains came early, as was frequently the case, the whole of the summer's labor and expense were apt to be swept away before a dollar could be taken out.

Jonas Winchester wrote an account of mining operations on the North Fork of the American River:

At low water two-thirds of the bed of the river is dry, exposing sand bars on the margin and in the bends. It is on these that gold is found most abundant. First the large quantity of stones, here the principal production, have to be removed from the surface—a labor equal to building a stone fence. Shoveling off the top sand, we begin upon the hard gravel below, in which is embodied twice as many rocks as on the top. Taking the dirt in the bucket or tin, it is carried to the machine and emptied into the hopper, where water poured on with one hand, dipping from the river, and the cradle rocked with the other, until the sand and gravel are washed through, the particles and scales of gold falling to the bottom. At every 20 to 50 buckets of dirt, the sand and gold are drawn off through a hold in the bottom, and carefully washed down until the gold is entirely separate from the dirt, etc., when it boxed or bagged, ready for currency.

Winchester continued his narration by describing the laborious job of river mining:

Eight hours a day, wet as rats, we dug for the week, realizing a total of $500—hard earned compared with the excessive labor and exposure. Don't

55 Jonas Winchester Correspondence, August 5, 1849.
you think this is what few would like
to do—to root in the water like a
beaver, the thermometer seldom under
93° and often as high as 104° in the
afternoon?53

River diggings continued to bring good returns
long after the Auburn dry diggings were exhausted, and
along with the quartz mines that were developed after
1851, provided many a miner with his daily wage.

56 Jonas Winchester Correspondence, August 5, 1849;
For additional accounts of mining at the junction of the
North and Middle Forks see John M. Letts, op. cit., pp.
72-73, 124-125.

57 Quartz mining was not developed in Placer County
until 1851. The first quartz mill in the County was
erected that year at Secret Diggings on the Rosencrans
ledge near Ophir. See Sacramento Daily Union, June 20,
1851, p. 2; Myron Angell, op. cit., p. 194; Herald,
October 17, 1857, p. 2; California Mines and Minerals (San
"Auburn came first. Placer was an afterthought."

These words uttered by some long since forgotten pioneer of forty-nine sum up the story of Auburn during the period 1849-1851, for during this period much of the history of Placer County was also the history of Auburn.

Claude Chana first discovered gold on rich Auburn Ravine on May 15, 1848, four months after Marshall's historic discovery at Coloma. The region abounded in gold deposits, and it was not long before Auburn became the center of some of the richest dry diggings in California. Following the initial discoveries in the ravines, however, river mining began to attract the greatest attention. Placer County, lying south of Bear River and embracing several branches of the American River, was the location of hundreds of rich river bars where the earliest mining was done. The American, having its source in Placer, was among the richest rivers in the State.

A road between the Sacramento Valley and Auburn existed from an early date. It was over this artery that the pioneer gold-seekers made their way into the upper regions of the County, and it was at the end of this road that Auburn developed. Like most mining camps of the
period, it was at first a flimsily constructed village, characterized by tents, shanties and rude hovels. Attractive or not, the settlement was strategically located with reference to rich mining regions in upper Placer County. Located near the junction of the North and Middle Forks of the American, Auburn became the immediate goal of the gold-seekers—the gateway through which they could enter rich gold regions to the north.

Trails fanned outward from Auburn to every river bar, gulch and canyon in the district. Those who wished to continue on had to travel by pack mule on one of these many trails, the forerunner of Placer County's present day highway system. Because of its strategic location, Auburn became the supply center for the mineral regions thereabouts. Here gold-seekers organized into groups, purchased their supplies, and traveled on to river bars beyond.

Crude structures made of pine poles, covered and sided with blue drizzling, canvas or other material were hastily erected to serve as stores, saloons and gambling halls. They did a flourishing business with the miners who made Auburn not only their trading center, but a place where they could gather for a drink, a game of monte, and a friendly bit of conversation when the lonely miner's life became too unbearable. These crude structures were
subsequently replaced by rough log and clapboard houses, and still later by brick and stone buildings, many of which are still in use today.

Winter brought high water and compelled river miners to flee to higher ground. Then a steady tide of men made their way to the dry diggings on the North Fork to await spring. Auburn shared with Placerville the distinction of being the center of the richest dry diggings in California. Between one thousand and fifteen hundred miners passed the winter of 1849-1850 at the Auburn diggings, crevicing in rocks or throwing up dirt. Many log cabin hotels, forerunners of the fine hotel system that has come to characterize Auburn, were erected to accommodate newcomers. Stores, saloons, gambling halls, all did a flourishing business.

The first months of 1850 brought express and stagecoach lines to Placer County. Auburn was the great hub through which passed the travel and freight to and from the extensive mining districts of upper Placer County. The settlement assumed the position as the transportation center of the County. Express offices, hotels, and stage stops were established, giving an air of permanency to the mining camp. Express and stagecoach lines left Auburn daily for every portion of the mineral regions.
When California was divided, in 1850, into counties, it was expected that Auburn would be the county seat of Sutter County in which it was originally included. It had many advantages to offer; it was the principal settlement in the County; it was the center of an extensive mining district; it was the supply and transportation center of a large area; and it was the geographical center of a thickly populated region.

Yet, with all these advantages, Auburn was by-passed. Through some political manipulations by Senator Green, the paper city of Oro was made the governmental seat of the newly formed county. The inadvisability of this choice was immediately perceived, and an election was held to select a more desirable location. This time Auburn was selected and the County offices were moved to that place. Sutter County, large and unwieldy, was broken up in 1851, and Auburn was included in the new county of Placer. The County Seat remained at Auburn, and from that time to the present, Auburn has served as the governmental seat of Placer County.

Extensive quartz deposits were discovered in the Auburn district in 1851, thus enabling the settlement to continue as a gold mining center long after the surface deposits were exhausted. After the decade of the 1870's, however, gold mining fell off considerably. Increased
operating costs and low gold prices have resulted in the marked inactivity of most drift and quartz mines.

The decline in mining was more than compensated for by the agricultural development commencing in the seventies. Rich producing orchards of pears, plums, peaches, and cherries now cover hills once mined by forty-niners. Today Auburn is the horticultural center of Placer County.
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San Francisco Picayune, October 21, 1850.

San Jose Pioneer, November 10, 1877.

Themis, April 24, 1879.
APPENDIX A

EARLY SETTLERS OF AUBURN

Below is a partial list of the very early settlers in Auburn which has been compiled from the various data consulted in this study. The list is by no means complete, and includes only those pioneer citizens of Auburn for whom approximate dates of arrival have been determined.

Andrews, Moses **
Bailey, Major **
Banks, ____ **
Bennam, Virgil **
Boggs, John Craig **
Boat, B. B. ***
Brown, Thomas **
Burr, H.P. **
Buttman, ____ **
Chase, Claude **
Cook, ____ ***
Courtois, Philibert **
Cragier, P. ***
Crandall, Dr. John Riggs ***
Crawford, Jim **
DeVan, James **
Devoe, James B. **
Dixon, ____ **
Dibrow, W.D. ***
Dobelman, John **
Earle, Morris **
______, Elias (colored) **
Ellard, Charles M. **
Elliot, Eliza **
______, Eugene **
Fairchild, Mahlon D. **
Fiddler, J. ***
Fitch, George K. **
Foster, Harriett ***
Fox, ____ **
Gates, William M. **
Gendron, Francois *
Gibson, Frederick **
Goodell, Dick ***

Gordon, Robert **
Gray, Isaac **
Gwynn, William **
Haley, ____ ***
Hall, ____ **
Hall, Edward M. ***
Harris, W. B. ***
Hawkins, Hiram R. **
Holmes, Henry Thomas **
House, Hudson M. **
Jenkins, ____ **
Johnson, Theodore T. **
Josselyn, Amos Platt ***
Kaiser, Jake ***
Keenner, George A. ***
Kennedy, Thomas B. **
Kennedy, ____ **
Kerr, ____ ***
Leary, W.M. ***
Lettis, John M. **
Love, M.P.H. ***
Lucas, J.P. **
Mankle, John A. **
Martin, ____
McCormack, Mrs. James **
McCutchen, James ***
McGinley, James ***
Milligan, ____ ***
Mott, Gordon M. **
Owsbey, William ***
Parkinson, James ***
Perry, ____ ***
Peterson, James **
Pierson, John ***

* Arrivals in 1840
** Arrivals in 1849
*** Arrivals in 1850
Poland, R.C. ***
Post,  ***
Prosser, Thomas ***
Purinton, R.H. ***
Rankin, R. ***
Reed, C.F. ***
Ripley,  ***
Risher,  ***
Robbins, Lorin **
Shannon, Governor **
Sigler, S. ***
Scoot,  ***
Simon,  ***
Smith, R.G. ***
Smith, J. ***
Smith, J.W. ***
Smith, James ***
Smith, Jack ***
Smith, Joseph ***
Sweezy,  ***
Thomas, F.W. **
Van Wormer,  ***
Wadleigh, J.W. ***
Walkup, Joseph **
Warner, Tuck *
Weld, Gilbert C. **
West,  (colored) **
Weston, S. ***
Wetzler, Julius **
Whiteman,  ***
Wilcox,  ***
Williams, George ***
Winchester, Jonas **
Wise, George ***
Witherby, D.S. ***
Wood, John S. **
Woods, Joe *
Wyman, Samuel B. **

* Arrivals in 1848
** Arrivals in 1849
*** Arrivals in 1850
## APPENDIX 2

### CALIFORNIA POSTAL STATIONS

(From the Daily Alta California, San Francisco, July 30, 1851)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWNS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
<th>TOWNS</th>
<th>COUNTIES</th>
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<td>#Auburn</td>
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<td>Nevada</td>
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<td>Solano</td>
<td>#Nicolau</td>
<td>Sutter</td>
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<td>Butte</td>
<td>#Oak Springs</td>
<td>Tuolumne</td>
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<td>#Parks Bar</td>
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<td>Chico</td>
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<td>Colusi</td>
<td>#Quartzburg</td>
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<td>#Rough &amp; Ready</td>
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<td>San Francisco</td>
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<td>#San Juan</td>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

* County Seat
# Mining Camps
APPENDIX C

PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS SERVED BY AUBURN'S STAGECOACH LINES DURING THE EARLY 50's.

(From the Placer Herald, Auburn, February 2, 1956)

Distance from Auburn to various towns:

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<td>Michigan Bluff</td>
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