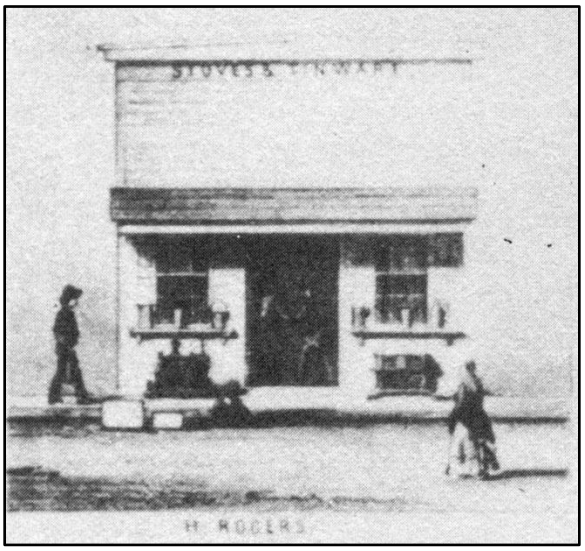
Block 10, Lot 5 Murphys

The old stone building with iron shutters across from the hotel on Main Street in Murphys has quite a history and many owners with at least two deaths associated with it.

Before the fire that destroyed the business section of Murphys in August of 1859, the land where it now is was packed with businesses and buildings. One of them was a building used by Brown's Express Company. Express companies were used by the miners for forwarding parcels and letters and for receiving gold dust, similar to a bank. The Brown's Express Company advertised in the San Joaquin Republican beginning on August 20, 1851: "*Persons wishing to send letters or packages to any mines on the Moquelumne [sic] or Calaveras rivers and Murphy's, Angel's and Carson's diggings, can send daily through this express by leaving their letters at the office of Newell & Co., Stockton and San Francisco…*" Brown's estate sold the building to Henry Rogers and his partner William Bryant in 1854. Henry Rogers ran a tin shop in the building until selling it in June of 1858 to A R. Jones, for a price of two thousand, six hundred dollars. *(Deed Bk C. Page 449)* The sale included the "*entire stock in trade, tin ware, hardware, iron, stoves.*" The August 21, 1859 fire destroyed most of the business district of Murphys Camp and the building was burnt down.



After the fire a stone building was erected on the lot. The stone building was built to withstand fire, with 2 foot rubble stone side walls and iron shutters to cover the windows and doors. Louis Robinson and his brother Jacob were probably the builders and Louis Robinson was the owner and probably running a tin smith business there, since that was his occupation listed at this location in 1861. By 1862 there was also a dwelling house on the back of the lot behind the stone building. Louis Robinson sold the stone building to Charles Rouseau in 1867. *(Deed Bk. P. page 7*) Rouseau had owned a gunsmith shop about a block west of here but sold it shortly before purchasing this property, and he may have ran his gunsmith shop here for a time. Rouseau owned the stone building for only a few years with the 1869 property tax assessment billed to him but with a note stating that the tax was paid by Adam Mager, who had recently taken over the stone building.

Adam Mager had been one of the first owners of the Murphys Brewery in the 1850s, and later purchased a bakery on the south side of Main Street. He still owned that bakery when he took possession of this building in 1869 from Lewis Robinson and started a bakery here, the first record of a bakery in this location. Adam Mager was born in France and came to America in 1853 with his sister Catherine and his brother Charles. Catherine Mager married Johann Heinrich Deitsch, who owned

property in the Owlsburg area of Murphys, and Charles Mager married Margaret Smith, who had two daughters from an earlier marriage and who he met in Calaveras County.

In March of 1873, Adam Mager was in San Francisco when he had some type of mental breakdown while walking down a street. He was arrested and committed to the Stockton Insane Asylum on March 24, 1873, at the age of forty-eight. The commitment papers stated that he was married with no children, worked as a baker, and that he showed no evidence of insanity but his manner and conversation was that of an insane person. His friends stated that he was not a drinking man, but he had no rational intervals and the hospital did not prescribe any treatment. He died in the insane asylum a month after he was committed. Possibly he was interred in the cemetery at the state hospital, which has no grave markers.

At the time of Adam Mager's death, he was married to a Mexican woman named Mary. His widow sold all of Adam's property soon after his death *(Deed Bk. W, page 505-507*) and there is no record of where she went. By 1875 of the parcels of land that Adam Mager had owned were purchased by John Heinsdorff who used the stone building as a bakery *(Deed Bk X, page 333).* All of Block 11, Lot 5, with the stone building on the east portion and the west portion vacant, was sold to John L March in 1883 *(Deed Book 9, Page 409)* and John March opened a store in the stone building. March had owned a large ranch outside of Murphys but moved into town the year before he bought the bakery building. Somehow, Mrs Eliza Perry Hoyt obtained the stone building and she sold it to Horace Edson Thorpe in 1890 *(Deed Bk. 26, page 336)* .

Horace Edson Thorpe again turned the stone building back into a bakery and restaurant. In June of 1896 Thorpe's wife hung herself in the early morning hours in the basement of her home, which was a wood frame building located behind the stone bakery and restaurant. She was discovered by her husband who had been working in their restaurant on Main Street and who called their daughter Kate and her brother Frank to help cut their mother down. Mary Jennette Curtis Thorpe was only forty years old. She left two daughters and three sons.

(Calaveras Prospect 6/27/1896)

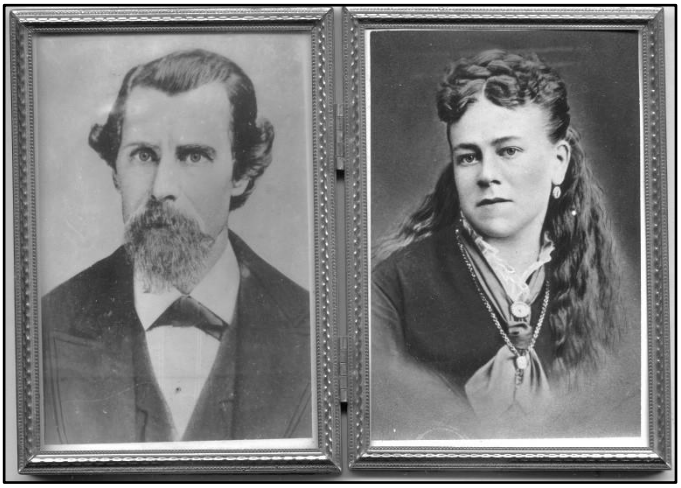
"*One of the most lamentable events that has ever occurred in this place shocked this whole neighborhood this morning. At an early hour this morning Mrs. Edson Thorpe while laboring under temporary insanity committed suicide by hanging herself in the basement of their dwelling. She was first discovered by her husband, who had gone from the restaurant to his house in the rear of the lot to call the children. He hastily summoned his daughter Kate, who was just rising, and together they gently cared for the dear one whose life had already fled.*

It was noticed by her most intimate friends that she was failing, for at times she would shed tears and seemed to be in fear that serious illness would overtake her. Yesterday she visited her mother and took her some ice cream and nothing out of the way was noticed by her parents. The deceased was the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Curtis and was aged 40 years."

Horace Edson Thorpe died in 1900 and his children inherited the property The stone building was owned by brothers Fred and Emile Schwoerer after 1909 *(Deed Book 55, Page 582)* who used the building for storage and it remained

empty for a time. Engineer Fred Fisk began preservation of the stone building, which included putting a big cable inside to hold the building together.

Isobelle Bishop Dibble visited the town in the 1950s and saw the old stone building, which was in poor condition. She purchased it and recovered the oven bricks that the previous owner had removed to make a patio at his home. The wood in the fireplace mantel came from the historic Manuel Mill at White Pines, and there are original handmade bricks in the front sidewalk.



Horace E. Thorpe and his wife Mary Jennette

Shortly after purchasing the bakery building, Mrs. Dibble also purchased the two story house that Thorpe had owned on the lot to the west of the stone building and restored both buildings. Thanks to her the stone building is still there today, one of the few original stone buildings left in Murphys. Unfortunately Horace Thorpe's two story Queen Anne style home burnt down and there is only a vacant lot there now.



The house that Horace Thorpe had built shortly before his death

