AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY

OF THE

NEW MELONES LAKE PROJECT

Compiled by

Dorothea J Theodoratus, Ph.D.

with

Clinton Blount
Ruth A. Gardner
Melville H. Hall
Connie S. Madsen
John H. Madsen
Kathleen McBride
Sydney A. Merkel
Thomas Nelson
Patricia J. Smith
Marie M. West

New Melones Ethnographic Research Project
Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties, California

Contract No. DACW05-76-0033 of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sacramento District
July 1976

Abstract

Purpose: To obtain data through extensive ethnographic research concerning the cultural history in and around the New Melones Project Area with a focus on ethnic groups and their utilization of the Project Area.

Contents: A descriptive overview of the Project Area is presented. Part I explores the various immigrant groups who have inhabited the area (American, European, Latin American, Asian) and their settlements, use of environmental resources, exploitation of mineral wealth, and agricultural pursuits. An in-depth examination of the town of Melones provides the town geography and history as well as data on ethnic relations, social stratification, social activities, family life and relationship to other communities. Work and social conditions in the Carson Hill Mines are surveyed.

Part II details the Native American Miwok habitation in the Project Area, the disruption and decimation of this population at the onset of contact, the modification of settlement as a result of contact, the utilization of natural resources, the social and political organization, spiritual life, and relations with other ethnic groups.

Findings: The ethnic groups present in the Project Area have had an important social and economic impact on the area. Place names and the development of mining techniques and agriculture can be attributed to some. Many chose to remain in the area and their descendants comprise much of the present population. Other groups are viewed as sojourners who saw the gold fields as a place to amass a fortune and then return to their home communities. The history of the Project Area is seen as the interplay of persons who were parts of these two patterns of migration. As corporate mining developed there was an increased dependence on immigrant labor and a succession of ethnic groups formed the population of Melones and was related to the hiring practices of the mining companies. The Miwok population has endured in the Project Area and continues to be a viable population although they have altered some aspects of their life-style as a result of their contact with non-Indians. Native American resources in the area are proved to be rich and varied and continue to be utilized by the Miwok.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following report would not have been possible without the extensive cooperation and assistance of numerous consultants--those listed in Appendix II and those who wished to remain anonymous. We especially acknowledge the cooperation and information provided by certain individuals. They are Milo Bird, Ted Bird and Howard Canevaro for their contributions concerning the social life and location of structures in the town of Melones; Guy Castle and Mark Hanna for mining information; Jim Williamson for homestead information; Inez Mathieson, Marie Potts, Jack Bailey,Sr., Brown Tadd, John Kelly and Ruren Domingo for specific data on Native Americans in the area; Wade Coffill for historic information on the Mormon Creek settlement; as well as Ray Dondero, Boscoe Jaich, Mrs. Donald Segerstrom and Ernest Raggio.

We would also like to acknowledge Patti J. Johnson and James Gibson of the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, for their assistance in the development and facilitation of this research.

Professors Richard Dyer and James Hastings, Columbia Junior College, must also be thanked for their assistance during the initial phases of research.

Other individuals who gave assistance during fieldwork were Professor Richard Coke Wood of the University of the Pacific and the Old Timers Museum in Murphys, California; George Poore of Calaveras County Museum, San Andreas, California; and Lyle Scott of Sonora, California, whose historical research and photographic archives were of great benefit.

We also wish to thank Frank L. Haggerty, Tribal Operations Officer of the Bureau of Indian Affairs for making records available from the BIA archives.

The time and efforts of members of the Tribal Council of the Tuolumne Rancheria are also appreciated.

A special appreciation is necessary for pilots, Kathy Bissell and Carol Kennedy of the Calavaero Flying Service.

Teresha Taylor who typed this manuscript deserves perhaps our highest praise for enduring numerous rough drafts and constant revision.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract		i
Acknowledgements		iii
Chapter		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	PART 1	
	THE GOLD RUSH AND AFTER: NON-NATIVE PEOPLES	
2	Immigrant Groups in and Around the Project Area (K. McBride, C. Madsen, P. Smith, D. Theodoratus)	7
	Blacks	7
	The French	13
	English and Cornish	19
	Irish	19
	Kanakas	19
	Italians	20
	Non-Indigenous Native Americans	21
	Other Ethnic Groups	22
3	From China to the Mother Lode (T. Nelson)	23
	Demography	37
	Inter-Ethnic Relations	39
	Mining Camps	49
	Chinatowns	53
	Non-Mining Trade and Labor	57
	The Chinese of Melones	59
	The Return to China	69
4	Spanish Speakers in and Around the Project Area (P. Smith, K. McBride, S. Merkel)	79
	Demography	79
	Life-Styles (1848-1860)	85
	Prejudice, Violence, and the Spanish-Speaking People	105
	The Foreign Miners' Tax	109
	Post Gold Rush Period (1860-Present)	113

Chapter | Page

5 Settlements in the Project Area (C. Madsen, M. Hall, P. Smith, D. Theodoratus) 121

Camp Nine 121
Rose Creek 125
Duck Bar 125
Pine Log 126
Columbia Marble Quarries 129
Columbia Powerhouse 130
Abbey's Ferry 130
Parrotts Ferry 131
Norwegian Gulch and Mine 131
Coyote Creek 132
Natural Bridges 133
Campo Seco 133
Jackass Gulch 134
Indian Gulch 134
Soldier Gulch 135
Carson Creek 136
Bostwick Bar 137
Reynolds Ferry 139
Mormon Camp 139
Bear Creek 142

6 Melones (C. Blount) 161

Historical Background 161
Ethnicity in Melones 172
Italian 174
Slavic Peoples 178
Mexicans 182
English (including Cornish) 183
Irish 184
Germans and French 185
Norwegians 185
Chinese 185
Native Americans 186
Gypsies 187
Relations between Ethnic Groups 188
Basic Town Layout 190
Social Stratification 191
Relationship to other Communities 193
Environmental Conditions and Hazards 194
Housing 196
Family Life 197
Social Activities 203
Suggestions 216
Melones Town Survey 217

Chapter Page

7 Work and Social Conditions in the Carson Hill Mines (M. Hall, S. Merkel) 265

Hiring Practices 268
Physical Conditions 273
Shifts 277
Mine Safety 279
Baseball 285
Highgrading 287
Wages 290
The Occupational Hierarchy 291
Leisure Time 293

8 Agriculture (C. Madsen, M. West, D. Theodoratus) 303

Land Acquisition 309
Cattle Ranching 311
Mixed Agriculture and Marketing 317
The Williamson Ranch 321
Employment 326
Social Life 327
The Depression Period 328

PART II

NATIVE AMERICANS IN AND AROUND THE PROJECT AREA

9 Introduction to the Native Americans in and surrounding the Project Area (R. Gardner) 341

10 Miwok Settlements (R. Gardner) 347

11 The Miwok and Their Neighbors (R. Gardner) 375

12 Miwok Material Culture (C. Madsen, J. Madsen) 393

13 Social and Political Structure (R. Gardner) 427

14 Spiritual Life, Illness and Life Cycle (C. Madsen) 443

Ceremony 443
Big Times 453
Death 458
Puberty 465
Marriage and Sex 466
Birth 468
Naming 468
Shaman 469
Illness, Spirits and Death Warnings 475
Creation 476
Miwok Creation Myth 477

Chapter

		Page
15	Miwok Use of the Stanislaus River (R. Gardner, C. Madsen)	485
16	Relations Between the Miwok and Other Ethnic Groups (R. Gardner)	501

PART III

17	Contractor's Suggestions	515
Bibliography		517

Maps

1	Melones Town Survey Map	219
2	Native American Occupation	363
3	Native American Occupation	365
4	Native American Occupation	367
5	Native American Occupation	369

Figures

1	Fish Trap	399

Tables

1	Number of Chinese Arrivals at San Francisco 1820-1852	37
2	Chinese in Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties 1860-1900	38
3	Time Chart of Construction at Camp Nine	122
4	Melones Town Survey Sites	221
5	Central Sierra Miwok Settlements	359
6	Plants Used for Medicinal Purposes	401
7	Vegetal Plant Usage: Food	406
8	Miwok Use of Fungi	409
9	Miwok Use of Mammals	410
10	Miwok Use of Fish	411
11	Miwok Use of Birds	412
12	Miwok Use of Insects	413
13	Miwok Industry	414
14	Miwok Clothing	419
15	Miwok Basketry	420
16	Miwok Shelter	422
17	Miwok Entertainment	424

Plates

		Page
1	Possible "Wing Dam" on Angels Creek	75
2	Ah Yet in Melones	77
3	The One Hundred Slavonians	147
4	Aerial View of Coyote Creek	149
5	Bostwick Bar - Aerial View	151
6	Bostwick Bar - Aerial View	153
7	Bostwick Bar - Stone Remains	155
8	Bostwick Bar - Stone Remains	157
9	Bostwick Bar - Stone Remains	159
10	Adobe at Melones	243
11	Robinsons Ferry	245
12	Robinsons Ferry	247
13	The "Old" Melones Bridge	249
14	Aerial View of Melones	251
15	Aerial View of Melones	253
16	Aerial View of Melones	255
17	Peirano Home, Melones	257
18	Rock Retaining Walls, Melones	259
19	Remains of Cecconello's Storeroom	261
20	Melones Movie Set	263
21	Carson Hill Mining Area	301
22	The Douglas Homestead	333
23	The Williamson Family Haying	335
24	The Williamson Family Haying Crew	337
25	Walker and Mary Gatekas	373
26	The Miwok Settlement at Murphys	389
27	Pinky From Sheep Ranch	391
28	Old Yellow Jacket From Murphys	439
29	Old Walker From Murphys	441
30	Indian Dance, Murphys	481
31	Miwok in Ceremonial Dress	483
32	Old Casoose From Murphys	499
33	Captain Jim From Vallecito	509
34	Old Yellow Jacket From Murphys	511

Appendices

1	Research Design	531
2	List of Consultants	539

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research has been conducted for the Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District, in connection with the New Melones Lake Project in the Stanislaus River basin, Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties. The study was accomplished under the Department of the Army Corps of Engineers contract number DACWO5-76-0033.

The purpose has been to obtain information about the cultural history of the Project Area. As stated:

> Emphasis will be on 1) the Miwok Indians covering a period from earliest documentation through their contemporary situation, and 2) on the local recollections of early non-Indian mining and settlement activities. These primary emphases will be pursued in the context of information about adjacent areas that are ethnographically and historically directly associated with this area. The study then, will also include research into the oral history of the inhabitation of the area by non-Indian population. The data will also be examined to determine the effect of this non-Indian population on the Miwok inhabitation of the area (e.g., mining, ranching).
>
> (Appendix I)

Field and library research was begun on October 6, 1975 and continued until December 24, 1975. On December 26, 1975 the compilation of data was begun. The Project's Principle Investigator, Dorothea Theodoratus, directed and participated in all aspects of the research. The library research was conducted by Connie Madsen, Kathleen McBride and Eleanor Derr. The field crew under the direction of Clinton Blount consisted of Pat Brady, Ruth Gardner, Melville Hall, Doris Johannes, Tom Nelson, Patricia Smith and Marie West. Clinton Blount took the photographs. The plates were prepared by Genevieve Jewell. John Madsen and Ruth Gardner participated in map research. Melville Hall prepared the maps. Virgil Woodworth handled financial aspects under the direction of the W. E. Himmelmann Company. Dorothea Theodoratus compiled and edited the report. Technical aspects of editing were accomplished by Sydney Merkel and Terry Ann Taylor with Dorothea Theodoratus, Connie Madsen and Kathleen McBride. Teresha Legatos Taylor typed the manuscript with the assistance of Martha Bocik.

The primary technique used to obtain the culture-history presented in this report has been through interview of present and former inhabitants of the area and their descendants. In the course of the fieldwork, consultants were contacted not only in towns within Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties but also in places such as Stockton, San Jose, Sacramento, San Rafael, Jackson and San Francisco.

Consultation included formal interviews with 144 individuals (see Appendix 2). In addition, numerous contacts were made which did not result in formal interviews.

Certain local historical sources were also consulted. These include: Murphys Old Timers Museum, Tuolumne County Historical Society, Calaveras County Historical Society, Columbia Junior College, Tuolumne County Recorder's Office. Further resources were examined at Bancroft Library, California State Library, Marysville-Yuba County Library, California State University, Sacramento Library, El Dorado County, Placerville Library, Lowie Museum, Berkeley, Archaeological Research Facility, University of California, Berkeley.

Formal and informal interviews were the primary techniques used in the field. The information obtained was recorded in notebooks with the consultant's permission during the interview. Some consultants preferred to have their interviews taped. At times (planned and unplanned), more than one consultant was interviewed at one time.

Four Native American consultants accompanied researchers into the Project Area at various times to record and explain Miwok usage of the area. Four non-Indian consultants directed researchers in mapping and explaining the area of the town of Melones.

Taking consultants to the Project Area itself helped to enhance consultants' recall and contributed to their ability to elaborate on general data. For example, when consultants were brought to the town of Melones, the result was a detailed town survey (Chapter 6). This probably would not have been possible had it been attempted away from the site. While non-Indian consultants entered the Project Area without hesitation, Native Americans were reluctant to enter certain areas which they felt had been out of bounds to them in the past. However, significant data was obtained despite these drawbacks.

The fact that this is an historically oriented area, and that both counties have active historical societies, would seem to facilitate the collection of historical data. However, this was not often the case. First, because of the controversial nature of the political issue involving

the New Melones Dam, many consultants did not wish to become involved in any historical survey for fear of offering support to one side of the issue. Second, because Columbia Junior College students are actively engaged in historical research throughout the community, many consultants felt "over-interviewed" on certain topics. Third, some consultants had built up patterned responses to standard interview questions. They appeared more comfortable discussing major events in the area--the demise of the bandit Joaquin Murietta or the opening and closing of the Melones Mine. They seemed to be disconcerted by questions which stressed routine events--the relationship between Slavic and Mexican miners or the price of a meal ticket in a Melones boardinghouse. Because of some consultants' previous interview experience, they were not prepared for our emphasis on the composition and interrelations of the ethnic groups in the Project Area. But, once the ethnic and social orientation of the study was made clear, consultants were able to provide information of unique value.

Prior to ethnographic research, the Corps had purchased or designated for purchase extensive land holdings of some consultants', and these consultants (who felt they had been treated unfairly) refused to be interviewed. Unfortunately, these persons are extremely knowledgeable about areas important to the study, especially agriculture. Such situations could be avoided if research had been conducted prior to Corps land purchase.

The researchers adopted a position of non-advocacy regarding the New Melones controversy. Therefore, researchers attempted to maintain objectivity and convey when necessary that the data was not being collected in order to support, discredit or influence the position of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the positions of any other individuals or organizations. The researchers attempted to convey a neutral position by disassociating themselves from issues and by explaining that the research was undertaken only in order to advance the knowledge and understanding of the area's ethnology.

The field interviews have demonstrated that there is extensive data available from consultants in the Project Area. The average consultant is of retirement age or older, and the immediate undertaking of further research is crucial. Each year we are losing the living memory of these consultants.

More extensive data could have been obtained during this project given a longer period for fieldwork. The time of year the fieldwork was undertaken hampered research in that it spanned a busy period--the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. In addition, some important consultants chose to spend the winter months in other climates.

Although there was a time and seasonal limitation, significant data were compiled on certain subjects. Yet, much more extensive information could be achieved given additional time.

The report is presented in two parts which reflect the concerns of the study. Part I focuses on non-Native American peoples in the Gold Rush and after (1848- on). The chapters include: Ethnic Groups (2,3,4), and Settlements (5,6) with particular emphasis on the town of Melones. Work and Social Conditions in the Project Area (Chapter 7) are portrayed as is the role of Agriculture (Chapter 8). Part II is concerned with the Native American Miwok population (Chapters 9 through 16). An attempt has been made to relate field data to the published literature as well as to refer the reader to additional published materials on the Miwok. Particularly appropriate for the purpose of this report is Chapter 15 on Miwok Use of the Stanislaus River area. Chapter 16, Relations with Other Ethnic Groups, discusses these historical relationships. This is an important aspect of Native American culture which places them in perspective with other ethnic groups.

What follows is an Ethno-historical study of the New Melones Project Area accomplished in a 'brief' three months. It is anticipated that this report will add valuable ethnographic and historic data on the Project Area.

PART I

THE GOLD RUSH AND AFTER:

NON-NATIVE PEOPLES

CHAPTER 2

IMMIGRANT GROUPS IN AND AROUND THE PROJECT AREA

Persons from various ethnic groups contributed to the history of the New Melones Project Area. This chapter deals only with those groups (except Chinese and Spanish speakers) mentioned by consultants and referred to in the published literature examined by researchers. The data represent what was learned and is not indicative of numbers of immigrants at any particular period. For example, more information was available on Spanish speakers (Chapter 3), Chinese (Chapter 4), French and Negroes than on other groups. The 1850 census lists immigrants from other areas, particularly Europe, as well as those discussed here (U.S. Bureau of Census 1852). More intensive study would reveal a more complete representation of the ethnic groups, their numbers and their contributions.

Blacks

Negroes (the term used by consultants) began arriving in the Southern mines within a mile of the Project Area as early as 1849 (Gunn 1928:73; Tinkham 1915:135). Many arrived as slaves brought by Southerners who intended "to work them in the mines or lease them for labor" (Tinkham 1915:134). According to Lapp, both slaves and free Negroes came. Although most were destined for employment in the mines, they also worked as servants for their masters enroute and after their arrival (Lapp 1964:81-82). Jenkins asserts that most Black immigrants to California before 1860 "were free men who had come West to make fortunes in business and mining, but some were slaves brought by Southern panhandlers to work the mines, and others were fugitive slaves" (Jenkins 1970:124).

The first state constitution provided that foreigners would enjoy the same rights of property as native-born citizens (Minke 1960:31). Although the state constitution did prohibit Negroes from voting, it did not prohibit voting by "mixed bloods"; and, in fact, a man of one-eighth Negro blood was a delegate to the convention (Jenkins 1970:124). Prior to statehood, Spanish-speaking Negroes and mulattos had been able to hold office; this equalitarian stance was soon abandoned (Jenkins 1970:124). By 1849 a statute provided that "no black or mulatto person or Indian shall be permitted to give evidence in favor of or against any white person" (Minke 1960:31).

The constitution declared that California was against slavery and involuntary servitude, except as punishment for a crime, or later as applied to Indians. However, when by 1852 there were growing numbers of runaways, the legislature passed a fugitive slave law which authorized slave owners claiming runaways to procure a warrant. It was then compulsory upon civil officers to serve the warrant and arrest the suspected slave. If the owner proved in court that the Negro was his property, he could compel that person, by force if necessary, to accompany him from the state. Abolitionists who assisted slaves in escaping were by the same law made liable to a fine, imprisonment or civil damages by the owner. Fugitive Negro slaves remained subject to this law until April 15, 1855, when it was declared null and void (Tinkham 1915:134).

Achievement of freedom (by running away or by manumission) was a problem for Negroes in the Project Area as well as throughout California. One consultant who grew up in nearby Sonora is the maternal grandson of two slaves brought to California during the Rush from Louisiana and North Carolina. Both grandparents were manumitted. Their records along with those of seventeen other Negroes freed in this way are on file at the Tuolumne County Court House. One of these was Tom Gilman, a resident of Shaw's Flat just east of the Stanislaus River. Two consultants gave similar reports of how Tom Gilman bought his freedom in 1853 for $1,000 in gold dust but was later captured as a runaway. He escaped or paid for his freedom a second time and returned to Shaw's Flat where he lived out his life as a placer miner.

As for runaways, the San Joaquin Republican reported on September 12, 1852, the "Escape of a fugitive slave whose owner was returning him to Alabama" after mining around Sonora. It is not known whether he was captured (Tinkham 1915:135). On at least two occasions, slaves were auctioned when their owners did not want to take them back to the South or had left the state earlier and in debt (Tinkham 1915:135). On both of these recorded occasions, the slaves were purchased by abolitionists and subsequently freed (Tinkham 1915:135).

By 1850 there were nearly 1,000 Negroes in the state, and this number doubled in the following two years. By 1860, when the number had risen to 4,000, Negroes comprised one percent of the population (Lapp 1964:81-82). One consultant stated that in 1860 there were 500 Negro families in Sonora--a number that declined thereafter.

In 1850, 52 of the 62 Negroes counted in the census of Tuolumne County were miners (Lapp 1964:85). Among those in and near the

Project Area during the Rush was a John Peters, reported to have received medical treatment from Dr. Gunn in the area between Jamestown and the Stanislaus (Gunn 1928:73). Daniel Woods mentions a Negro man in the same area in 1850 who assisted him in the burial of a friend (Woods 1857:95-96).

Lapp reports that in 1850 those Negroes not involved in mining were listed in service occupations: laborers or cooks, food dispensers in restaurants of the area, barbers and servants (Lapp 1964:81-82,85). A Negro living near Murphys' (northwest of the Project Area) in 1854 ran a laundry, charging 25¢ apiece for unironed shirts (Gerstaecker 1946:89). Sonora saloons employed "Ethiopian" serenaders (Marryat 1855:235) and clerks.

> In one of the saloons, a very interesting and well-looking young girl was attending at a part of the bar where confectionery was sold. I should not have supposed her to have had black blood in her veins; but J.B. assured me that she had been a slave, and had once been sold at New Orleans at a very high price, which he mentioned, and I ascertained this to be true; she was free now, but freedom had come too late, I suspect, to bring much value with it to her. (Marryat 1855:238)

John Kelly, a consultant, related that during the same period of time a Black rancher and gardener in the area was killed in Chinese Camp after committing several murders.

Because a Negro could not testify against a white man in court, he sometimes had difficulty protecting his claim. Stellman illustrates as follows:

> Nigger Hill /North of Columbia and several miles from the Project Area/ is the monument to one Ethiopian's invincible fortune. He was an ex-slave and knew nothing of mining, so the legend runs. But he was lucky. He found prospect after prospect, and as fast as he did a white man, who had probably been watching him, appeared and threatened him with a revolver. "What do you mean by digging on my claim, you black scoundrel?" the white man would say, and Nigger Joe, with the most abject apologies for his unintentional trespass, would give over. It got to be a joke around the camps and the darky a bit of a pest, as one whom we have wronged may become. So they decided to get rid of him. They pointed out a bald knob some distance away. It was considered absolutely destitute of gold. "Go and dig up there," they told him.

> He thanked them. "Is you sho' none ob you genlemens got a claim up dah?" he asked. They assured him laughingly that no one had. "Den--what I finds am mine, sho 'nuf?" he questioned. "Every ounce of it. We'll swar to that," they told him. (Stellman 1934:71-72)

There was gold, and he got rich; then he left the area.

A Negro miner near Tuttletown accumulated several thousand dollars' worth of gold and went to Stockton. He was treated as an important person in all the saloons and spent his fortune in three days treating his 'friends'. When his money gave out, so did their friendship. Quickly reduced in their eyes to "nigger," he was so distraught that he committed suicide by cutting his throat (Stellman 1934:72).

Another Negro miner, Moses Dinks, who lived near Jackass Hill (a mile east of the Project Area) found a 35-pound nugget in 1852. Not wishing to take it with him on a prospecting trip, he buried it near Shaws' Flat. When he returned three weeks later, he found Italian miners digging within two feet of the nugget. He told them his gold was there, and they let him recover it (Buckbee 1935:329). One consultant related that a Negro miner near Columbia (four miles from the Project Area) was run off his claim by White miners after he struck a $60,000 pocket. This claim later became Shanghai Mine.

In 1858 there was an unsuccessful attempt to repeal the Negro evidence law. Editorial opinion advanced the view that repeal of this law would result in "no man's life or property" being safe (Tinkham 1915:136). At the same time, a bill was passed by the California legislature prohibiting "free Negroes and other obnoxious persons from immigrating" to California and providing that fugitive slaves who came could be reclaimed by their "Masters" (Tinkham 1915:136).

> California's Homestead Laws offered no benefits or enticements for the masses of blacks to move to California, for under the laws of the new state black people were not given homestead rights. State Homestead Laws were passed in 1851 and again in 1860. Section two of the 1851 law read: 'Whenever any white man or female resident of this State shall desire to avail himself or herself of the benefits of this act, such person shall make a written application to the county . . . in which the land is situated.' (Jenkins 1970:125)

The Homestead law of 1860 preserved the stipulation that the claimant must be White. It added that he be free, a citizen and over twenty-one years of age (Jenkins 1970:125).

By 1860 placer claims were running out. Economic opportunities were becoming scarce, and for Black settlers the political atmosphere was equally inhospitable. According to a Negro consultant, the 500 Black families in Sonora in the 1860's declined thereafter until in 1920 only his family was left. According to this consultant, Negroes were not allowed to attend White schools and had none of their own until late in the 1800's. John Kelly, a Miwok consultant, confirmed this statement saying that in 1920 there were no Negroes in the area. Except for the oldest consultants, there is no living memory of Black people in the Project Area or surrounding areas. The only Negro consultant stated that many left in the 1890's, and some went to Canada (possibly to the Alaska goldfields). A contributing factor to their population decline may have been the introduction into Tuolumne County of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK).

The experience of a group of Blacks living in Standard (ten miles from the Project Area) demonstrates local area animosity toward Blacks around 1920. Their area of town was called "Coontown" by local Whites. The Black men all worked for one of two competing lumber camps in the town at lower wages than the Whites working for the other mill. About 1920 White workers, fearing that the Blacks' lower salaries would adversely affect their company and consequently their jobs, formed a KKK group with the purpose of scaring the Blacks out of the area. They burned crosses on several occasions in "Coontown," and, while no known physical violence occurred, the Black community felt so threatened that they moved from the area (Black 1973). The company which had employed them went bankrupt shortly after, leaving the other company without competition to this date.

According to John Kelly, there were Black miners in the Chicken Ranch area. They did not get along with the Chinese, and around 1885 the two groups made "war." One man from each side was wounded, and this ended the confrontation. A Negro consultant reported that as a child he was warned by his family and other Negroes about the Chinese and was frightened of them. Whether this was an outgrowth of the "war" is not known, but it does offer additional evidence of negative stereotyping of Chinese by Blacks near the Project Area.

Prior to 1900 a group of Black miners working near Jamestown (three miles from the Project Area) were in the employ of an older Black man. They lived in an area near their "mine" and near the Chicken Ranch Rancheria. John Kelly, as a child and resident of the Rancheria, sometimes walked to their camp with a Black woman who served as their prostitute. She lived at the Rancheria and walked to the camp several times a week working out of their cabins. The consultant did not know what had become of the miners, their employer, of the Black woman.

In the 1920's and/or 1930's, a Black man, "Nigger Bob," lived near the Project Area (a mile southwest of Camp Nine in Calaveras County). He lived with a Miwok woman and, according to a consultant, had a son, recently deceased.

From about 1900 to 1906 there was one Negro, Andy Green, in the vicinity of Melones. Living alone in a cabin about one mile down the Stanislaus River from the old ferry house (Robinson's), he worked in the mill for the New Melones Mining Company. He was a large, strong man, and two consultants remember him for this. A story by one of them, Milo Bird, relates,

> From his seat beneath that old pine, the boy once looked into town and saw Andy Green, a powerfully built black man, with a bucket of swill from the restaurant on his head and one in either hand walking toward his home where two grunting pigs waited for their evening meal. On another day as he watched he saw Andy behind the restaurant standing perfectly erect with a bale of hay on his head. The Chinese cook came out of the restaurant and put a bucket of swill upon the bale and then went back for the two other buckets which he handed to Andy. In that way, he took home a bale of hay for his cow and three buckets of swill for the pigs in a single trip. The boy was sure then that his dad was right when he said that Andy was the strongest man in the world. (Bird n.d.:241)

Another consultant remembers that Andy Green, who was most often referred to as "Nigger" Green, always stopped to speak to him if he was in the front yard playing. Green always wanted to shake hands and scaring the consultant, who was about three years old. Green told the child's father the boy was afraid the black would come off on his hands. This consultant said Andy raised chickens under his house and had a cow for milk as well. One consultant remembers that Andy occasionally rode a horse. He was gone from the area prior to 1915, but consultants did not know where or why he had gone.

According to another consultant, the Devereaux family, mine owners in Melones, employed a Black chauffeur prior to 1920. He also served as personal servant for the elder Mr. Devereaux, who had been partially incapacitated by paralysis. The same consultant thought they may also have employed a female Black servant in some capacity. The only other Negroes at Melones were a group of traveling minstrels described by Milo Bird (Bird n.d.:178).

The Negro immigrants and settlers who came to California and the Project Area were the only ethnic group whose members arrived as

slaves. After their arrival, their absorption into the dominant culture and economic mainstream was, if not completely halted, severely hindered and limited by legislation. They were often socially isolated by the attitude of other groups. Finally, they were the only ethnic group whose presence precipitated the formation of a countergroup in the dominant White culture to drive them "out" (the KKK). When these factors are added to the economic conditions affecting all ethnic groups in the area, it is not surprising that their numbers declined.

The French

In January of 1848, coincidental to the time when James Marshall was announcing his discovery of gold in Coloma, California, France was undergoing one of the worst economic setbacks in her history. The French were thrown into unemployment; impoverished conditions and discontentment with their native land prevailed. As news of Marshall's gold discovery spread into Europe, all of France listened to these reports with intense interest and undisguised excitement. Many boarded ships and set sail for the 'New Eldorado.' Some came out of curiosity, driven by reports that "all one has to do, so to speak, is to stoop and pick up gold" (Chinard 1944:42). Others arrived in hopes of escaping their impoverished situation or of finding "a good market for French merchandise and thus ease the economic depression at home" (Nasatir 1934:4). Regardless of their reasons, "the veritable French exodus to California poured thousands through the Golden Gate, and swelled the population of the paradise of the Pacific" (Nasatir 1934:3).

Several authors note that Stockton was the gateway to the Southern Mines; and while many French immediately procured means of transportation to this area, others, caught up in the excitement of their arrival and the wonder of San Francisco, chose to remain there to try their luck at a new city life. Those who went on soon poured into the southern mining districts by the hundreds, each in search of his or her individual dream of wealth and adventure.

Once in the Southern mines, the French chose to congregate in large communities, preferring to keep company with their fellow countrymen and with the "Spanish-American society" (Nasatir 1934:10). The two groups inhabited mining towns and camps known as French Camp, Sonora, Shaws Diggings (Shaws Flat) and others located along the Stanislaus and its tributaries. The miners nicknamed them the "Keskydees" as a result of "their oft-repeated question, 'Qu'est que se dit?' (Caughey 1948:194).

Foreign miners were generally ill-treated, primarily because the Americans believed that the "foreigners rarely spent their gold in this country" (Holmes 1930:13). Feeling against these foreigners was very strong in the early mining days (1849 and 1850). In speaking of this, Holmes states,

> The French were among the first to experience the outrages and unjust treatment accorded foreigners by some of the miners. In one instance, an attack was led against the French throughout this region /Southern mines/, and they were forcibly driven from their claims. These attacks, better termed -- raids, were generally led by the lower element but the better class of miners, strange to say did not seem to feel that they were called upon to protect the foreigners against the ruffians who wished their property. (Holmes 1930:13)

Borthwick has stated that "As miners, the French were far excelled by the Americans and the English" (Borthwick 1929:344). According to Caughey, it was commonly believed that the clannish Frenchmen were a "bit impractical and therefore not ideally suited for mining life" (Caughey 1948:194). One possible reason for this inadequacy as miners may be that they preferred to travel in parties of half a dozen in search of rich diggings; yet, once having found a prospective mining site, they were unable to work together without arguments, and therefore made little progress. "In the mines the Frenchmen were often in trouble. They could not work in companies and were often found isolated in groups of four and six; they were scattered everywhere" (Nasatir 1934:10). Borthwick states that few Frenchmen were willing to travel more than a day or two from the nearest French community (Borthwick 1929:347).

> . . .--if all the productive resources of the country had been in their hands--it would have yet been many years before they would have raised California to the rank and position of wealth and importance which she now holds. (Borthwick 1929:346)

The French miner's concern for himself can also be seen in other aspects of his life in the diggings. While other miners of this time complained of weather conditions, food, loneliness or other ailments plaguing the average miner, the French had a unique ability to make themselves as comfortable as possible:

> . . . the French, as a nation, were excelled by no other in practice of the art of making themselves personally comfortable. . . . /They/ always appeared to be jolly, and enjoying themselves. They worked hard enough while they were at it, but in their intervals of leisure they gave themselves up to what seemed

> at least to be a more unqualified enjoyment of the pleasures of the moment than any other miners, who never entirely laid aside the earnest and careworn look of the restless gold-hunter. (Borthwick 1929:344)

Speaking of the French along Coyote Creek, Borthwick notes,

> But of all the men of different nations in the mines, the French were most decidedly those who, judging from their domestic life, appeared to be the most at home. Not that they were a bit better than others able to stand the hard work and exposure and privations, but about all their huts and cabins, however roughly constructed they might be, there was something in the minor details which bespoke more permanency than was suggested by the generality of the rude abodes of the miners. It is very certain, that without really expending more time or labor, or even taking more trouble than other men about their domestic arrangements, they did 'fix things up' with such a degree of taste and with so much method about everything, as to give the idea that their life of toil was mitigated by more than a usual share of ease and comfort. (Borthwick 1929:342-343)

According to Marryat, the French would work steadily unless an unusual disturbance occurred such as the arrival of a strange Frenchman. On such occasions they would stop work and devote the day to discussion of their native country (Marryat 1952:295).

Of the miners around Sonora (1849-1852) ". . . the French are the most musical" (Perkins 1964:285). They always sing when they are together, particularly patriotic songs, ". . . almost every Frenchman can sing his national song with taste and feeling" (Perkins 1964:285). This extreme love of music was noted by one early traveller upon finding a Frenchman serenading a cow tied to a tree by playing a French song on the trumpet (Gerstaecker 1946:66).

French women also found their way into the gold fields and towns and became a well-established part of California life. Perkins, in his journal (1849-1852) states,

> They are to be met with everywhere, and everywhere they are the same, money making, unscrupulous, and outwardly well-behaved for rarely in any situation does a French woman forget that grace and an affectation at least of dignity, are all-important attractions in her sex. (Perkins 1964:303)

Perkins goes on to note that "thousands have immigrated to this country as adventuresses. Some few are married and have come out with their husbands, but these generally have few personal attractions" (Perkins 1964:303). The remaining French women who occupied California were to be found throughout the area entertaining miners. For example, Perkins mentions the arrival of a "beautiful" Parisienne woman in nearby Sonora, who, in marrying a well-established London man, separated him from his family. While Perkins did not believe they were actually married, he saw no reason to "despise" her ". . . as she dances perfectly and is very correct in everything that meets the public eye" (Perkins 1964:268). Certainly, as many miners have noted, they were a "handsome," "well dressed," "welcome sight" to the many mining towns.

Those French men and women who did not pursue the miner's life could be found ministering to other needs by "the keeping of resturantes, estaminets, cafes chantants, and billiard rooms" (Borthwick 1929:345). Although Borthwick thought the French more interested in pleasures than necessities, the 1850 census for Calaveras County showed French in various occupations: merchant, physician, builder, carpenter, mason, butcher, baker, miner (U.S. Bureau of Census 1852). There was also a French store in nearby Columbia (Wells and Peterson 1949:110-111) and a hotel in Sonora (Quaife 1949:249).

Through 1850, gold was extracted from both the northern and southern mining districts in increasing amounts. During this time, foreign immigration increased considerably. Concomitantly, the Americans' antagonism and hatred for these "outsiders" grew, for they felt the foreigners "would dig all of the gold and return to their native land" (Tinkham 1915:127). As 1850 wore on, tension worsened and ". . . /In/ the mines /they/ were often the butt of anti-foreign agitation and several fights occurred" (Nasatir 1934:10). On June 1, 1850, this hostility took tangible form as the foreigners, including the French, became subject to a legislative act taxing all foreign miners $20.00 per month for mining privileges in California. Few miners could afford this tax since many extracted no more than a few ounces per month. The French were one of the groups to "become excited" over the license tax. In May, 1850 at Shaw's Flat, they, with Chilenos and Mexicans, tore down the American flag and raised national flags in protest and to avenge the insult of the tax. The American intent was to support the law. As reported by the Stockton Times of May 25,

> Today the collector and sheriff will first proceed to Shaw's Diggings /Flat/ and compel the foreigners to comply with the law; thence to the new digging, etc. It is estimated that probably at least 1,000 armed Americans will rendezvous at Sonora before noon this day. I apprehend bloodshed.
>
> (Perkins 1964:39)

The foreigners had no previous warning of this tax. Frightened by the thought of forced payment or eviction, many French miners fled to Stockton, while those remaining behind, armed and excited, joined forces with Mexican and Chilean miners to demonstrate through the larger towns of Sonora, Murphys, Columbia and Tuttletown. Here they held "meetings and consulting on means to evade the payment of the imposition of $20.00 per month" (Perkins 1964:397). After several conferences, the foreigners declared they were willing to pay a lesser fee of $4.00 or $5.00 dollars per month; this request was denied.

Many miners continued working their claims, completely disregarding this discriminatory tax (Perkins 1964:155) which was to begin June 1, 1850. "From all indications and reports, trouble was expected in making the collections" (Tinkham 1915:128). The Collector of License decided to "Summon a posse of American citizens to prevent them, forcibly if necessary, from continuing mining operations" (Perkins 1964:38). Fearing for their lives and disillusioned with California, many foreign miners (including the French) decamped, leaving ghost towns behind them.

> Some were discontented because of the injustices of the Anglo-Americans. But on the other hand, few Frenchmen who arrived in California were skilled workers, and their ignorance of common trades and their determined clannishness resulted in a refusal to learn the English language. This proved to be a great handicap to them, making it still more difficult for them to earn their livelihood. (Nasatir 1934:11)

Many returned to France. Others, having developed a taste for the pleasures gold could buy, headed for the mines of Mexico and, later, Australia. "Those who remained in California, adapted themselves to the environment and many were soon able to earn a livelihood and became prosperous, law-abiding American citizens" (Nasatir 1934:12).

Others who shared the frustrations of this tax were merchants, both American and foreign, who would face bankruptcy should the foreign miners leave the area. In Tuolumne County alone "our foreign working population in this county is estimated at ten thousand, and the estimate is, I assure you, . . . not exaggerated" (Perkins 1964:400). Merchants in Stockton, Sacramento, Sonora and other thriving towns were dependent upon the business of the foreigners for their livelihood. As a result of the exodus, towns were left deserted: Sonora lost a third of her population; Columbia had only ten persons left. "Real estate fell fifty per cent; the mountain merchants saw bankruptcy staring them in the face, and a general stagnation of business took place" (Tinkham 1915:129). The merchants of Sonora appealed to the Supreme Court to repeal the foreign

miners' tax. The 1851 California legislature repealed the tax, and many miners returned to their claims; but others, remembering the abuse they had experienced, left the country altogether.

The French as a national or ethnic group are not as explicitly remembered by consultants as other groups in the Project Area although there are two places named for them--French Flat and French Gulch. According to one consultant the French were at one time "very active in mining along the river," but they were absorbed into the community, i.e., no longer thought of as French but as community members. If this did happen, some of the negative attitudes toward them must have changed.

One consultant said there were many French in the area of Melones, while another could remember only one Frenchman, Henri Boscas, who worked in the town (1903-1916) but had no family. The first settler of Melones was a Frenchman by the name of Gabriel K. Stevenot, the grandfather of Archie Stevenot, for whom the new bridge across the canyon is named.

Another consultant knew of french settling near Melones at French Gulch and mining along Coyote Creek, although neither the time of their residence nor departure is known. The consultant believed that these French were getting the gold washed out of the sluices of Italians mining upstream because the Italians put too much dirt in the sluice. These Italians, who soon gave up mining for farming, felt they "regained" some of their "lost wealth" by selling the Frenchmen wine. The French came each Saturday with bottles slung from poles over their shoulders to buy their week's supply of wine. This occurred after 1855, the date of the Italians' arrival in the area.

Consultants knew of three French homesteads (Chapter 8). One Frenchman (name, date unknown) had a ranch at French Gulch. Another, Jules Girard, homesteaded in the area of Bear Creek in 1882 where he raised a garden and fruit trees (this homestead was sold to a neighbor). Louis F. Chantereau, an "old prospector from France," homesteaded a half mile west of Girard in 1885. A neighbor purchased this land soon after the property was filed.

The French came in large numbers to the Project Area, but their clannishness and their unbusinesslike, almost nonchalant, attitude toward the pursuit of wealth irritated the practical Americans. Stereotyped attitudes toward the French were prevalent and continued for many years.

The French were suspected of spiriting their gold out of the country. Their value to California business (of all foreign groups)

was completely unrecognized even by businessmen until the enactment of the Foreign Miners' Tax. A general exodus of foreigners took place, and the drastic effect on business was instrumental in the tax's prompt repeal. The French as a group are not well remembered by area residents indicating that those who remained integrated into the community.

English and Cornish

The English, like the Americans, had a reputation for prejudice toward anyone different (Marryat 1952:267). One Englishman in the area particularly hated Indians. Having bought a portion of land above Parrotts Ferry and below Camp Nine, he would perch on the bluff high above the river and shoot Indians catching salmon. He was a very unpopular figure, and when he disappeared no one inquired as to his welfare or whereabouts.

The Cornish were famous as hard rock miners. A large group of them settled near Soulsbyville, where their influence can be seen today. The Cornish, referred to as "Cousin Jacks," were known for their weekend pastie feeds. Cornish miners were reported by consultants to be pre-eminent high-graders. They called anything that showed gold "Family Rock."

Irish

Consultants report many Irish miners in the area, but exact numbers are lacking. Perkins twice mentions the Irish in his journal of Life in Sonora (1964). An Irishman named Jemmy Fagan was chased by a grizzly bear and narrowly escaped being mauled (Perkins 1964:181). The journal also contains a lengthy description of an Irish wake followed, much to Perkins' chagrin, by the wedding of the widow. The newly-married couple was given a "charivari" [sic] by the celebrants (Perkins 1964:164, 165).

Billy Mulligan was a notorious Irish badman of Calaveras County. He was well-known in San Francisco as a hoodlum and had come to the Southern Mines in hopes of quick money, not from mining, but from swindling others.

Kanakas

South Sea Islanders were among the immigrants to the Mother Lode. Perkins' opinion of the Hawaiians was very unfavorable:

> And here was a Kanacker [sic], or Sandwich Islander - small eyes, coarse face, and an immense shock of hair. A bright colored calico shirt is bound about the waist with a gaudy silk sash. He wears no shoes, and his pantaloons are nothing but a pair of cotton drawers. There is a vacancy and stupidity of look about him, that contrasts unpleasantly with the intelligent looking East Indian. (Perkins 1964:102)

South Sea Islanders were forbidden to mine at Columbia. Anyone who sold a claim to a South Sea Islander or Asian lost the privilege of holding another claim for six months (Shinn 1948:234). Consultants report that as children living near Columbia they were cautioned against playing in certain areas lest the Kanakas get them. Not until they were adults did they discover Kanakas to be South Sea Islanders (Hawaiians).

Jim Crow was a well-known Kanaka in the Mother Lode. He had a reputation for discovering rich gold deposits and led large parties through the Mother Lode. He located rich gold veins in Jim Crow Canyon.

Another famous Kanaka from the area was Captain Ross.

> Captain Ross, believed to be the son of the great Hawaiian chief, Kamehameha, was a gold-seeker in and about Tuttletown during the fifties. He had a large following of Pacific Islanders and luck was with him, too, for he located Kanaka Creek, where nuggets, some of which weighed thirty pounds were unearthed. (Stellman 1934:73)

The 1850 census for Calaveras County lists a number of persons from the Sandwich Islands who were engaged in mining (U.S. Bureau of Census 1852).

Italians

The Italian immigration into the Project area occurred around the turn of the century. Most Italians came to America to avoid conscription into the Italian army and were from the area around Genoa. One consultant described the Italian miners as being "serfs." Many Italian miners went into farming and ranching (Chapter 8). A consultant's father homesteaded and bought a total of 1600 acres. Reportedly, many Italians kept large gardens and sold produce from door to door. All the Italians kept their cellars full of homemade wine.

A group of Italian miners lived at Shaw's Flat, and a number of Italians worked in the marble quarry with the Irish. Italian Bar was a

mining camp near Columbia where an Italian named Murvi kept a store. He kept the records of his sales to miners in pictographs, presumably because he was illiterate.

The Italians preferred to live separately from the rest of the populace in Melones (Chapter 6). Their section of town was known as "Little Italy." Up the river from Melones was a boardinghouse where some Italians stayed. The owners, also Italians, made and sold wine and brandy. Consultants report that Italians gathered between Sheep Ranch and Murphys on Sunday to play "bocchi"--a bowling game.

Non-indigenous Native Americans

William Perkins' diary contains several references to Mission Indians in and around the Sonora area. Perkins claimed they had wandered away from the coastal missions and returned to the hills. We have no way of determining whether Perkins was correct in his identification of these as Mission Indians.(Chapter 11). He makes reference to their diet as being influenced by the Spanish. Their singing or chanting reminded him of church music which he assumed they had learned at the missions. Perkins describes them as being fond of bright, and outlandish costumes as well as "constant draughts" of aguardiente /cactus liquor/ (Perkins 1964:107, 145, 106; personal communication, Ruth Smith).

A number of Cherokees were reported in the area. Consultants claimed to have known two women who were married to Cherokee men. Several Cherokee women living in Murphys in the early 1900's were also married to White men. Another consultant in the area reported a Cherokee woman who first married a White man and then a Miwok.

John Ridge was a full-blooded Cherokee who wrote for San Francisco's weekly, Golden Era. He traveled up and down the Mother Lode collecting stories. In Tuttletown he gathered most of the information for his story, "Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murietta," published in 1854. He often used his Cherokee name, Yellow Bird (Buckbee 1935: 328).

Yaquis were also reported in the Project Area. Although many miners claimed to be part Yaqui, few would admit to being full-blooded. The father of a consultant in Shaw's Flat hired a Yaqui who came up from Sonora, Mexico. Many Yaquis had acquired mining experience in the Sonoran mines in northern Mexico. A group of Yaquis were reported to live near Copperopolis and often fought with Mexicans there.

Other Ethnic Groups

Other ethnic groups were present in the area in the early days. Australians were reported to be the worst vagabonds in the neighborhood of Murphys. Especially notorious were a couple of Irishmen who had come from Australia. Most Australians were assumed to be ex-convicts and were blamed for many of the local crimes.

The Portuguese immigrants were concentrated in the Shaw's Flat area, although little is known about them today. The Serbs were a widespread ethnic group.

Jews and Mormons were two prominent religious groups in the area (see Chapter 5, on Mormon Gulch; Chapter 6 on Melones for additional discussion on ethnic groups).

Germans were also present in the Project Area. One consultant's grandfather deserted Bismark's army and came to America to settle in Columbia. There he raised eight children and helped to construct the first Presbyterian church in the district. William Schwoerer and four other Germans were reported to be working an old claim on Jackass Gulch in 1855. Schwoerer was also founder of a store in Tuttletown (Buckbee 1935:328-329), and his descendants are still present in the area.

CHAPTER 3

FROM CHINA TO THE MOTHER LODE

In order to understand the life of the Chinese in the United States during the Gold Rush and later phases of the history of the American West, one needs to examine the roots of the social system in their homeland. Although conditions in China were far from favorable, the vast majority of the Chinese who came to the United States were not here to seek a new homeland; they did not view the United States as a permanent refuge from the conditions left behind. The adventure of the California gold fields was a sojourn for most, a temporary displacement for a definite purpose. The goal of the Chinese immigrant was to return to his homeland with the financial resources to improve the status of his family. With this goal in mind, he subscribed to a social system which reinforced his attachment to the homeland, rather than the one common to many other immigrant groups which emphasizes adaptation to the dominant culture. The study of a mass sojourn such as the Chinese movement to the United States demands particular consideration for native homeland conditions because they are not really left behind, but rather temporarily transplanted.

Most of the Chinese who immigrated to the United States came from the Pearl River Delta, an area measuring about fifty miles by seventy miles. The Delta, on the coast of the South China Sea, embraces three major cities: Canton, Hong Kong, and Macao. This region is divided into twenty-four districts, each of which possessed its own government and a strong local identity. Alliances between certain districts with common interests are important to the study of Chinese in the Gold Rush. Three districts in the vicinity of Canton were aligned as the Sam Yup (three districts). The Sam Yup introduced most of the wealthier merchants into the United States through its close association with the city of Canton and its diversified economy. To the west and south of Canton was the group of districts known as the Sze Yup (four districts), the origin of most of the laborers and domestics who came to California (seven out of every ten California Chinese). The remaining districts have little bearing on the subject of the Chinese in the Mother Lode, but it should be noted that in the broader study of the Chinese in California certain districts came to dominate particular segments of the Chinese-American economy.

Dialect cut across district organization. The overwhelming majority of immigrants spoke the Cantonese dialect, but a significant minority spoke a dialect which caused them to be called Hakka (Guest People) by the Cantonese. The Hakka were immigrants to the Pearl

River Delta from another portion of China in the historical past, sharing customs which partially isolated them from the Cantonese speakers. The Hakka were distributed sparsely throughout all the Pearl River Delta districts; but in the district which embraces the city of Hong Kong, Pao-on and the district of Chikkai, they were predominant. The Hakka as a culturally-and linguistically-distinct group come to play an important role in the history of the Mother Lode (Chinn 1969:2-4).

The history of the Pearl River Delta during the nineteenth century presents a picture of great political unrest and economic hardship. Those who sought economic improvement felt their best opportunity lay abroad, far from the conflicts and turmoil in their homeland.

By 1850 the Chinese had endured 200 years of Manchu rule. Foreign trade, previously limited, opened in 1840 as a result of war with Britain. The outcome was the growth of Western influence coinciding with the decline of the Celestial Empire (mythological reference; Celestial - Chinese person). In addition, in the 1840's adverse economic conditions accompanied by natural disasters resulted in the wealth of the country concentrating in the hands of a few. The peasants responded to these conditions with local uprisings and open rebellion against Manchu rule.

In 1854, the San-Ho Hui, a secret society traditionally dedicated to the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, instigated a series of uprisings in the Pearl River Delta region, adding to the general turmoil of China for more than a decade (Chinn 1969:11). Local inter-ethnic rivalries erupted into open conflict. The Cantonese and the Hakka living in the Sze Yup districts decided to settle their differences through warfare.

> This domestic turmoil caused great economic dislocations and distress and was one of the important factors forcing so many Chinese to decide to migrate from the Pearl River Delta region. Since the Cantonese had long had maritime contacts, it was only natural that, when the news came of the discovery of gold in California and good wages to be had, some would consider emigration to America as a solution to their economic difficulties. Thus many took passage to California; others went to Southeast Asia, Australia, South America and the West Indies.
>
> (Chinn 1969:12)

The most important source of contact with China for the early sojourner was his district association, known as a hui kuan or, more popularly, "Company" (Lyman 1970:78). The following account written by a journalist in 1869 reveals the influence various member companies of the "Six Companies" exerted over the sojourner from the moment he stepped off the boat:

'. . . a living stream of the blue coated men from Asia, bearing long bamboo poles across their shoulders, from which depend packages of bedding, matting, clothing, and things of which we know neither the names nor the uses, pours down the plank . . .. They appear to be an average age of twenty-five years . . . and though somewhat less in stature than Caucasians, healthy, active, and able-bodied to a man. As they come down upon the wharf, they separate into messes or gangs of ten, twenty, or thirty each, being recognized through some to us incomprehensible free-masonry system of signs by the agents of the Six Companies as they came, are assigned places on the long broad shedded wharf /to await inspection by the customs officers./ . . . They are turned out of the gates and hurried away toward the Chinese quarters of the city by the agents of the Six Companies . . .'

(as quoted by Chinn 1969:16)

The hui kuan was a group who ". . . spoke a common dialect, from the same district of origin in China, or belonged to the same tribal or ethnic group" (Lyman 1970:80). The hui kuan functioned as "caravansaries, hostelries, credit associations, and employment agencies to their members" (Lyman 1970:80). They also represented their constituencies in dealings with the other hui kuan and with the white population as well. In addition, they managed a trans-Pacific postal service for the transfer of news, parcels and funds. The Six Companies, a confederation of the most significant hui kuan in California, served as a supra-organization regulating the affairs of the member hui kuan. The original Six Companies were Ning Yeung Company, Hop Wo Company, Kong Chow Company, Yeong Wo Company, Sam Yup Company and Yan Wo Company (Chinn 1969:66). The term, "Six Companies," as applied to early immigration, is incorrect since the number of the companies belonging to the Chung Wan Kung Saw (Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association), a more correct term, varied between four and five and only later became an organization of six companies (Barth 1964:97). The term, "Six Companies," is a source of confusion because popular use fails to make the distinction between the individual companies, hui kuan, and their collective associations (Chinn 1969:66).

The influence of the hui kuan over the daily lives of the Asian sojourners was considerable:

Certain companies had almost a complete monopoly over the immigration from China and over the conduct of the Chinese after they arrived in California. These companies were known as the Six Companies. Originally they were labor agencies in six different districts which surrounded the city of Canton. Their chief business was to encourage the emigration of the coolie

class. In 1849 it was seen that the Chinese were welcomed in California and that great numbers of laboring people would be needed. The Six Companies moved to San Francisco the following year. This city became their headquarters. . . .

These organizations were secret. . . . They claimed to be humanitarian organizations, but they were regarded as defensive institutions, protecting the immigrant from abuse and giving him aid. They found work for the immigrant, assisted him in securing living quarters, gave him medical care, and returned him to his native land if he became incapacitated in any way. For this service the Chinaman was obliged to pay a percentage of his earnings over a period of time. . . .

Perhaps ninety per cent of all the Chinese who entered California were brought in by these companies. The sworn obligation of the coolie to the companies and his payments to them were kept in great secrecy. They had a membership in 1878 of 148,000 scattered in various countries, but the most profitable trade was realized from carrying Chinese to California where the largest membership existed. (Gray 1934:398)

A short time ago it was discovered that a clique existed in San Francisco composed of a few of the wealthiest Chinese, and that these self-constituted mandarins exercised so much influence over the Chinese population of the country as to subject them to fines and bastinado, and they even went to the length of shipping some of them back to their own country. . . (Marryat 1952:172)

There were Chinamen of the better class among them, who no doubt directed the work, and paid the common men very poor wages . . . A Chinaman could be hired for two, or at most three dollars a day by any one who thought their labor worth so much; but those at work here were most likely paid at a still lower rate, for it was well known that whole shiploads of Chinamen came to the country under a species of bondage to some of their wealthy countrymen in San Francisco, who, immediately on their arrival, shipped them off to the mines under charge of an agent, keeping them completely under control by some mysterious celestial influence, quite independent of the accepted laws of the country.

They sent up to the mines for their use supplies of Chinese provisions and clothing, and thus all the gold taken out by them remained in Chinese hands, and benefited the rest of the community but little. . . (Borthwick 1929:253)

> Extreme cases depicting disciplinary measures were most likely to find their way into the newspapers. At Drytown in Amador County a Chinese miner who had stolen four hundred dollars received twenty-five lashes and lost his queue. When he was returned to his mining company his countrymen whipped him again, cut otf his left ear, marched him to San Francisco, and shot him by the road. . . . (Barth 1964:116)

It should be plain that the true role of the individual hui kuan and their confederation will fluctuate between the image of an innocent traveler's aid society and that of a malevolent, self-serving, slave-trading organization. The primary reason for this confusion is that early in the Gold Rush the district associations did indeed participate in a labor contracting scheme which was virtually indistinguishable from indentured servitude.

Among the first immigrants to California were groups whose services had been sold by contract for a definite period of time. Many of these laborers were, in fact, prisoners taken in clan feuds, victims of kidnapping or men who had been tricked by unscrupulous gamblers and indentured to pay their debts. The term, "coolie," applies only to these contract laborers. Coolie trading was an active business through the ports of Macao and Hong Kong between the years of 1845 and 1874. Most of the coolies went to areas other than the United States. Living conditions for the coolies aboard ship were poor and mortality rates high. Upon arrival, the coolies' contracts were sold at auction or allotted to employers according to previous arrangement (Chinn 1969:13-15). Barron (1974:453) identifies the wage scale for contract laborers as $3 to $4 per month of which $1.50 to $2 was deducted for subsistence of the families in China. She makes no reference to the length of time the coolies were expected to work.

Contract labor was not as easily enforced in the United States as in other countries. Chinn cites the experience of an Englishman:

> '. . . The fifteen coolies I brought from China, and who were under a bond for two years with the party who engaged them, were no sooner ashore than they resisted their contract, and each turned his separate way. Nor would the authorities interfere . . .' (Chinn 1969:15)

In 1852 a bill was introduced in the California State Assembly to recognize the validity of the labor contract within the state. The bill passed the Assembly, but ran into strong opposition in the State Senate. The sentiment behind the opposition was not based upon humanitarian principles, but rather upon the threat of a large, cheap labor source,

the competition for gold and a blatant racism. The following is a partial account of the bill's progress dated May 9, 1852:

> It is estimated that over 10,000 Chinese are on their way to California. About 5,000 of them have already arrived at San Francisco, and scattered themselves through the mines. These Chinese are of the poorest and most servile class of their nation. They are sent here by speculators, to dig the gold from our mines to fill the coffers of those who send them. But, they are of no advantage here whatever. Their habits, manners, and customs prevent their becoming American citizens. Our forms of law and government are not binding on them. They go in clans from 50 to 500, and depend on their own traders for their supplies. Their importation costs only $45 per head. Before the arrival of this Asiatic horde, our assembly passed the "Coolie Bill," which was intended to legalize this speculation in Chinese bones and sinews. While the bill was under discussion in the Senate, public meetings were held in Sacramento, and the majority of the Assembly denounced. The Governor also sent a special Message to the Legislature, calling upon that body to pass a law to stop the arrival of the Chinese horde. The newspapers gave the alarm throughout the mines. On the Feather, Yuba, American, and southern rivers, meetings of the miners have been held, companies of Americans organized, and now the Chinese begin to leave about as fast as they arrive. To a man, the Miners are resolved to protect themselves, and in a short time it is hoped that California will be free of the scum of China. (Myrick 1971:98)

After a bitter debate, the "Coolie Bill" was killed in the State Senate.

The contract labor system was replaced by one only slightly different which allowed the Asian sojourner more freedom of movement and a reduced period of enforced employment. The system was referred to as the "credit-ticket" system. Instead of being obligated to work a specified time for a specified employer, the emigrant in China was loaned the cost of passage to San Francisco on the promise of repaying the loan on a regular installment basis (Chinn 1967:15). Unfortunately, there was no information in the available literature regarding payment schedules; the literature does, however, offer two widely differing costs for passage: $125 (Chiu 1963:12) and $40 (Chinn 1969:15). The average wage of the Chinese laborer was $2 per day as given by Borthwick (1929), but this figure may actually reflect the charge of the hui kuan to White companies for supplying the labor of one man for one day. It is unclear whether or not the credit-ticket borrower was obligated to work exclusively for the hui kuan or Company which provided

his ticket until his fare was paid, but it is clear that the Company was responsible for the collection and transfer of the funds back to China (Lyman 1970:84). The hui kuan was certainly in a position to exploit the laborers since it had the only recognized agents for dealing with the White power structure and apparently exercised the power of life and death over its members. The organization of certain Chinese mining enterprises and the sums paid for certain claims suggest involvement of one or more of the Six Companies in the direct employment of their members.

> . . . in Mokelumne Hill, Calaveras county, a group of Chinese spent $70,000 for the purchase of the mining sites and freedom from molestation. (Chiu 1963:19)

> . . . the many Chinese companies of miners, varying in size from fifty to five hundred men, were the object of continual attention from the miners and the mining communities. These large groups traveled from digging to digging in the gold region . . . (Williams 1930:52)

The literature abounds with references to gangs of Chinese laboring in an organized fashion under the watchful eye of a headman.

At this late date it would be difficult to determine the exact relationship between the hui kuan and its members and the exact degree to which the individual laborers were indebted to their hui kuan because the literature refers to any collection of miners working in a cooperative fashion as being a "company." Whether or not the large "companies" of miners traveling through the Mother Lode were members of the same hui kuan and worked collectively under the management of that hui kuan for its profit is strictly conjecture. That Chinese miners banded together and worked collectively suggests that they were all from the same hui kuan. They spoke a common dialect, and it was not unusual for all miners, regardless of their nationality, to camp and mine with those who were from their home region. That the headman was from the same hui kuan as his workers also seems probable. The degree of servitude which held the miner to the hui kuan generally decreased as the number of Chinese emigrants increased. Working with the Calaveras Mining Laws of 1854, Chiu (1963:19) presents a case showing the majority of Chinese miners in a particular area as independent operators.

In the face of such conflicting data, perhaps the best assumption is that there were two classes of miners. The first class would be the newly arrived who would tend to be more deeply indebted, less familiar with the alien culture, and less experienced in mining. The second

class would include those who had paid all or most of their bond and were more familiar with social and mining techniques.

Whether or not the Celestial miner and his hui kuan shared an employee/employer relationship, the Chinese identified strongly with his district association in other affairs. The most spectacular instances of this identity sharing are found in the conflicts between the various hui kuan or "tong wars" in California during the 1850's. (The term "tong" in this application is incorrect and misleading. Tongs will be described in detail below.)

Prior to 1856 in China, there had been growing enmity between the Hakka-speaking peoples and the native Cantonese of the Sam Yup and the Sze Yup. This conflict evolved into open warfare in China, but the dispute had broken into open fighting two years earlier in California. Two thousand Chinese gathered at Jackson on May 24, 1854, to do battle; but the sheriff arrested the leaders, and no blood was shed. Three separate battles took place at Weaverville, in Trinity County, California, in 1854, 1857 and 1858. Skirmishes were recorded in the streets of Nevada City, San Francisco, and one involving an estimated 600 Chinese occurred in Sacramento in September of 1854 (Barth 1964:95).

One of the best documented clashes between district associations took place near Chinese Camp, close by the New Melones Project Area. One of the Project's oldest Native-American consultants related that the Miwok had witnessed the battle from the surrounding hillsides. The following account is the most complete:

> Two companies of Chinese, the Yun Wo and the Sam Yup clans, were working side by side at Two-Mile Bar, on the Stanislaus River. They quarreled with each other concerning a large stone, about two tons in weight, which the Yun Wos rolled on the Sam Yup's claim. Now to a Chinaman a stone is a stone until it is in the wrong place, then it becomes a bone of contention, as did this one, to all Chinamen along the river. Words and blows soon followed. The Sam Yup workers being twelve in number and the Yun Wos but six, the Sam Yups had no difficulty in conquering their opponents. The Yun Wos called for help from their clan brothers and prepared to war on the Sam Yup clan to wipe out the disgrace of their first encounter. The Sam Yups, hearing of the gathering of the clan, decided to beat their pig-tailed foes, and issued the Yun Wos a challenge to fight to the finish. Following is a translation of the challenge as it appeared written in Chinese characters on red paper and posted at Chinese Camp, near Sonora:

CHALLENGE FROM THE SAM YUP COMPANY, AT ROCK RIVER RANCH, TO THE YUN WO COMPANY, AT CHINESE CAMP.

There are a great many now existing in the world who ought to be exterminated. We, by this, give you a challenge, and inform you beforehand, that we are the strongest, and you are too weak to oppose us. We can, therefore, wrest your claim, or anything else from you and give you notice to drive you away before us, and make you ashamed of yourselves. You are nothing as compared to us. We are durable as stone, but you are pliant as a sponge.

Your force would have no more effect against us than an egg would against a stone. You want to coax us to come to terms. That we refused to do. We mean to fight you, and expel you all from your localities. If you don't stand and fight us, we will consider you no better than so many brutes; and, as such, we will harness you to our own desires. There are plenty of us, well equipped, and ready, at any time to meet you and fight you, wherever you choose; and will make you run into your holes and hide yourselves. But we need not go to that trouble. We have only to speak and you will become frightened. You won't stand like men; you are perfect worms, or like the dog who sits in the door and barks, but will go no further. If you won't accept this challenge, we tell you, by the way, to go and buy lots of flour, and paint your faces; then go in your houses, shut the doors, and hide yourselves, and we'll kill every man of you that we come across. Shame! Shame!

(McLeod 1948:53-54)

The Yun Wo Company responded to the challenge by arranging to meet in battle with the Sam Yup Company following their ancestors' method of waging war. Sending for armaments from San Francisco, both companies dressed in traditional Chinese costumes. Over twenty-one hundred Chinese battled at Kentucky Ranch four miles from Chinese Camp. No mercy was shown by either side shocking the White population who observed this warfare. The Sam Yups won this engagement.

Five thousand Americans witnessed the battle; the local sheriff could not stop it. The cost of the battle was estimated at $60,000 raised by a tax upon all clan members. Very few were actually killed by the battle, but its primary purpose, that of establishing company honor was fulfilled.

> The calling of the clans to fight in China is as ancient as the empire itself. Confucius teaches them that 'The murderer of your father ought not to remain under the sky with you; you must not lay down your arms as long as the murderer of your brother lives; and you cannot live in the same kingdom with the murderer of your friend.' One can see from this that the Chinese are vindictive, being taught in their sacred books that revenge is honorable. (McLeod 1948:55)

The Yun Wo Company is more properly identified as the Yan Wo Company (Barth 1964:95) which was the Hakka hui kuan. Accounts of the so-called "tong wars" are often given in anecdotal form as examples of the unusual behavior the Chinese displayed to "save face" over some "trivial differences" (Barron 1974:455). The account cited above describes the source of conflict as the large rock; the true nature of these occurrences is rooted in the traditional hostility between certain districts of the Pearl River Delta region. It should be noted that even after gaining membership in the "Six Companies," the Hakka Company, Yan Wo, was excluded from the privilege of having its headman serve on the board of directors (Barth 1964:97). One may consider that these clashes may have been promoted by the Six Companies as a means of engaging the services of the Yan Wo Company on their own terms. Also worthy of note are the sums the hui kuan were able to raise. These indicate the extent of their financial resources. Perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from these battles is the contemporaneous bond shared by the Chinese in California (with those who remained in the homeland).

The role of the hui kuan and their confederation, The Six Companies, cannot be too strongly emphasized. It was they who brought the Chinese here and took care of them. As long as the hui kuan was there to champion the emigrant, he did not have to worry about dealing personally with the White population. The language barrier was only a minor problem for the Chinese, since the hui kuan was capable of circumventing it. The fact that the Chinese did not intend to remain in the United States discouraged many from learning English, and those who did develop a facility for English took the position of spokesmen, assuming the role of headman (Gibson 1877:61).

Another factor which contributed to the isolation of the Chinese was the aggressive trading in Chinese commodities by the Six Companies and later by independent Chinese merchants. Borthwick gives two separate accounts of visits to Chinese stores. In the first he notes that the storekeeper passed out upon the floor with his opium pipe in hand, but goes on to describe:

> The store was like other stores in the mines, inasmuch as it contained a higgledy-piggledy collection of provisions and clothing, but everything was Chinese excepting the boots. (Borthwick 1929:256)

In Sonora he visited a store and commented on its cleanliness, a feature uncommon to Gold Rush establishments. This store had a woman sitting behind the counter whose only purpose in being there was to attract business.

Besides the hui kuan or "company," another association which enabled the sojourner to maintain his ethnic identity was the family association. Lyman describes these associations as clans:

> Clans have their origin in the Chinese lineage communities so prevalent in southeastern China, communities which united their male inhabitants with bonds of blood loyalty based on descent from a common ancestor. Overseas, the lineage unit was replaced by a net sprung wider than the original geographically-compact village of origin to include all those bearing the same surname. The clan provided the boundaries of the incest taboo by prohibiting marriage within the same surname group. Clan officials established hostelries for their kinsmen, and the clan association became a kind of immigrant aid society providing food, shelter, employment, protection, and advice. The clan further served to remind the sojourner of his ties to village and family in China, and, in the absence of the original lineal authorities, it assumed a role in loco parentis. (Lyman 1970:79)

Coolidge describes the family bond as being more powerful than any in Western culture:

> Divorce is rare and desertion by the husband still more so, indeed, the strength of the family tie is beyond anything Western civilization can show. The responsibility of members of the family for each other to remote degrees, the sacrifices and obligations which they undertake, the kindness of men to their wives and the extravagant pride and affection which they have for their children, forms a striking contrast to the narrow limits of the family and the looseness of ties in Occidental nations. (Coolidge 1969:10)

The credit-ticket operators were to be repaid by the family of the emigrant regardless of the success or reliability of the sojourner. "The debts of an individual are an obligation upon his family and kindred, and thus the family solidarity gives security in business and property

relations as it does in public order" (Coolidge 1969:8). The traditional pressure to repay debts among Chinese was considerable. "Every Chinaman pays his debts once a year at least, and the suicide of a man who is unable to meet his obligations is not uncommon" (Coolidge 1969:8).

These factors combined to exert considerable pressure upon the sojourner to repay his passage as soon as possible. Failure to do so would place him in an embarassing position and jeopardize the status of those left behind who were closest to him.

Within the realm of family associations is the nuclear family, but the wife of the Chinese sojourner invariably remained in China --". . . wives always remain at home to care for the husband's parents . . ." (Coolidge 1969:10). And,

> Of the Chinese who came to California at least one-half were married and expected not merely to make their personal fortune but to support a family at home; for no man in China over twenty remains unmarried unless he is a wanderer or very poor. At this period there was so strong a sentiment in China against any respectable woman leaving home even with her husband that very few went to America or Australia. The few who went to California were for the most part large footed women of the working class or women of disreputable character.
>
> (Coolidge 1969:18)

Since there were so few wives among the Chinese immigrants and many unmarried men, it seems natural that many should find solace in the company of prostitutes. The severe shortage of women may have prompted another form of family association, the temporary polyandrous marriage.

> 'Very few bring wives with them,' wrote Henry K. Sienkiwicz in 1880, in one of his letters from America, 'and for that reason it so happens that when among ten Chinese occupying a dwelling place there is but one woman, they all live together with her. I encountered such examples of polyandry quite frequently, particularly in the country.' (as quoted by Lyman 1970:85)

The literature says little about the importance of clans during the Gold Rush except that their role in developing alliances and conflicts helped to spawn the Six Companies (Chinn 1969:65). This suggests that as the importance of the Six Companies diminished, the importance of the family associations increased (Chinn 1969:66). The Project's oldest Chinese consultant stressed that the family

association was more important among the last Chinese living in the Sonora area than the district associations (see below, "Chinatowns").

The third variety of association which to the Western mind is typical of the Chinese was the secret society or the group popularly called the "tong." Tongs, like the Six Companies, were dual in nature. On one hand, they were true benevolent societies or fraternal orders such as the Elks or Masons, serving their members on a mutual aid basis. On the other hand, tongs organized Chinese crime in the United States in a fashion similar to the Mafia. Like the Mafia, which publicly identified itself by a name such as "The Italian American Friendship Society," the Chinese were fond of giving euphemistic titles to their tong associations. For example, the Hip Shing Tong (Hall of Victorious Union) was a fraternal gambling society. The On Leong Society (Chamber of Tranquil Conscientiousness) and the King Dak Tong (Chamber of Far Reaching Virtue) specialized in prostitution (Chinn 1969:68).

The oldest, long-term Chinese resident of the Project Area spoke of a group he identified as the "Chinese Free Masons." Just after the turn of the century throughout California, he said, there were a great number of these Free Masons, and they would identify one another through a secret system of signs and countersigns. He said that in his business (operating a laundry and managing a hotel kitchen) he would hire only members of the Chinese Masons. The group operated statewide lodges including one dedicated in 1905 in the Chinatown of Sonora. Members of the Chinese Free Masons could travel throughout the state secure in the knowledge that lodging in a congenial atmosphere could be found in a "Temple," as the lodgehouses were called. The consultant stated that meetings of this society were not very ceremonious but rather affairs involving drinking and gambling. He also stated that the society helped the revolution of Sen Yat Sun with financial support. In 1910, the year before the anti-Manchu forces proved victorious, this same consultant attended a function in Stockton addressed by Sen Yat Sun who was in the United States trying to raise money for his revolution.

The true name of this society was the Chih Kung T'ang, an American extension of the San-ho Hui, the group involved in uprisings against the Manchu Dynasty in the Pearl River Delta. Lyman writes with reference to the San-ho Hui:

> In nearly every overseas Chinese community of size, secret societies sprang up as chapters of this society, or as models based upon it. . . .the several secret fraternal brotherhoods not only organized much of the social, economic, political,

> criminal, and recreational life of the Chinese Community, but also played a significant role in the industrial and political development . . .
>
> In the United States and Canada, Chinese secret societies were established by the early immigrants in the cities and also in the outlying areas, where Chinese miners gathered together to organize the meager elements of livelihood and daily life.
>
> (Lyman 1970:81-82)

The name, "Chinese Free Masons" was popularized by the Chinese for three reasons: to identify this group to the White population with an analagous Western association, to disassociate it from the tongs and their violent reputation and to promote membership by allowing the lower classes of Chinese to emulate the traditional Masons. It is difficult to prove connections between the Chinese Free Masons and those societies which were devoted to criminal activities, but all secret societies claim descent from the Chih-kung T'ang (Chinn 1969:12). As an extension of the San-ho Hui, or the Triad Society, the Chih Kung T'ang functioned as an overseas revolutionary auxiliary:

> In San Francisco, over two million dollars in revolutionary currency were printed, while in rural California a few hundred inspired Chinese young men drilled in preparation to join the fighting forces of Sun's revolution. When Dr. Sun was stranded without funds in New York City at a crucial moment in the revolution, Seto May-tong, a Triad Society official who was to continue to exercise influence on the international relations of China and secret societies for more than thirty years, raised the necessary funds to finance his fateful return to China.
>
> (Lyman 1970:82)

From the beginning of the Gold Rush to the beginning of this century, intimate contact between the Chinese of the Mother Lode and those who remained in China can be demonstrated. The primary mechanisms for maintaining this union were the various associations: district, family, and tong. The dramatic patriotic displays between hui kuan during the 1850's and the highly organized support for the Revolution of 1911 demonstrate an interest in partisan politics rarely displayed by emigrants toward their homeland. This serves as a reminder that the early Chinese miner was a sojourner. He never really left China but rather found a better job in a new location and brought his China with him.

Demography

The first Chinese population in this country appeared in San Francisco in 1849. This group numbered only about 300 and was considered by the White population to be of the merchant class. They were well received in San Francisco, and public reaction to the desirability of Chinese in California was generally positive (Chinn 1969:9).

As the number of Asians in California increased, the novelty of seeing a Chinese waned. The table below reflects the staggering increase in Chinese immigration that shocked many White Californians:

Table 1

Number of Chinese Arrivals at
San Francisco Custom House 1820-1852

Year	Number
1820-30	3
1830-40	8
1848	3
1849	325
1850	450
1851	2,716
1852	20,026

(Chinn 1969:18)

An unusual feature of this large early immigration is the paucity of women, fewer than 1%. The number of Chinese women in the United States never approached the number of men until well into the Twentieth Century (Perkins 1964:319).

The table below indicates the Chinese population of the two counties of the Project Area:

Table 2

Chinese in Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties 1860-1900: A Comparison with San Francisco, California, United States.

	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
Calaveras	3,657	1,441	1,037	326	148
Tuolumne	1,962	1,524	805	253	158
TOTAL	5,619	2,965	1,842	579	306
San Francisco	2,719	12,022	21,745	25,833	13,954
California	34,933	49,277	75,132	72,472	45,753
United States	34,933	63,199	105,465	107,488	39,963

(Chinn 1969:18-19,21)

In 1860 these two mining counties had a Chinese population greater than that of San Francisco. By 1870 this relationship was reversed and a trend established. As the Chinese population of Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties steadily decreased, the populations of both San Francisco and the entire United States increased until the census of 1890. The subsequent decreases reflected the effect of the Exclusion Act of 1882 which virtually stopped Chinese immigration to the United States. The Chinese population of San Francisco fluctuated as did the Chinese population of the United States as a whole after 1860. These figures reflect their urbanization after the early Gold Rush and their dispersion from the Project Area to other states. While some of the miners who came to the Mother Lode may have gone to the later strikes in Oregon, British Columbia, Idaho and Montana or perhaps worked on the transcontinental railroad, the vast majority probably returned to China. In 1882, just 30 years after the first Chinese appeared in California, there were 132,000 Chinese living in the United States, but by 1882, over 150,000 had come to the United States and returned to China. Since the heaviest concentration of Chinese occurred in the Project Area during the first ten of these thirty years, it would seem that these early miners would be among the first to return. William Perkins noted the eagerness with which the Chinese

were returning to their homeland in 1852, just after they had begun to come to the United States en masse: ". . . when a Chinaman amasses a small amount of cash, he immediately returns home to the 'flowery land'" (Perkins 1964:319).

As San Francisco increased in importance to the Chinese, so did the Chinatowns of the Mother Lode. The declining Chinese population of Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties through 1860 to 1900 was coupled with a concentration of the remaining Chinese in the local Chinatowns. The 1860 figure reflects the number of Chinese working as miners camped along rivers and streams while the 1900 figure indicates the number who were living and working in local Chinatowns associated with White settlements.

The Chinese left when the gold ran out, but they did not run out of gold until they had reworked the claims left by White miners. Early statistics (pre 1860) for numbers of miners both White and Asian are non-existent, but Chiu (1963:25-28), basing his case upon foreign miners' tax receipts and the tax value of mining ditches, substantiates the general opinion that the Chinese worked the claims of White men as they were abandoned in the late 1850's and early 1860's.

After 1900, the numbers of Chinese who remained in the Mother Lode were reduced to a handful. Most were relatively late arrivals who operated or worked in businesses which catered principally to the White population. By 1920 the few Chinese who lived in the area were again recognized as novelties by a new generation. The oldest long-term Chinese resident presently living in the area arrived in California in 1910. All the remaining Chinese in the vicinity of the Project Area are very recent immigrants. No one of Chinese descent remains as a resident of the area to be innundated.

Inter-Ethnic Relations

The early history of Chinese Camp, California, just a few miles from the New Melones Dam site, is a microcosm of the history of the Chinese throughout the Project Area. In early 1849 a group of Chinese settled at a spot just above Woods Creek called Campo Salvador after its Salvadorian founders. Here the Chinese built a structure of native design, and the spot became popular among the few other Chinese miners in the area and the increasing numbers of Celestials passing through from San Francisco on their way to the gold fields. White miners were curious about the value of the diggings at Campo Salvador and moved in to prospect. Having discovered gold, they managed to evict the Chinese by an unrecorded means in 1850 (Barron 1974:453-4).

The Chinese moved their camp a short distance to a spot known as Camp Washington. Here the diggings were valuable, but there was little water available to wash the dirt, a situation which had discouraged the White miners. The Chinese managed to overcome this difficulty by hauling the dirt manually to the water of Six-Bit Gulch and washing it there. By this time the Asian population of Camp Washington had swelled to several thousand and was able to resist another attempt by Whites to displace them. Instead of working the claims themselves, the White miners hired the Chinese to haul the dirt for them at $15 a cartload. A ditch was finally dug from Woods Creek to the diggings, and the White miners hastily extracted the easy gold and left the tailings to the Chinese who reaped a fair profit by reworking them.

Camp Washington was now completely given over to the Chinese who made it a field headquarters for their operations in the Mother Lode. Four hui kuan established offices and hostelries in the community for their members. Camp Washington was thereafter called Chinese Camp and was for many years the hub of Chinese activity in the Southern Mines. The pattern of harassment, displacement, and possession of second-rate claims established in Chinese Camp became the model of Chinese mining for many years (Barron 1974:453-4).

The legal status of the Chinese in the United States was such that the only claims they could hold were those the White miners did not want. The Chinese had no standing in a court of law. If a White appropriated a Chinese claim or destroyed Chinese property, the victim had no recourse.

> Although the first constitution of the State of California provided that foreigners should enjoy the same rights of property as native-born citizens, one of the California statutes of 1849 provided that 'No black or mulatto person or Indian shall be permitted to give evidence in favor of or against any white person.'
>
> Later, Chief Justice Murray of the California Supreme Court was called upon to clear the question relative to the Chinese being given the right to appear in court with testimony against their persecutors. To the question, 'What is an Indian?' the judge said: 'Indian as commonly used, refers only to the North American Indians, yet in the days of Columbus all shores washed by Chinese waters were called the Indies, therefore all Asiatics were Indians. In the second place, the word 'white' necessarily excludes all other races than Caucasian; and in the third place, even if this were not so, I would decide against admitting the testimony of the Chinese on grounds of public policy.' (McLeod 1948:62)

The local government during the early Gold Rush consisted of miners' conventions, self-appointed groups who determined such immediate issues as size of claims, penalties for thievery, and the exclusion of persons from the district. In most cases the Chinese, among the first groups to be excluded, were often the only ones (Chiu 1963:12-17).

On May 8, 1952, in the mining district of Columbia which borders on the Project Area, a miners' convention was held during which it was decided to exclude all Chinese from the district mines:

> 'Resolved, That it is the duty of the miners to take the matter into their own hands, and apply such remedies as the exigencies of the case may seem to demand, to erect such barriers as shall be sufficient to check this Asiatic inundation that threatens to roll over the state, and turn back its waves on those who set it in motion.'
>
> 'Resolved, That no Asiatic . . . shall be permitted to mine in this district /Columbia and surrounding area/, either for himself or for others, and that this resolution shall be part and parcel of our mining laws . . . Resolved, That a Committee of Vigilance . . . be appointed, whose business it shall be to see that the above resolution is carried out, and to correspond with the miners in the different districts of the southern mines, and endeavor to secure a thorough and efficient organization of the miners, for the purpose of protecting themselves from this influx of the degraded inhabitants of China.'
> (Williams 1930:66)

Across the Stanislaus in Vallecito, a smiliar ordinance was passed several years later. Chinese who owned claims were given ninety days to sell before being forced to leave. All others were allowed only ten days to depart (Minke 1960:44). In 1885, a group of fifty Chinese miners was excluded from a mine in Soulsbyville. The situation in this instance was quite different in that the Chinese were employed by a company, and the movement against them was based on resentment of the low wages for which the Chinese were willing to work rather than on the competition for claims that they had represented earlier (Barron n.d.).

The exclusion of the Chinese from rich claims forced them to seek the claims cast off by Whites as being "played out" or worthless, as in the case of Chinese Camp. Turning abandoned claims into profitable diggings alienated a White population whose spending habits necessitated larger profits.

'. . . they soon flocked into the mining regions in swarms, well satisfied to work over the old abandoned claims left and deserted by others. They were welcomed by the mining communities with open arms, as it was soon discovered that the Chinese would not preempt, or locate any new mining grounds, desiring only to buy at a fair price the old worked-out claims which had been abandoned. Here was the grand opportunity of the miner to relocate and sell to the Mongolian immigrant these old mining claims; and well did these disciples of Confucius merit the title of scavengers of the mining regions, for many of the old claims which had been abandoned as worthless, were not so in fact, as it was soon discovered that from many of them the Chinese miners were taking out large amounts of gold.' (as quoted by Williams 1930:53)

Hostility against the Chinese can be attributed to their great influx, yet the first Chinese in California were welcomed with open arms:

> The first immigrants were cordially received. The press welcomed them. As they appeared in their native costumes on the streets, they became objects of interest and of great curiosity. When San Francisco held its first Admission Day celebration in 1850, the Chinese were given a place of honor near the head of the long parade. Nowhere was there hostility toward them. Governor John McDougal, in his message to the legislature in 1852, recommended the granting of swamp land to those who would drain it. He thought this work would induce further immigration and permanent settlement of the Chinese, whom he considered to be 'one of the most worthy classes of our newly adopted citizens.' (Gray 1934:397)

The White miners who had been competing for the rich diggings considered the great numbers of Asians a threat. A riot had occurred in Sonora during July of 1850 over the great numbers of foreign miners working the limited claims in the area. At this early date there were few Chinese but there were enough other foreigners to force the issue, resulting in the Foreign Miners' License tax law of 1850. The overall effect of this first attempt to tax the foreign miner was to paralyze all mining without generating any of the expected income, and the tax was repealed the following year (Coolidge 1969:28-30).

Nevertheless, the precedent had been set. In 1852 another license tax was passed at a cost to the foreign miner of three dollars per month (the following year raised to four dollars). The Chinese bore the heaviest portion of the tax burden at this point since many other foreign miners had already departed or were in the process of doing so. There was pressure within the California legislature to exclude the Chinese completely from the mines and competing pressure to allow them to remain since they were also major contributors to local economies. A compromise was reached when it was decided to raise the license tax $2 per month every year starting in 1855. Local merchants complained loudly as the Chinese gave up mining for other enterprises; tax revenues fell. Against the wishes of the anti-Chinese administration of Governor Bigler, the tax was reduced to its former $4 per-month level until it was declared unconstitutional in 1870. While it was in effect, the foreign miners' tax generated almost five million dollars for the state of California (50% of the state's total resources for 1855 to 1870) (Coolidge 1969:30-37).

Collecting the tax was delegated to several agents, encouraged to be thorough by being paid a percentage of the amounts they collected. They were given the "power to seize and sell the property of the debtor at one hour's notice" (Coolidge 1969:33).

> An army of them ranged continuously over the diggings equipped with blank licenses. All Chinese in the camp were compelled to pay the mining licenses, whether or not they were actively engaged in mining. The collectors frequently came back before the month was out, or one would follow another, giving ficticious receipts. If the Chinese refused to pay, they were struck, stabbed or shot. Sometimes the collector tied them to a tree and whipped them; at other times, he might drive them on foot with a horsewhip, riding behind them lashing them as they ran, to some other town where he could exercise other compulsory measures. The collectors in turn were often followed by cormorants to whom they sold the property of Chinese which had been 'forfeited' for nonpayment. At other times in sheer wantoness these officials would destroy bedding, boots and other articles. (Minke 1960:46-47)

Several consultants recollected stories of the horrible treatment of the Chinese in the Project Area as told them by their parents of grandparents. The early Chinese are well out of living memory and all that is known other than what is in the literature is second-or third-hand information.

A Sonora consultant related a murder witnessed by his father who was a youth in Columbia during the 1860's. He was resting on a hillside in the vicinity of Yankee Hill unobserved by a group of miners working below him. A dispute broke out between a group of Italians and a solitary Chinese over the use of a spring. One of the Italians sneaked behind the Chinese and clubbed him with a shovel. Deciding he was dead, they took the same shovel and buried the luckless Asian on the spot. No one missed the lone Chinese except perhaps his friends, and they could only have guessed at his fate. This consultant said that many Chinese met their end in this fashion, therefore it was no wonder that they chose to camp and work where they were assured the security of numbers.

The vicinity of Parrotts Ferry was often cited by consultants as a popular mining spot for gangs of Chinese. According to Ray Dondero, a consultant whose family had lived close to Joaquin Murietta's original Columbia home, Parrotts Ferry was the place where Joaquin and his associate, Three Fingered Jack, terrorized whole groups of Chinese. They would observe the Celestials at work until they were most vulnerable and then swoop down upon them from the hillside. When stories of this nature were recorded (almost all consultants had some distant family memory of the colorful Murietta), the most horrible crimes were attributed to Three Fingered Jack who in this instance would tie five or six Chinese together by their queues, extract the location of their hidden gold, and then kill them by slashing their throats. Because they were a favorite target of violence, the Chinese developed such a hatred for Joaquin and his band that they donated several thousand dollars toward his bounty. When word of his demise spread to Chinese Camp, a holiday was proclaimed.

Popular music often communicates public feeling about current topics. The song transcribed below expresses the White attitude toward the early Chinese placer miner:

John Chinaman

1

John Chinaman, John Chinaman,
But five short years ago,
I welcomed you from Canton, John-
But wish I hadn't though;

2

For then I though you honest, John,
Not dreaming but you'd make
A citizen as useful, John,
As any in the State.

3

I thought you'd open wide your ports,
And let our merchants in,
To barter for their crapes and teas,
Their wares of wood and tin.

4

I thought you'd cut your queue off, John
And don a Yankee coat,
And a collar high you'd raise, John,
Around your dusky throat.

5

I imagined that the truth, John,
You'd speak when under oath,
But I find you'll lie and steal too--
Yes, John, you're up to both.

6

I thought of rats and puppies, John,
You'd eaten your last fill,
But on such slimy pot-pies, John,
I'm told you dinner still.

7

Oh, John, I've been deceived in you,
And in all your thieving clan,
For our gold is all you're after, John,
To get it as you can.

/Appleton, 1855/
(Heizer and Almquist 1971:253-4)

Chinese reaction to this discrimination was passive (patience and long suffering). Their method of dealing with the foreign miners' tax was evasion through flight. Since they had no standing in a court of law, it was up to the local law to deal with infringements of their rights in whatever fashion they felt was suitable. An incident that occurred near the Project Area presents a case of successful Chinese retaliation:

> Near Altaville lived a bad character who, on one occasion, went down to O'Byrne's Ferry and indulged in gambling with the Chinese. When the stakes became large on the table he covered the Chinese with a pistol, raked in the gold dust and departed. A short time thereafter, he returned and again took the stakes.

> The Chinese were prepared for this and, catching him off guard, overpowered him and bound his hands and feet. They then sewed him up in a blanket and tossed him into the river.
>
> The authorities didn't even investigate the matter and were satisfied that it was good riddance.
>
> (Smith 1963:8)

A Native-American consultant stated that the trail that ran over Table Mountain between the area of Peoria Flat and Chinese Camp was a favorite site for robbing the Chinese as they went to and from their diggings:

> Ah Chung was a very industrious Chinese miner who had a claim on the Stanislaus River below Peoria Flat. It is now covered by the waters of the Melones Dam. He was on his way to deposit his gold dust in the bank in Jamestown, when an attempt was made on his life. He acted on impulse and killed his enemy, a prominent citizen of the community. From that time on local laws were established to give the Chinese more protection and understanding than in the past.
>
> (Stevenot 1963:7)

But incidents with favorable outcomes for the Chinese were rare. McLeod (1948:61-62) cites a case from the Northern Mines with a more typical ending. A group of Chinese who had established a successful community on the Yuba River were attacked at night by a band of armed White men. Their gold and stores were stolen by these White men and their camp set fire. This band then claimed the area as their own. Friends of the Chinese brought suit against these individuals. The band claimed they could work the area better than the Chinese, and the judge ruled against the Chinese.

The Chinese and the Miwok Indians shared an unusual relationship during the years of placer mining since they were all considered citizens of the "Indies" at one time. It is hard to determine at this late date which group had the higher status, but two stories were collected which indicate that the lowly "digger" Indians were of a higher status in the eyes of the White man than the Chinese. To those familiar with the treatment of the Miwok during the Gold Rush, this may be hard to accept. According to two different consultants, the local Miwok collected their own version of the foreign miners' tax from the Chinese. They had seen the tax collector circulating among the Asian miners collecting his due. The Miwok tax collector followed behind and extracted a sum from them also. In relating this story, one consultant said that the Miwok had absolute contempt for the Chinese.

The second story follows verbatim:

> One time a small circus came to Columbia. Some Indians were standing around observing the monkeys. Someone asked the Indians if they knew what the animals were. The Indians said, 'Sure Indian know what this animal is. He Chinese papoose, that what he is!'

A massacre of Miwok by Chinese was reported by a Native-American consultant. Judging by the age of a person said to have been the sole survivor, the event must have taken place in the 1890's. The location of the massacre was given as Peoria Flat under the present Melones Reservoir. According to the consultant, the creek ran red with blood, and the Gulch was thereafter called Bloody Gulch. This same consultant related a story concerning the murder of a Chinese by a Miwok. The Chinese refused to give an Indian boy a drink of water. An older man who was with the boy disguised their black or white horse with white or black handkerchiefs to make the horse appear spotted. The man then sent the boy home alone while he returned on the horse to the place where they had encountered the Chinese. He killed the Chinese and returned home to find that the boy had already arrived safely. Having disguised the horse, he would not be as easily recognized as the killer when he rode back into the Chinese camp on his single colored horse.

Yet, one Native American said that he had spent the early years of his life in the home of a Chinese family who treated him with great kindness. The basis for these friendships may have been the opium the Chinese regularly sold to the Miwok. Many young Miwok used opium or the residue from the Chinese opium pipes. One consultant said that the drug was a combination of opium and nicotine. Another said that the drug was called "inseen" or "the real stuff." Use of the drug is within living memory, and one consultant dated its use as late as 1908. The Chinatown in Sonora was its source, and a piece the size of a dime could be purchased for $1.50, lasting only a couple days. The drug was either eaten or smoked, and withdrawal could be fatal. One consultant knew of a death caused by withdrawal. Before the victim passed away, he displayed "cramps /knots/ moving under his skin the size of baseballs" which others unsuccessfully tried to massage away.

The difference in relationships between Miwok and Chinese might be explained as a function of time. During the Gold Rush, both groups were oppressed, neither wanting to occupy a position below the other (a position at the absolute bottom of the social scale). In later years the pressure eased, and the two groups found a common

bond in the use of opium. This diachronic relationship deserves a more thorough analysis.

A Native American consultant also mentioned that around 1885 there had been a battle between some Negroes and some Chinese in Lawrence's field near the Chicken Ranch Rancheria. No reason was given for the conflict, but it was reported that one member of each group was wounded (page 11).

As the placer gold was exhausted, most of the independent White miners abandoned the area to quartz speculators and to the Chinese. The number of Chinese in the Project Area steadily declined as the Celestial sojourners returned to China, moved to more recent gold strikes or learned new occupations. A few remained to rework the gulches and streams that had been reworked many times before.

In 1882 an extreme act of anti-Chinese sentiment was passed --the "Chinese Exclusion Acts."

> The two major provisions were: 1) It suspended the immigration of Chinese laborers ('skilled and unskilled and those engaged in mining') for ten years. . . 2) It prohibited the naturalization of Chinese in the United States. (Chinn 1969:26)

The ten-year limitation was extended in 1892 and 1902 and indefinitely in 1904. The act virtually stopped Chinese immigration to the United States. Because of deaths, returns to China, and the lack of another influx of sojourners, the Asian population began a steady decline.

As time wore on, a new tolerance developed among the Whites for the remaining few miners who were symbols of a bygone era. Other Chinese moved into the Chinatowns of the Mother Lode or took jobs as domestics on ranches or in lumber camps. The insulating influence of the hui kuan was diminished, and the barriers of language and custom were slowly eroded. It is from this era, 1880-1920, that the bulk of the data regarding the Chinese in the Mother Lode is derived. By this time, the bulk of Chinese had left the immediate Project Area for the surrounding settlements. The life of these later Chinese and their relation to the White settlements in which they lived is discussed under "Chinatowns."

Mining Camps

During the early Gold Rush, the Chinese settled throughout the area to be inundated by the New Melones Dam. The Chinese were almost exclusively placer miners, and the placers of the Stanislaus were among the richest ever discovered. Their base of operations in the Project Area was Chinese Camp, but most of their time was spent along the river and its tributaries.

Some areas of concentrated Chinese occupation and mining are distinguishable today. The Parrotts Ferry area was worked heavily by the Chinese. Steve Farbotnik recalled the words of his father-in-law, Frank Canepa, regarding the Chinese near Parrotts Ferry. He referred to them as "swarms." Their numbers were so great they looked "like ducks" on the river. Frank Canepa was fascinated by the mechanical expertise displayed by the Chinese and impressed this fact on Mr. Farbotnik. According to the tales told by Frank Canepa to Mr. Farbotnik, the Chinese had managed to expose large areas of the Stanislaus riverbed by completely diverting the river from its banks into a system of flumes and ditches. At that time, before the construction of Relief Dam, the flow of the river was greatly diminished in the summer. The same dams that provide the greater flow during the present summers also prevent the great torrents that often destroyed the Chinese ditches and flumes with spring runoff or a sudden fall rainstorm. Ray Dondero remembered the Stanislaus in the spring before the reservoirs were built. He said from the top of the canyon one could hear the giant boulders rolling along the bedrock with the current and crashing into one another. Remains of Chinese handiwork in the canyon probably were destroyed by the action of the river. Borthwick describes a similar operation on the Yuba River:

> They had a claim in the bed of the river, which they were working by means of a wing dam. A 'wing dam,' I may here mention, is one which first runs half-way across the river, then down the river, and back again to the same side, thus damming off a portion of its bed without the necessity of the more expensive operation of lifting up the whole river bodily in a 'flume.'
>
> The Chinamen's dam was two or three hundred yards in length, and was built of large pine trees laid one on the top of the other. . . . (Borthwick 1929:252)

Upstream from Parrotts Ferry on the South Fork of the Stanislaus was the settlement of Pine Log, mentioned by consultant Lyle Scott as a Chinese mining area. Downstream from Parrotts Ferry on the Stanislaus,

there is historical evidence of "great numbers" of Chinese populating the village of Robinsons Ferry, later to be known as Melones, in the 1870's and 1880's (Stevenot 1963:7).

Further downstream:

> From Reynolds to Robinsons Ferry, there are many diggins [sic] and claims and it is the best area in the county for mining right now (1858). It is estimated that there are 2,000 Chinamen at work in this area at present
>
> (Hittel's Scraps, 1858 as quoted by Stevenot 1963:7)

It is in this area just upstream from the confluence of Angels Creek and the Stanislaus that some of what may be the most remarkable remnants of Chinese mining are found. Here on the northern side of the creek remain rock walls which may have been used to divert the creek out of its bed above a long "bar" and then return it to its original course further downstream (Plate 1). To one unfamiliar with early mining techniques, these structures would appear to be remnants of stone walls of the variety built by the Chinese to enclose livestock. Barron (1974:459) reports that the Chinese were employed in the building of rock walls in the general vicinity of Chinese Camp for 25¢ per rod (16-1/2 feet). Gangs of hundreds were used in this work, so the task of diverting a stream by using a rock wall was not an unreasonable undertaking.

In the same area is located Bostwick Bar. Hittel writes:

> Bostwicks Bar [sic] near Reynolds Ferry consists of three or four large river claims which are worked by Chinamen. The Chinese generally work in swarms of from 25 to 30 and are said to be equal to white men for turning and fluming rivers.
>
> (Hittel's Scraps, 1858, as quoted by Stevenot 1963:7)

The Chinese were from the Pearl River Delta where diversion of water was a way of life. Bostwick Bar shows great evidence of having been a habitation site of relatively long duration. Unfortunately, the site is under water from the present Melones dam most of the year. Bostwick Bar was also cited as an area of dense Chinese population by Mark Hanna, a native of Angels Camp, and across the River from Bostwick Bar is another example of a rock wall.

The various streams which feed the Stanislaus were often mentioned as popular spots for Chinese placer mining. Coyote Creek which runs from the town of Melones through Vallecito and which will be flooded for about two miles at maximum fill was cited by several consultants as having been the site of intensive placer mining by Chinese.

Consultant Al Ponce related a rare story about a Chinese woman miner. The poll tax collector was working in the vicinity of Coyote Creek and, having already collected the tax from a popular miner named Johnson, he moved downstream where he encountered a female Chinese placer miner wearing typical miner's attire. He stopped and tried to collect from her also. He told her that since she was doing man's work she should be taxed like a man, but she refused. He told her that since she was dressed like a man she should be liable for the tax. She refused again and told the tax collector, "You go talk to Johnson. He savvy me a woman!" The tax collector took the story back to town, and Johnson suffered for it for some time.

Mormon Creek was also cited by a consultant as an area of Chinese placer mining. It was specifically stated that the Chinese moved in with the Chilenos after the Mormons (for whom the Creek was named) moved on.

Working the rich river and streambeds, the Chinese camped near their diggings. Perhaps the most unusual feature of Chinese mining camps is that some of them were very large. Borthwick describes the camp that was associated with the wing dam cited earlier:

> There were about a hundred and fifty of them here, living in a perfect village of small tents, all clustered together on the rocks. . . Their camp was wonderfully clean: when I passed through it, I found a great many of them at their toilet, getting their heads shaved, or plaiting each other's pigtails; but most of them were at dinner, squatted on the rocks in groups of eight or ten round a number of curious little black pots and dishes, from which they helped themselves with their chopsticks. In the center was a large bowl of rice.
>
> (Borthwick 1929:252,255-256)

The following newspaper account was of another camp:

> On the banks of the rivers and in ravines, a correspondent of the San Francisco Herald found companies of twenty or thirty Chinese 'inhabiting close cabins, so small that one . . . would not be of sufficient size to allow a couple of Americans to breathe in it. Chinamen, stools, tables, cooking utensils, bunks, etc., all huddled up together in indiscriminate confusion, and enwreathed with dense smoke, present a spectacle which is . . . suggestive of anything but health and comfort.'
>
> (Borthwick 1964:114)

Borthwick cited two other Chinese mining camps, one near Placerville:

> 'A whole bevy of Chinese had recently made their appearance on the creek. Their camp, consisting of a dozen or so small tents and brush houses, was near our cabin on the side of the hill--too near to be pleasant, for they kept up a continual chattering all night, which was rather tiresome till we got used to it.' (Borthwick as quoted by Williams 1930:40)

The other Chinese camp was recorded by Borthwick near Angels Camp and may have been within the bounds of the Project Area:

> While walking around the diggings in the afternoon, I came upon a Chinese camp in a gulch near the village. About a hundred Chinese had here pitched their tents on a rocky eminence by the side of their diggings.
> (Borthwick 1929:302)

The Chinese employed several techniques to separate gold from the soils and gravels in which it was found, but their favorite tool was a device known as a "rocker":

> 'The rocker . . . is an oblong box about four feet long, two feet wide and nine inches deep at the higher end. A bar divided the box in the middle, the lower end being left with a very low end-board. The top of the rocker . . . was open. Another box was perforated sheet-iron bottom was made to fit into the upper half. This was known as the 'hopper' . . . Beneath the hopper was a canvas 'apron,' placed at an angle of about thirty degrees with its lower end near the upper part of the cradle. The apron was so placed that the dirt in being washed through the water would have to pass over this apron and down on to the floor of the cradle . . . The box was mounted on rockers.'
> (Coy as quoted by Williams 1930:56)

Devices used by contemporary White miners were considered superior to the rocker--the "long tom" and the sluice box. Both of these devices may have been able to process greater amounts of paydirt, but for the Chinese, they had certain drawbacks. They were not as portable as the rocker and required a constant flow of water. Relatively permanent structures, they were more susceptible to sabotage and, if destroyed, represented a greater loss. The rocker only intermittently needed water to operate. This was easily supplied by a dipper which could draw water from any nearby source. Companies using sluices or long toms were often dependent upon water companies

for their running water and sometimes were forced to pay dearly for it. While the rocker might not have been efficient to a small number of White miners anxious to process as much dirt as possible in a limited time, they were well suited to the Chinese who had more workers per company to operate them and less overhead. By consistently camping and mining close to the river and streams, the Chinese would have been able to avoid dealing with the water companies. Another advantage of the rocker was that it could be operated by one man. "Charlie," the last Chinese to live in Columbia, used a rocker into the 1920's.

"When a group of Chinese finished cleaning up that river, you might as well do nothing there but fish." Such remarks were common among consultants who were familiar with mining. Apparently with these techniques, regardless of how crude they appeared, they were able to extract all the gold that remained, and no amount was too small for their consideration. There is little information regarding the intensive phase of Chinese mining (1852-1870's) even though the Chinese were mining throughout the area in great numbers. The most common responses to questions such as "Where did the Chinese mine?" were "everywhere," or "all over." Chinese mining appears to have been more intense between Robinson's Ferry and the present dam site, but this assumption requires support from more thorough historical research and more extensive examination of the archaeological record.

Chinatowns

While none of the settlement areas to be discussed in this section is within the strict limits of the Project Area, they are pertinent to the study of the Chinese who did live along the Stanislaus. Apart from the fact that a few old-time Chinese miners took up residence in these towns, the settlements are important because their residents shared many goals and habits common to the early Chinese placer miners. Because they were more closely associated with the White community, residents of the various Chinatowns offer an insight into the lifestyle of the Chinese sojourner that was not available in the relatively closed social system of the isolated placer miner. Finally, most of the Chinatowns to be discussed were functioning supply centers for the Chinese camped along the river during the placer mining era. A visit to the Chinese sections of Columbia, Sonora, Jamestown or Angels Camp was a welcome diversion to the early Chinese miner--the next thing to visiting China itself.

Probably the most important Chinese settlement of the area was Chinese Camp. Chinese Camp was a unique blend of Chinese mining camp and Chinatown. The area directly adjacent to the town was a rich "dry" diggings, and the settlement attracted Chinese from other mining camps throughout the area as a supply depot and social center. The offices and hostelries established early by hui kuan insured Chinese Camp's prominance among Asians.

To the early miners, Chinatowns provided release from the drudgery of mining:

> Few indentured emigrants ever shook off the shackles of work for periods longer than a New Year's celebration, a day in the theater, or a night at the fan-tan table. With the explosion of the last firecracker, an actor's closing line, and the loss of the last copper cash, the pressure of the control system brought the sojourners back to their life of service. For a few hours, the atmosphere of Chinatown had alleviated their homesickness. Their dreams of freedom, dignity, and grandeur, released by the visit, vanished rapidly in the ordinary air of Chinese California. Incessant toil and drudgery, rigid regimentation, and strict supervision again filled their ordinary world of labor and debt bondage. Less colorful and exotic than Chinatown, this world of labor has never been adequately depicted, although it harbored the majority of Chinese sojourners and formed the setting which gave Chinatown meaning and value. (Barth 1964:112)

Certain elements were relatively constant throughout the Mother Lode Chinatowns: prostitution, the Chinese theater, Chinese temples, gambling, opium, cemeteries, mining, laundries and stores. Prostitution was reported by consultants as a "major industry" throughout the Mother Lode among all races and during all periods. Chinese women arrived relatively early in Sonora and Chinese Camp, and Sonora's Chinatown was to maintain its reputation as a "Red Light District" for over fifty years. Three consultants recalled prostitution being practiced there after the turn of the century. Two of the three had occupations that took them into the Chinese quarter where they said they felt uncomfortable because of the unsavory element found there. The third consultant confessed to patronizing a prostitute named Big Lou. Like gambling and opium, Chinese prostitution was a feature common to all Chinatowns.

Little is known about the Chinese theaters of the Mother Lode. Due to the language barrier, few, if any, Whites attended the performances. An anecdote survives regarding the Chinese theater of

Columbia. Before entering the theater the patrons would remove their shoes and leave them outside lined up next to the door. During the performance, several youths came along and spit into the vacant shoes. When the Chinese left the performance and saw what had happened, they became furious and chased the boys around town.

Chinese Temples, often referred to as Joss Houses, were located in every Chinese settlement. These were Confucian Temples devoted to the worship of ancestors and were filled with carved statues, many covered with gold leaf. The air of the temples was always filled with the aroma of burning incense. An anecdote which expresses the superstitious behavior often attributed to the Chinese with regard to spirits was given by a consultant. This incident, supposed to have occurred at Columbia, was told about a sick man who went into the Temple to pray for his health and died there. No one would enter the darkened temple to remove his body. The White population finally cornered a relative of the deceased and threatened to hang him unless he removed the body. He took the rope he was being threatened with and tied one end to the leg of the dead man and pulled the body out into the street.

Gambling was a pastime associated with Chinese from the early Gold Rush to the time of the Chinese Masons of the early 1900's. A crier would walk the streets of Chinese Camp in the evenings yelling, "Fan-Tan, Fan-Tan," advertising one particular gambling establishment (Barron 1974:455). Gambling establishments were found in all the local Chinatowns. In later years lotteries became popular with the various Chinese communities until the dwindling population made them unfeasible except in the larger Chinatowns of Sacramento or San Francisco.

The smoking of opium was a common practice among the Asian sojourners and was apparently accepted by the White population as a relatively inoffensive idiosyncracy. Barron describes the opium dens of Sonora:

> These two good sized rooms had several bunks around the walls. In the center of the room was a round table on which were six opium pipes, a water bowl, a Yen Shee scraper (to get the crust or residue from the pipe) and a little box containing a small amount of opium. All of these articles were owned by one person and it was his job to supply whoever was interested in participating.

> On the side of the table was a bench and the participants would lie on their side and smoke the pipe. After the first pipeful of opium was smoked, the Yen Shee scraper was used to collect the crust which was smoked again, and the residue from this was put in the mouth. The smoker then climbed into a bunk where he 'went to heaven' while the drug worked on him. (Barron 1974:458)

The Yen Shee scraper may be related to the word "Inseen" used by the Miwok to describe the drug they pruchased from the Chinese of Sonora. Al Ponce recalls watching Chinese "Charlie" of Columbia smoke opium and fall asleep, oblivious to the children around him.

The dead were buried in special Chinese cemeteries near local Chinatowns to be exhumed later and returned for final burial in China --a commentary on the Chinese attitude toward returning to their homeland. Their funerals were curious affairs to the White population who attended:

> A Chinese funeral formed in the Chinatown of the area. The head Chinaman would sit on top of the highly decorated hearse with the undertaker. There would be a band to play, if available. The Chinese would march in a procession to the grave. In Sonora, the Chinese were buried in the old City Cemetery beyond the jail.
>
> There was a specific Chinese ritual and at different times during the ceremony, Chinese assistants would place eatables at the coffin. These consisted of roast pig, roast duck, bowls of rice, Chinese sauce and Chinese liquors. Chinese incense was burned to keep out the evil spirits, candles were lighted to 'light the way for the journey.' The food was to keep the spirit from getting hungry on his long trip. Also, gold and silver paper money was burned so that the spirit would not be 'broke' during his passage.
>
> The last activity was to blow out the candles and leave the punks burning. At the end of the ceremony all American guests would receive a 10¢ piece wrapped in tissue paper . . . After everyone left, the food was generally taken by the Indians nearby and a big feast was held.
>
> The hearse, drawn by two horses, was extensively decorated in order to show proper respect for the deceased and his relatives and to show the adoration of the Celestial group he was leaving behind. The remains of the men were generally packed in a box and sent back to China. Where the women were buried was immaterial. (Barron 1974:458)

The last Chinese funeral to take place in Sonora was held in 1948. The deceased was Happy Hen Chow, the last Chinese resident of Sonora's Chinatown, and his funeral was very similar to the one described above. A Chinese consultant participated in the funeral and was able to recall details, even to the Indians who observed the affair and waited to eat the food that was to be left behind.

> 'While traveling in a desolate mountain region,' commented an early day Argonaut, 'I was impressed by the sad, lonely form of a Chinaman, walking pensively toward a solitary grave, and scattering little papers as he went. . . . his prayers to the spirit of his ancestors and the departed.' (Barron 1974:460)

As a child, consultant Irene Ponce observed a similar scene in the Chinese section of the Columbia cemetery from the window of the Columbia school (ca. 1905). She witnessed Chinese bringing food to the cemetery and remembers their scattering red pieces of crepe paper, symbols of their prayers to the ancestors.

Physically, the various Chinatowns were similar. They usually occupied one or two city blocks, housed between 200 and 400 souls and were constructed of wood. Many separate buildings shared common walls. A Chinese carpenter would use the exterior wall of one building as a wall for the immediately adjacent building. In this way, the Chinatown would become one continuous structure, and in the event of a fire, the whole settlement would be destroyed. The Chinatown of Sonora was surrounded on three sides by a covered porch. An open area behind the stores and residences was used for washing and social visits. Only Chinese were welcome in this courtyard. For the consultants who remembered it, Sonora's Chinatown was a particularly exotic spot with its shops and unusual odors.

Non-mining Trade and Labor

The overwhelming majority of the early Chinese were mine laborers, but some of these laborers were engaged in fence building. Mining was seasonal, and when impossible, laborers would turn to fence building or ditch digging. A few had other occupations such as storekeeper or restaurant operator. Ah Chi opened an eating establishment in Sonora in 1849, a very early date for an Asian business venture:

> His stove of creek stones covered with a piece of sheet iron served him well. Within his flimsy shack on Washington Street miners gathered around a pine table to eat wild pigeon pie and grizzly bear steak perfectly grilled. Ah Chi also make excellent dried apple pie. (Barron 1974:455)

As the placer gold ran out, the Chinese followed other occupations. Restaurants and stores remained among their principal businesses, but Chinese laundries became popular. Barron and Leonard state:

> Mr. Lun Kee ran a general merchandise store in Chinese Camp. (Barron 1974:454)

> In the middle of the block /Sonora's Chinatown/ was a fairly large store owned and operated by Kwong Wo Sr., a big strapping Chinaman, some 6'4" in height and weighing about 220 lbs. He was the head of Chinatown and generally all decisions were rendered by him. (Barron 1974:458)

> A Chinese called Jim Lee had a liquor store in the area of the Shawmut Mine. He also kept a group of Chinese slave girls there. . . Lee was also suspected of peddling opium on the side. (Barron 1974:455)

> Chong Kong operated a restaurant on Main Street /Angels Camp/ in 1856. A building on the back of the lot became the Pioneer Restaurant and was operated by Louie . . . (Leonard 1963:3)

> Ah Lee operated a laundry on Bush Street /Angels Camp/. Wah Ling leased the building from Mrs. McGaffey in 1908 and with several helpers carried on a laundry business. (Leonard 1963:3)

Those who could not afford to operate their own business worked for other Chinese or Whites as domestics or odd job men. Chinese cooks became fixtures in logging camps, construction camps, and on cattle ranches. These cooks were popular as the butt of many jokes and pranks. The following story related by "Doc" Dambacher reveals some of the hardships faced by these men:

> One cowboy suggested that they should let up on the teasing they had been giving their cook. They agreed and he was elected to inform the cook that there would be no more tricks.

This he did. The Chinaman asked him,
'You no more nail shoes to floor?'
The cowboy responded, 'No, we won't nail your shoes to the floor.'
'You no more tie Chinese queue to post?'
'No,' the cowboy answered, 'No more.'
'You no more put salt in the sugar bowl?'
'No, no.'
'O.K. Then I stop spit in soup!'

The Dambacher family was one of many employing a Chinese servant at the turn of the century. One consultant commented that she felt most recollections of the Chinese in living memory are derived from the relationships shared by children of the 1890's and 1900's with these family servants.

Another important non-mining occupation was gardening. Chinese living near many communities tended gardens and distributed produce with pole and baskets. Several Chinese gardened near Montezuma for the residents of Chinese Camp and other nearby communities. Ng Quoy ran a farm near Angels Camp, raising fruit, vegetables, and hogs.

The Chinese of Melones

Considering the thousands of Chinese who passed through the Mother Lode, it is remarkable how little is known of their daily lives. The language barrier was probably the greatest reason for the lack of personal contact. Perhaps many thought that the Chinese would remain to tell their own story as did other ethnic groups. Periodically, people do recognize the unique position of the Chinese and take the time to record their past. Such a person is Milo Bird, a former resident of Melones who appreciated his hometown and recorded its history accurately. Within Milo's memory are the last Chinese known to have lived in the Project Area.

While little is known of the early years of the last of the Chinese population of Melones, each represented a portion of the Chinese population's history. There was Yet Ben Nam the restaurant operator, Ah Lee the laundryman, Ah Yet the gardener, and Ah Tong the placer miner.

Yet Ben Nam may have been the most successful in terms of monetary gain. Operating a small restaurant in the town of Melones, he employed several Chinese as waiters, cooks and dishwashers.

Milo Bird would occasionally fill in for the many young Chinese waiters who seemed to leave their jobs without giving notice. Milo had a regular job making ice cream for the restaurant, and for his trouble, Yet Ben Nam let him lick the dasher, have a free bowl of his own ice cream, and paid him a dime.

Ah Lee was the local laundryman who lived with Ah Tong and Ah Yet near Coyote Creek. Apparently Ah Tong helped Ah Lee deliver the laundry at one time, but his failing health prevented him from continuing. Milo remembers how he dampened the clothes as he ironed by taking mouthsful of water and spraying it with great accuracy upon the area to be ironed. He also extracted snake oil from the snakes Ah Tong killed. He gave the oil to Ah Tong for his arthritic joints, and the remaining bit of snake meat, which resembled pork "cracklings," he would eat. Ah Lee gave young Milo a snake crackling one day when he picked up his mother's laundry. He ate it and thought it was good until Ah Lee told him what it was. A consultant stated that Ah Lee had a wife and son in China. The son reportedly became a successful doctor through Ah Lee's earnings. What finally became of Ah Lee is unknown. He may have been the same Ah Lee who opened a Chinese Laundry in Angels Camp, but this is not certain.

Ah Yet and Ah Tong were two individuals who attracted the attention of young Milo. He made a point of getting to know these two and developed great admiration for them. Milo Bird recalls Ah Tong and Ah Yet:

AH YET

> Ah Yet was old and bent when I first knew him. Not over five feet tall, he didn't weigh a hundred pounds, and he looked like a well cured piece of jerky. He had a garden at Bostick's Bar on the Stanislaus River from which place he dog-trotted around the country carrying two huge baskets of vegetables slung from a pole across his shoulders. Either one of those baskets of vegetables weighed as much as he did.
>
> Every week he stopped at our house across the river from Robinson's Ferry. He always had lichee nuts with him or a bit of cocoanut meat; sweets dear to the hearts of four growing boys; things that always made him welcome at our house.
>
> My mother bought all of her vegetables from him because they were always fresh and firm. After Ah Yet weighed out the vegetables he recorded the transaction in a little black notebook full of peculiar looking characters much resembling the crossed

sticks of a crow's nest. Wondering what they all meant, I one day mustered up enough courage to ask him. He pointed to a funny little figure at the head of a column of crows' nests and explained, "Dat foah boy momma."

That was my mother, I knew, because she had four boys. The next figure down the column meant "one pund beet - 2 cent." Next came "1 cabbage - 3 cent." And another character meant "two bitsie." That was the total bill my mother owed him at the time.

After we moved to Robinson's Ferry we didn't see Ah Yet for several months. Probably the twenty-five cents charged to ferry anyone across the river kept him away. However, one day I was out playing where I could watch the ferry as it plied across the river and back. On one of its trips back it seemed to be empty, but when the ramp was lowered, a little bent figure dog-trotted off and looked around.

I danced with joy and shouted "Ah Yet" at the top of my lungs. He heard me and came up the hill at a half run, his carrying pole bending precariously as his baskets swayed in harmony with his steps.

Upon reaching me he set his baskets down carefully and wiped his sweating brow with a big, bright red bandana. Then as a friendly grin crossed his leathery old face he asked, "Foah boy momma lip heah now?"

"Yeah," I told him, "Only now there's five boys."

His face brightened more than ever; five boys could eat more vegetables than four could.

Picking up his heavy baskets he started for the house. "I see momma now," he announced.

I took him into the house and clear into Mother's bedroom where she lay beside the new baby then only three days old.

"Now you fi' boy momma," Ah Yet announced as he took out his little black notebook and made a character at the head of a column on a clean page. Then he wanted to see the baby. When Mother threw back the covers he stood bug-eyed. Finally he exclaimed, "Big, big. How much pund?"

When Mother told him that the baby weighed ten pounds he sucked in his breath with a whistling sound and exclaimed again, "Chile baby no so big. Melicum baby velly big."

For several years after that Ah Yet carried his heavy load of vegetables from Bostick's Bar up to Robinson's Ferry. That was ten miles up and ten back over the roughest, steepest, mankillingest mountain trails a person could imagine, but he never lost his wonderful smile nor his happy disposition.

One day Mother asked him, "Ah Yet, why do you carry your vegetables all the way from Bostick's Bar? That's a long way and it's hard work."

He gave her a very logical answer, "Got gahden Bostick's Bah."

Mother then pointed out to him that the Pendola family owned a big garden just a mile from town and they would probably sell him vegetables cheaply enough that he could make a good profit on them.

His wonderful smile slowly faded as the import of her words got through to him. He wiped his forehead clear back to the long black queue hanging from the back of his head. Then without saying a word he stooped down between his baskets, raised up under the carrying pole and dog-trotted away.

Several days later he appeared at our house, a big smile separating the top of his head from his chin. "Pendola sell me veg'able all li'," he announced as he put down his baskets.

After wiping his forehead on the ever-ready bandana, he added, "You sabby Ah Lee, laundly man? I lip him hou'. Him want d'lively boy. Ah Tong too ol', no can walk fas'. I takee job. Now makee plenty money. I so fi' dollah weekee."

It was the longest speech we had ever heard him make. It was an ideal set-up for him. He could live in the laundry house with Ah Tong, the sluice box operator, and Ah Lee the laundry man and deliver clothes when he wasn't peddling vegetables.

The advent of hand operated washing machines gradually put Ah Lee out of business, but not Ah Yet. Since he visited every house in town he knew every housewife and listened to their tales of washday blues. Whenever one of them griped about running her washing machine, he took over the job. Soon, he kept busy going from one home to another doing peoples' laundry in their own machines.

Every morning, while dew was still on the grass, a little bent figure could be seen dog-trotting wraith-like along a road

or trail with his two heavy baskets of vegetables swinging rythmically from his carrying pole. Later in the day, Ah Yet would head for his next customer and turn out a complete weeks wash including ironing for "one dollah fi'ty cent."

By evening of the same day he could be found sitting placidly on the river bank fishing. Afterward, he wandered along the river looking for bits of scrap lumber, tin cans or anything else he might be able to use around the old laundry house. Yes, he had finally decided not to live with Ah Tong any longer. When asked why, he explained, "Ah Tong dutty allee same hog. Him nebbah wash. Smellee likee hog."

Little by little Ah Yet built his house. Stick by stick and can by can the walls grew taller. When they were about five feet high he laid poles, either round, square or crooked across from wall to wall. Across these he laid other sticks, mounding them up in the center to form a gable. Over this mound of sticks he carefully laid unsoldered tin cans from behind the restaurant. The unsoldering process was performed by putting the cans into a fire until the solder melted and ran off.

After his house was completed to his liking, he continued to bring driftwood home from the river. He stacked it against the outside walls until his house resembled a huge woodpile.

When Ah Tong died, Ah Yet was free to claim the Chinese laundry if he wished. He finally decided to tear it down and add it to his own house. He laid the heavy pieces at the bottom of his walls and threw the smaller pieces on his roof.

Now that Ah Tong was gone, Ah Yet met only the women folk whose washings he did or those who bought his vegetables. Apparently, that wasn't what he needed. He must have felt the need of male companionship; the need to associate with men where he could talk man to man. Since he had never known what miners talked about when they weren't working, he did a lot of listening when he first began coming to town evenings.

Our first intimation that Ah Yet was undergoing some sort of change came when we noticed him coming to town more frequently than usual. He would saunter into Baldy's saloon, flip a nickel upon the bar the way he had seen other men do and order a glass of beer. He would then carry his glass to a corner table, sit facing the other men and listen intently to their sprightly banter.

In addition to spending an occasional evening in the saloon he began to spend time around the general store. He

sat on benches with men along Main Street, tried playing a game or two of pool and even took in a moving picture show. But he didn't seem to make friends rapidly with the men he met that way. He evidently didn't realize that the shiny black queue hanging down his back definitely set him apart from them.

In addition, the little round quilted hat that fitted just the top of his head, the loosely fitting blue jacket with its voluminous sleeves, the baggy pants and the soft-soled slippers which he wore to town evenings were incongruous in the company of men wearing Fedoras, blue denim jackets, neatly pressed pants and brightly shined shoes.

Although none of the men ever mentioned those things, Ah Yet must have noticed the incongruity and decided to do something about it. But to cast off a form of dress he had used for seventy years and adopt American clothes undoubtedly was too much of a transition for him to make overnight. He changed gradually from his usual dress to one more in harmony with that of his new associates.

First, he discarded the little round quilted hat and showed up wearing a Fedora. It was too large for him and his Queue made it tip too far forward, but we showed him how to put folded newspapers inside the sweat band so it would fit his head.

We were not conscious of when he discarded his coolie jacket for one made of blue denim and which was known as a "jumper" in the mining country. One by one we realized that he had made the change. Shortly afterward we noticed him wearing a pair of neatly pressed pants instead of the baggy ones he usually wore.

Shortly after this final metamorphosis had taken place we noticed that he was letting his hair grow. He no longer shaved it back to the base of his queue. When asked about it, he explained, "I Melicum man now. Pletty soon cut queue." We didn't believe he would do it, but one day he walked into the barber shop, handed the barber thirty-five cents and said, "Cut haih Melicum style."

For several years after that, Ah Yet came to town every evening to talk to people whom he met at the grocery store. And then came the day when he failed to show up to do a laundry. At first, the woman thought that he might have forgotten. She sent her son to his house to see if he could locate him. He was looking at that mass of firewood which constituted Ah Yet's house when he heard a groan from within it. He ran to town and got help. When the men got to Ah Yet, he was pinned down by a caved-in roof.

"It'ink so tlee day," Ah Yet told his rescuers. For three days he had lain there on his bed pinned down so tightly by the hundreds of pounds of sticks that had formed the mound in the center of his roof.

When Ah Yet complained that he couldn't move his left leg they undressed him and found the leg swollen and dark blue. A doctor's efforts were of no avail. Ah Yet died two days later in the county hospital. With his passing the town lost the most lovable and highly respected man it had ever known. All of us, young and old, man, woman and child felt that we were far richer for having known him. His Tong in San Francisco sent the remains of that lovable character back to China for burial in the land of his ancestors. And thus ended the career of a wonderful little guy; a Melicum man to his death.

(Bird n.d.:290-297)

AH TONG

I first saw Ah Tong when the school teacher, Miss Isabella Campbell, sent Aurelio Moreno and me down to the spring for a bucket of water. The spring was nothing more than a hole in the gravel beside Coyote Creek. There in the middle of the creek stood an old, old man shovelling gravel into a trough. Since I was new in the Mother Lode I didn't know that the trough was a sluice box nor that the old man was Chinese, one of the few left over of the thousands who flocked into California during the days of gold fever. But Aurelio knew and enlightened me.

That evening I nearly pestered the life out of Dad trying to learn all I could about getting gold out of dirt by shovelling it into a trough. I, too, wanted to get gold out of that creek but didn't know how to go about it. Dad didn't know either because he had been raised in Kansas where there wasn't any gold. However, he suggested that I watch the old Chinaman and learn how he did it.

I had difficulty getting acquainted with that superannuated Chinese. As I reflect now I realize how morose and distant he was; how far he was set apart from all other people both Oriental and Occidental. He was suspicious of everybody old and young; even me, a skinny little eight-year old kid.

Every Saturday and Sunday I went to the creek and watched Ah Tong. When school was out for the summer I practically lived on gravel banks near his sluice box. Day after day I sat there

and watched everything he did. I don't suppose he ever fully understood my motives. He didn't speak much English and I didn't know a single word of Chinese. Even if we could have conversed freely it would have been impossible for me to explain why I had attached myself, so leach-like, to him. I couldn't have explained that I was interested in everything technical, and to me at that age even a simple sluice box was highly scientific.

Ah Tong was stocky, well built. He stood about five feet four inches tall when he straightened up and he weighed close to one hundred and seventy-five pounds. His shoulders were broad and his legs were thick and heavy. A long braid of jet black hair hung clear to his waist line. And his color was that of the rind on a slab of smoke cured bacon. The thing that intrigued me most of all was the nail on the little finger of his left hand. It stuck out at least half an inch beyond the tip of his finger.

Ah Tong gradually took me for granted, like a dog does his fleas. He no longer scowled at me when I popped up over a pile of gravel and yelled, "Good mornin', Ah Tong." Instead, a kindly smile that disclosed his toothless gums would spread across his face and he would straighten up long enough to give me a friendly wave.

By the end of that first summer he let me watch him clean out his sluice box before he went home at night. In his few words of English he explained how mud and silt and sand washed over his riffles while gold and black sand and nails and lead shot stayed in them. He showed me how he stopped the flow of water in his box by using a slide gate at the upper end. While explaining this to me he carefully lifted out his riffles and washed them carefully in his prospect pan. Then he picked up all of the concentrate from the sluice box bottom using a small scoop shaped like a pancake turner with the edges turned up. The entire contents of the box went into that pan. He then squatted down beside the creek and slowly panned the concentrate until nothing but black sand and a tiny rill of gold was left in the pan. Every nail, no matter how rusty, and every lead shot went into pockets of his faded blue jumper (Jacket). He threw away the small rocks and the numerous cubes of pyrite. When nothing was left but gold and black sand, he tucked the pan under his arm and trudged down the creek.

Another school year passed and we were well into our next summer before I ever learned how Ah Tong separated gold from black sand. It was nearly noon that day before I got to

the creek. As usual I had stopped at a fig tree and had filled every pocket with big ripe figs. Upon reaching Ah Tong's sluice box I found him eating a dry crust of bread and something that didn't look very appetizing. When I handed him a couple of my figs he broke into a big smile and dug down into one of his jumper pockets. In a moment he came up with two lichee nuts.

That evening when he cleaned up his sluice box I watched intently, as usual, and after he was satisfied that his pan contained nothing but gold and black sand I mustered up enough courage to ask, "How d'ye get the gold out?"

After turning my question over in his mind he replied, "Use magget."

I knew that maggots lived in rotten food but I didn't know that they could be trained to separate gold from black sand.

"Can I watch ?" I asked shyly.

In a moment he answered, "You good boy, you come my hou'."

In his house, which was a little hut built of packing crates, driftwood and old fruit cans, he set his prospect pan at the back of his fireplace and let the water evaporate slowly. Meanwhile, he cooked a pot of rice and heated water for tea.

As soon as the black sand was thoroughly dry he meticulously poured it out upon a sheet of clean white paper. Then he carefully removed the black sand with a horseshoe magnet. This required several operations because the small cluster of black sand that spanned between the poles of his magnet often picked up a fleck of gold, far too precious to be wantonly tossed away.

After satisfying himself that the gold was clean, he picked up the paper by its four corners and snapped the gold into a tiny rill at the bottom. He then laid the paper down and from a secret recess of his fireplace brought out a bromo seltzer bottle, removed its stopper and set on his doorstep. He cradled the paper in his right hand, tapped it gently to make the rill form again, then with a deft scoop he picked up every piece of gold with that fancy fingernail on his left hand. He put the paper down inside his prospect pan and carefully poured the gold into the bottle. Without taking his fingernail away from the neck of the bottle, he examined it closely to be sure that every fleck had gone into the bottle.

While he was putting the cork back into the bottle I blurted, "What are you gonna do when you get the bottle full of gold?"

He cocked his head to one side, thinking out every word. "I go Chile," he replied.

"Back to China, huh?"

"You savvy Chile?"

I thought a moment. Yes, I had heard of China. I didn't know where it was nor why anyone would want to go there. Again my inquisitiveness asserted itself. "Why do you want to go to China?" I asked.

A scowl crossed his face. "I cut het?" he replied indicating his action by a slashing motion across his throat.

That was a new facet. I had never seen the old man in such an angry mood; morose, yes, but never angry.

"You gonna cut somebody's head off?" I asked unbelievingly.

He picked up a small bowl that had green dragons painted on its sides, dropped a few tea leaves into it and filled it with hot water from a can at the back of his fireplace. Holding his teacup in both hands, he sat in his doorway where the final rays of the sun could shine upon his back. Then he made the longest speech I had ever heard him make.

"One time hab heap gold. Sell, buy tickee go Chile. Nother Chile boy steal tickee, go Chile. Bimeby go Chile, cut het."

There in his own words was the reason for his moroseness; for his distrust of everybody, for his wanting to be left alone; even for his original fear of me. This was no doubt the reason it took me so long to make friends with him.

But Ah Tong never went back to China. He never had a chance to revenge himself by cutting the head off the boy who stole his ticket and went back to China on it. Rheumatism, in spite of the snake oil that he rubbed on his knees and ankles, finally got the best of him and had to be committed to the county hospital in San Andreas where he died still hoping to go to "Chile."

Did I say he never went back to China? Well, that isn't quite right. After his death enough gold was found in his house to send his body to his Tong in San Francisco, and they in turn sent his remains to the land of his fathers where he could sleep with his ancestors in the land he loved so much.

(Bird n.d.:298-303)

Ah Yet was a Chinese entrepreneur, willing to deal closely with the White population and unafraid to use his broken English. Worthy of note is his association with Bostwick Bar, the former site of many Chinese diggings, and the fact that he hiked several miles to distribute his produce to best advantage. By far the most unusual feature of his personality was his desire to become an American. Perhaps if he had lived long enough and earned enough, he would have returned to China; but for a man of his age to change as Ah Yet did required a certain amount of rejection of his previous culture (Plate 2).

Ah Tong represents the poor placer miner who was never able to return to China. To have saved enough for the return only to have it stolen must have been a terrible tragedy. The picture of old Ah Tong in Coyote Creek day after day operating his sluice for what must have been very little is particularly touching. Apparently he never gave up hope of returning; but when he did return, he was in no position to avenge the wrong that had been done. Both of these stories are remarkable documents, the most detailed glimpses into the daily lives of rural Chinese on record, and relate directly to the Project Area.

The Return to China

Little is known of the Chinese who returned to their homeland, and the political situation in China at present prohibits a free flow of information regarding former sojourners to the United States. There are some bits of information which give a very limited picture of the strong desire to return.

Soon after the first appearance of Chinese in California, Perkins writes:

> The pigtail is the glory of John Chinaman, and he must have made up his mind never to return to his country who sacrifices it. In San Francisco there are not more than three or four tailless Celestials, and their countrymen undoubtedly look upon them with the same feeling of contempt which was meted to the fox in the fable by his companions.
>
> (Perkins 1964:338-339)

Mark Hanna spent a number of years working in the Phillipines with Chinese workers. He commented that in Southeast Asia the Chinese sojourner shared the same interest in returning to China displayed in the United States. He commented that the Chinese had "a remarkable homing instinct."

Willy Lee was a cook for Grandma Rolleri in the Calaveras Hotel in Angels Camp for many years. Willy engaged his sons as dishwashers and managed a crew of helpers (as many as five). After Willy returned to China, he sent Grandma Rolleri two inlaid teak chairs. Later he returned to the United States to work for Grandma Rolleri again, and under his direction the kitchen developed a favorable reputation (Leonard 1963:3). It is not known whether or not he managed to return to China a second time, but according to Milo Bird, a serviceman (a native of Angels Camp) sightseeing in China after WWII met an unidentified Chinese who asked in English if the young soldier knew Grandma Rolleri.

A Chinese consultant who was born in Hawaii traveled to China for his education and then returned to the United States. He said that he had met relatives in China who had been to the United States and returned before the year 1903. His relatives had worked in fruit orchards near Stockton and had managed to save enough money to buy a small rice farm and spend their remaining years in comfort.

In discussing the attraction of the homeland with this same consultant, many hypothetical situations were presented to him. "Would a man return to China if he owned property in the United States and had a family?" "Would a man return to China if he had high status here and would have low status in China?" The answer was invariably, "Yes, he would return to China if he could." This same consultant was fond of using the analogy of a tree and its leaves in comparing the relationship of a sojourner to his homeland. The tree is rooted in the earth and though its leaves may grow far from the earth, they must return to the native soil. The roots of the tree never move from the place in which they grow. When asked why he never returned to China, the consultant said that no one wishes to return to China as long as the Communists are in control.

The Chinese played a significant role in the history of the Project Area, but because of the nature of their visit, it will probably be never fully documented. The Chinese recognized the Gold Rush as an opportunity to make enough money to alter their lives in China. They had no intention of staying in the United States and tolerated conditions here with the serenity and patience because they knew it was only temporary.

There is no group to boast of the achievements of the Chinese miners in the same fashion that the E Clampus Vitus does for the White miners. The Chinese Historical Society of America has done much to document the history of the Chinese miners throughout the United States, but has not popularized their achievements. The

modern cultural historian and historical archaeologist must recover as much of the history of these sojourners as possible to place in proper perspective the role they played in the development of the Modern West.

The wall-like structures at the confluence of Angels Creek and the Stanislaus River should be carefully surveyed. It should be determined whether or not the structures are diversion dams and whether or not they are Chinese constructions. If they are, the location of the associated mining camp should be determined and excavated. Through such an excavation, it may be possible to discover whether or not the Chinese who did the mining were independent miners operating on a cooperative basis or company miners operating on a labor contract basis.

Bostwick Bar and the surrounding area should be carefully surveyed for Chinese mining camps and the original home of Ah Yet. All large Chinese mining camps discovered should be recommended for excavation to help fill the scanty historical record.

If further information is required regarding the Chinese in the Project Area, it is suggested that a researcher attempt to contact former residents of the Project Area in the Chinatowns of San Francisco or Sacramento or in the small Chinese community of Locke, California. A few Chinese children were reported to have lived close to the Project Area during or soon after the turn of the century. These individuals, if surviving, could prove to be the best links with the past. One such consultant could double the information now available. Much valuable information may reside in the archives of some of the hui kuan, but gaining access to them would be a major coup. The activity of the Chinese in the Project Area should be properly documented with memorials or a museum after the New Melones Dam is constructed.

PLATE 1

Possible "wing dam" on Angels Creek. The stone wall parallel to the creek in the center of the photograph might have been a diversion or wing dam. The dam was used to divert the flow of the creek so that the creek bed could be more easily and extensively mined. Mounds of disturbed earth between the wall and the creek indicate mining activity. As the data on the Chinese in the area speculate, this and similar dams in the Project Area, may have been the product of the collective labor of the large Chinese "companies."

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 2

Ah Yet in Melones. Ah Yet is shown seated in the back of the wagon. Branham McCabe, is the teamster on the left, and Cecil Dieren is his helper. The Tramontini and Canepa store is in the background. The railroad crossing is visible in the upper central portion of the photography. (circa 1915)

From the collection of Milo Bird,
San Rafael, California



PLATE 1



PLATE 2

CHAPTER 4

SPANISH SPEAKERS IN AND AROUND THE PROJECT AREA

Most of the Spanish-speaking people who entered the Project and the immediately surrounding areas came and left between 1848 and 1860, though a very large majority were gone by 1851 as the result of the Foreign Miners' Tax and other acts of persecution by the American miners. While in the area, the Spanish-speaking people had considerable impact on many facets of the life of all other groups. They introduced mining techniques, supplied staples not otherwise available, and were a ready supply of labor as well as the primary consumers of certain goods. Uniquely, they brought women and families with them earlier and in greater numbers than did other groups. Some women also came as prostitutes and attractions for saloons, restaurants and gambling houses.

In general most Spanish-speaking people came to the area to mine or earn money from the miners. Most returned to their respective countries--though a small minority remained for several generations (an even smaller number remain today).

The format for this section takes advantage of the split in information on these people. The information in the literature deals almost exclusively with the period from Spanish exploration of the area in the early 1800's to about 1860, while consultants deal almost exclusively with the period from 1895 to the present. From the literature, a comprehensive collage of the Spanish-speaking immigrants' views during the early Gold Rush period may be formulated. The information available from consultants is much more limited. Information on the period from 1860 to 1895 is completely lacking. The period saw the decline of placer mining and its practitioners throughout the southern mines, and predated the period of company mining in the Melones area (also see Chapters 6 and 7).

Demography

In the earliest days of the Rush (1848) and until enforcement of the Foreign Miners' Tax (1850), Spanish-speaking people comprised a numerical majority in the Project Area and the areas surrounding it.

> The Americans of Sonora and that vicinity were from the first outnumbered by the foreign population, and only united action saved them from being overwhelmed. There were but nineteen 'white men,' two of whom were Frenchmen, four Spaniards,

and the rest English, Scotch, and Americans, in Sonora Camp in 1848: the rest of its population were Mexicans and Chilians. (Shinn 1948:197)

The Spanish-speaking people were generally treated and viewed as a single group by the Americans although there were obvious differences in their life styles.

The main groups were Mexican (primarily from Sonora), Chilenos and, at least early in the Rush (1848-49), Californios (native Californians). Additional contingents came from Argentina, Peru, and Bolivia. The Americans, who could not distinguish between Chilenos and Mexicans, had difficulty with the even more subtle differences between Sonorans, New Mexicans (New Mexico was still part of Mexico) and Californios (Perkins 1964:20).

Antonio Franco Coronel, a Californio, along with his party of thirty, mined along the Stanislaus southwest of the Project Area in the summer and fall of 1848. He met other Californios and New Mexicans during that period and had at least one Sonoran, Chino Tirador, with his party (Perkins 1964:22-24).

In the fall and winter of 1848 a large migration began from Sonora, and by December of 1848 ". . . Mexicans from Sonora were daily passing /Yuma/ 'on their way to the . . . gold mines'" (Perkins 1964:20). This was also substantiated by Caughey who relates:

> Mexico got news /of the Gold Rush/ fairly promptly, and towards the end of the summer /'48/ her northwest provinces, Sonora in particular, were contributing a substantial flow of prospectors. The men of Sonora included many skilled miners. They preferred the southern diggings, and they left the name of their state on its principal town. (Caughey 1948:23-24)

Around April or May of 1849 Sonora was a fast-growing camp. The Spanish-speaking population grew to several thousand by August (Perkins 1964:26; Shinn 1948:133). A correspondent "S.W.," for the Alta California from Woods Diggings /less than five miles from the Project Area/ described the Sonoran migration to the Project Area in May of 1849 as follows:

> The immigration for the past two days has been less than usual. Now and then, a party appears on its winding way, composed principally of Mexicans, with their lances and red

> flags. . . . This afternoon the line of march seems to be resumed, and the apparently interminable array is again in motion. One may well ask 'where do they come from? and what country is likely to be depopulated?' for some parts of the world must be thinning their ranks very rapidly.
> (Perkins 1964:26)

The Sonoran migration differed from those of other groups in that it often involved whole families who would arrive, work several months and then return to Mexico. Although the term Sonoran is used to distinguish immigrants from that particular state in Mexico, there were also immigrants from the states of Sinaloa, Chihuahua and Durango (Smith 1976:personal communication; Pitt 1968:54).

The internal political upheaval experienced in Mexico (they had recently lost a war to the United States), and in the northwest states in particular, contributed substantially to the migration. In addition, some of the large ranch owners of northwest Mexico sent groups of their "peons" to the gold fields to mine for them (Smith 1976: personal communication). The northern Mexican patrons encouraged the migration of the peons by sponsoring expeditions of twenty or thirty underlings at a time, sponsoring them in return for half of their gold findings in California. The migration included a broad spectrum of the population of Sonora and Sinaloa, and was so large and continuous throughout 1850 that it compelled the governors of northern Mexico to caution their people about the dangers of life on gringo soil (Pitt 1968:54).

Chileans comprised a second large block of Spanish-speaking immigrants to the mines of California.

> From January, 1848 to July, 1849, a total of three thousand passports were issued by the Chilean government. Twenty-nine hundred of these applications were for California and it was estimated that 5,000 Chileans entered California without passports. . . . Of the 3,614 arrivals during July 1849, only 210 were from Chile, and it was estimated that 3,000 had come from the United States. (Giacobbi 1967:22)

Further information indicates that this influx continued throughout 1849:

> The emigration of the Chileans to the gold fields of California continued unabated. In the early months . . . the Chileans constituted a very significant minority. Between April 12 and June 30, 1849, 5,677 males and 209 females came by sea to California--the Chilean immigrants numbering 1,360 males and 70 females. (Giacobbi 1967:18)

Unlike the Sonorans, the majority of Chileans came by sea, embarking from Valparaiso along with goods and stores for the mines (Lopez 1973:xiii). During the 1840's and 1850's the political situation in Chile was characterized by the rule of "enlightened despots" and in general by political stability. The composition of the immigrant group from Chili is discussed in detail by Perkins:

> The immigration of Chili is much more of a mixed character /than that of Argentina/. Men of all classes have come from there; for Chile is not only a seaboard country, but its people are infinitely more enterprising than any other of the spanish /sic/ Republics of South America; and they have a very respectable marine. It has consequently been no difficult matter for Chilenos, of even the lower class, to make their way to California.
>
> (Perkins 1964:222)

Many of the Chilenos came to California with the advantage of experience in the mining of gold, silver and copper in their native country, and willingly shared their expertise. ". . . they taught the 'anglos' how to dig shafts and pan for gold, and how to select the most promising places" (Lopez 1973:xii). Like the Sonorans, the Chileans ". . . often brought their women with them to the mines" (Giacobbi 1967:19).

The impact on Chili is apparent from the following observation by Giacobbi:

> The pressures on the Chilean Argonaut were also directed from his own quarter. El Mercurio reported that the emigration had reached epidemic proportions and the loss of so many of Chile's people constituted a threat to Chilean industry. El Dia of Valparaiso expressed further concern over the emigration, and suggested some radical solutions to the problem. One suggestion was to prohibit further emigration to California; another, was to prevent any Chilean from leaving the country. El Mecurio went so far as to state that the emigration was bad because the people who were returning had lost many or all of their religious convictions. (Giacobbi 1967:23)

Argentinos were a third group of Spanish people who came to the Project Area early in the Rush. This group, smaller in number than the Sonorans and Chilenos, was present in Sonora in 1849 (Perkins 1964:285). There is strong evidence to suggest that the majority of Argentine immigrants were political refugees from the regime of Rosas, then dictator of Argentina. Rosas, who had come into power some

years earlier, was the head of a highly repressive and violent government characterized by the emigration and exile of the intellectual aristocrat (Perkins 1964:285; Smith 1976: personal communication). Most of the Argentinos were from this social class. They, like the Sonorans and Chileans, brought women with them to the gold field. Perkins writes:

> For instance: the immigration from the Argentine Republic is composed almost exclusively of men of education and family. The reason is simple, Rosas, the Tyrant of Buenos Ayres, is governing with the half savage masses, and has driven more than half of the aristocracy from the country. Large portions of these banished families are in Chile, others in Bolivia, in Peru, and Brazil. None of the lower orders of Argentinos have left their country, which is so far off, and presents so few facilities for leaving, that a poor man cannot get out of it. (Perkins 1964:222)

The Peruvians and Bolivians were usually of the aristocracy. "Of Peruvians and Bolivians there are very few, and none of the lower class" (Perkins 1964:223). Their governments were in a fairly constant state of turmoil but not to the extent described in Argentina (Smith 1976: personal communication). In 1849 during a three-month period from April to June, there were 227 males and 21 female Peruvian arrivals by sea (Perkins 1964:29). There may have been further immigrants from other South or Central American countries, but there are no specific oral or written references to their presence in or near the Project Area.

The Southern mines were the destination of most of the Spanish-speaking people in the early days of the Rush.

> It is singular that the state should be thus divided by nature into two sections of country so unlike in many important points; and that the people inhabiting them should help to heighten the contrast is equally curious, though it may possibly be accounted for by supposing that Frenchmen, Mexicans, and other foreigners, preferred the less wild-looking country and more temperate winters of the southern mines . . . (Borthwick 1857:307)

The dates given for the founding of Sonora, capital of the Southern mines, differ in the literature from the summer of 1848 to spring 1849, but certain particulars of its founding are constant--it was settled by Sonorans from that state of Mexico. Several accounts of the founding and initial growth of this town illustrate the number of Spanish-speaking people in the immediate area of the Project during this period:

Sonora was founded by Mexicans who came overland from Sonora, Mexico, by the Mission Trail, from Monterey to Mission San Jose, then over the Sierra Nevadas.

> They arrived at Woods Creek in the summer of '48 and were met with sour looks by the Americans there. They went up Woods Creek to the place where it met Sonora Creek, called the new spot Sonorian Camp, after their home district, set up a temporary village of canvas and brush huts and little mud ovens, and struck it very rich at the bottom of the two creeks. (Wells and Peterson 1949:137)

One correspondent wrote to the Picayune, a New Orleans newspaper, in August of 1849 from Woods Diggings (Jamestown) describing the founding of Sonora in essentially the same terms. "The Mexicans and South Americans," he said, number 8,000 . . ." (Perkins 1964:26). Both Perkins and Stoddart give the population of Sonora in July of 1849 as 5,000, the majority of whom were Mexicans and South Americans (preponderantly Chilean) (Perkins 1964:100; Stoddart as quoted by De Ferrari 1963:101). The highest estimate comes from Shinn who writes, "The several hundred dwellers in and about the Mexican or 'Sonorian' camp were reinforced as early as July, 1849 by fully fifteen thousand foreigners . . ." (Shinn 1948: 133). Giacobbi supports this larger figure: "The greatest population convergence of Chilean miners was in Sonora, where the estimated Chilean and Mexican population was 12,000" (Giacobbi 1967:20). Although the figures vary from 5,000 to 15,000, it is evident that the Spanish-speaking population in and around Sonora in 1849 was very substantial, and their numbers gave them a distinct advantage.

Within one to four miles of the Project Area were other concentrations of Spanish-speakers. "At Woods Creek, there were approximately 1,000 Mexicans and Chileans" (Giacobbi 1967:20). There were Mexican camps at Columbia (at first called New or Spanish Town); "Saw Mill Flat had large numbers of Mexicans, Chilenos and Peruvians in 1850-1851" (Shinn 1948:231). They were also found in the vicinity of Tuttletown (Marryat 1952:258). There is an additional reference to their presence in Mormon Diggings in 1850, and Gunn notes the presence of Peruvians and Mexicans near the Stanislaus in 1849 (Gunn 1928:72, 73). Others speak of their living during the same period at Vallecito (Weston 1948:82) and there is confirmation of this from a consultant, Wanda James of Vallecito. Gerstaecker also speaks of Mexicans and Chileans in the Murphy's diggings (Gerstaecker 1946:64, 94).

Melones was reported to have been settled early in the year 1848 by a party of Mexican miners. By 1849 they had built at least one structure there (Weston 1948:78, 82) and were residing there in numbers in 1851 along with Chileans (Perkins 1964:221). During the same period, Mexicans were also living and working on Carson Creek (downstream from Melones). Borthwick reported that while they were living there during the early 1850's, they were employed by an American company (Borthwick 1929:324-325). Consultants consistently reported their presence in Melones from the 1890's until the final closing of the mine in the early 1940's. These Spanish people were not long-term settlers of the area, but primarily single men and families who had come from Mexico for the work. There are a few examples of families residing in the area for several generations and these include both Chileans (Ponce family) and Mexicans (Paredes family) still in the area. But most consultants, while aware there had been large numbers of Spanish-speaking people in the area, had little information to offer about their demographic distribution.

Life Styles (1848-1860)

Many aspects of the lifestyles of the Spanish-speaking immigrants during the Gold Rush and the period immediately following (1848-1860) were chronicled by early diarists. They described the typical cultural patterns of the peoples at Sonora and other camps in immediate proximity to the Project Area. Since Sonora was the gathering place for Spanish-speaking people for a radius of considerable distance, it would probably have served as such for residents and miners of the Project Area. Many Spanish-speaking miners who lived in Sonora or its outlying areas worked in mining camps during the week, and some would probably have worked along the Stanislaus (a rich area within a few hours walk) (Monaghan 1973:134). Another description of these living/working commuting patterns appears in Perkins:

> The men had constructed brush houses and, leaving their wives and children in charge, separated in all directions in search of the richest diggings . . . to return to the camp and their families on Saturday. (Perkins 1964:103)

Monaghan in a similar description states:

> Many of the men left town every Monday morning to work mining claims, some as far away as 10 miles. They would camp close to their work and return on Saturday to wives and families in Campo de Sonora for a grand weekend spree.
> (Monaghan 1973:134-135)

Although most Spanish-speaking people came to the 'southern mines' to prospect, others came as entrepreneurs in mercantile areas, as well. As Pitt describes:

> The Sonorans came on swiftly, heedless of any warnings, knowing that they had vital services to offer California--as prospectors and hired hands, as supply merchants and mule skinners, also as monte gamblers and prostitutes. The leading merchants of Altar and Horcasitas, Sonoran towns near the international boundary, stripped their shelves in the spring of 1849, loaded up every available pack animal and scurried for the mines. There they sold everything they had brought, dug some gold, and shortly left their followers to return to Sonora for new stock or for quick investments in Mexican securities--much of this accomplished before most of the Yankee Argonauts had even arrived. (Pitt 1968:54)

Perkins states, "The lower orders /of Chileans/ are sturdy miners, and the better classes, sharp merchants. The latter class is seldom seen at hard work, but have made large fortunes in commerce" (Perkins 1964:222). In discussing Argentine merchants, he refers to them as "generally honorable in their mercantile transactions" (Perkins 1964:222).

The importance to the entire local economy in 1849-1850 of Chileans as importers and merchants may be gleaned from an account by Perkins who writes in June of 1850 that because of a summer dry spell everyone had been forced to feed the animals on barley, which came from Chile (Perkins 1964:165).

> Even if the stores of Valparaiso had been depleted, the rich Chilean central valley kept the California population from going hungry. In 1853 Chile was the leading country in exports to California: 127 ships with a total of 37,370 tons. The most important product was flour. Chileans mills in Concepcion province kept grinding grain twenty-four hours a day. (Lopez 1973:xiii)

Sonora, Mexico exported an enormous array of products to the state as well.

> Merchants in Sonora reaped a harvest importing from Mexico brilliant sarapes, fancy saddles, neatly braided riatas, warm blankets, lace mantillas, cashmere shawls, bolts of gay cotton cloth, silk stockings, satin slippers, and even rolls of velvet,

along with cornmeal, raw and crystallized sugar, chili peppers, and beans. Restaurants served venison and bear meat, spicy tamales, coffee in pewter cups, or wine imported on muleback from south of the border. (Monaghan 1973:135)

This enthusiasm on the part of exporters was welcomed by miners:

> Sonoran peddlers marched into the mines and sold 10,000 pack mules in three years, thereby depressing the prices of mules (from $500 to $150 a head in a matter of weeks) and of freight rates (from $75 to $7 per hundred weight in two months). (Pitt 1968:57)

The Mexicans were famed as handlers of pack trains and as mule skinners. Before the development of roads, the mule train was the primary method of transporting freight. ". . . the Mexican arrieros (mule skinners) were the most reliable of hired hand--skillful, proud of their work, and sure to get the pack train through the worst blizzard over the toughest mountain trail" (Pitt 1968:59).

Gunn in his diary speaks of having hired two Peruvians to build his adobe house at Jamestown (some four miles from the Project Area) (Gunn 1928:75). Other miscellaneous references to "peons" being used to pack lumber on their backs up Jackass Hill to build a store (Buckbee 1935:331), and the various performers at the bullfights including matadors (Borthwick 1929"336) are mentioned in the literature. Lopez discusses the presence of Chilean stone cutters, who made the wheels for "arrastras" or Chili Mills for mining.

> Since a large number of . . . /these wheels/ are still in existence today, we can presume there was a large number of Chilenos in this trade. However, the 1852 Census only lists two as 'stonecutters.' This would indicate a very poor count among the Chileno residents of California. (Lopez 1973:xii)

In the early days of the Gold Rush (1848 and early in '49), Californios were mining in the area. They often came in companies composed of a patron and laborers. The latter often included 'mission' or Yaqui Indians and Sonorans.

> In all, about 1300 native Californians mined gold in 1848, the year of the bonanzas. If they had missed the opportunity to discover Sierra gold in the past, they did not do so now; nearness to the placers gave them the head start on the thousands of prospectors still getting their wits together for the voyage

halfway around the world. The Californios had additional advantages in knowing precisely where and how to find gold and in gladly pooling their resources and dividing their labor. As a result, the organized Californians, though less numerous than the 4,000 individualistic Yankees in the mines that year, probably extracted as much gold as they did. (Pitt 1968:50)

The Sonoran was also considered by many to be excellent in this field. Stellman writes of them:

> The pathfinders of the Gold Rush . . . were roving bands of Mexicans called Sonorians because they hailed from the great mining province of the southern republic out of which California had been torn as a trophy of war. They came from its veta madre, or Mother Lode, a name they bestowed on the huge quartz belt they unearthed in the new land.
>
> These were expert miners. . . . They opened both the placers and the quartz veins of the Mother Lode, locating some of the richest camps that flourished in the forties and early fifties. (Stellman 1934:33)

Pitt adds that the Sonorans gravitated toward the tributaries of the San Joaquin River, or the "Southern mines." Their mining abilities were considered phenomenal:

> Sonorans somehow could probe the topsoil with knives and bring up nuggets, or work the batea (pan) to great advantage. Where water was scarce and quartz plentiful, as in the southern mines, they had the endurance to sit for hours and winnow dirt in their serapes, sometimes using their own gargantuan breath if the wind died down. They could also improvise the arrastra (mill), consisting of a mule harnessed to a long spoke treading in a circle and grinding ore under a heavy, flat boulder. Others eventually caught on . . . but the Sonorans' sixth sense for finding gold and their willingness to endure physical hardship gave them great advantages. (Pitt 1968:54-55)

Many writers take note of the "air washing" of gold by the Sonoran miners (Quaife 1949:199-200). Colton describes its usefulness in "dry washing" where separation of small particles of gold is difficult. They separated the gold from the gravel and dust much as farmers used to separate the wheat from the chaff. But in this case the wind was supplied by their own lungs (Colton 1949:306),

Gerstaecker describes a group of Mexicans near Murphy's:

> . . . and here and there, in perfectly dry gulches, where no other miner would think of looking or at least of trying for gold, small parties of Mexicans were at work . . . We saw them here putting the dry hard earth into their round wooden bowls--the only diggers, in fact, who carried and used wooden wash-pans--rubbing the earth into dust with their hands, and then blowing it away from the heavier gold; but it requires the lungs of a Mexican to do that longer than a quarter of an hour. (Gerstaecker 1946:94-95)

The experienced Chilean miner was described by Perkins as "excellent" (Perkins 1964:222). Lopez writes of these miners and their tools:

> They . . . made use of some of the techniques they had learned in their native country: cracks in the ricks [sic] were picked with the long curvy knife, the 'corvo;' sands were tested with a 'poruna,' the hollowed horn of a cow or steer. When there was not enough water to wash, they used the 'aventamiento' method or 'dry washing,' and if the ore needed crushing, they improved the Mexican 'arrastre' [sic] by providing it with a stone wheel and giving it a new name: the 'Chili Mill.' (Lopez 1973:xii)

The Chilians' experience in mining in their own country stood them in good stead when the gold-bearing streams were worked out. They began mining the quartz veins in the hillsides.

The Mexicans had devised the arrastra, or drag mill for crushing the quartz. The Chileans improved on this by substituting a larger, heavier, stone for the upper stone of the mill. This stone, in both cases, was dragged in a circular motion over the granite placed between the upper and lower stone wheels, crushing more rock in a shorter period of time. The "Chili Mill" "made Sonora one of the leading gold-producing areas of the mother lode, and the southern diggings attracted gold seekers of all races. Some accounts claim as many as 20,000 men worked there" (Monaghan 1973:137).

A unique description of Chilean family mining is given by Daniel Woods during his travels near the Project Area in 1857.

> Jan. 7th. Prospected with Captain Wadsworth at the Chilian diggings. This is an open level field, through which a stream formerly ran, but which now has so little water that many of

> the miners take the dirt to the river to be washed. Here was a large settlement of Chilenos, who have come from their own gold mines to try their fortune here. They often bring their families with them. I saw one family, the father of which, assisted by the older children, was 'panning out' gold on a stream near his rude home made of hides. The mother was washing clothes, while the infant was swinging in a basket made fast to the branches overhead. An interesting girl of five years, with a tiny pick and spade, was digging in a hole, already sunk two feet, and putting the dirt in a pan, which she would take to the stream and wash, putting the scale or two of gold into a dipper a little larger than a thimble.
>
> (Woods 1857:99-100)

This group's monetary success is partially detailed by Giacobbi:

> In 1851 a group of Chileans and Mexicans dug out $500,000 in gold at Carson Hill in just a few months. In a gulch at Jamestown . . . recently worked over and abandoned, three Chilenos took out $15,000 in gold in two weeks. The greatest pocket mine ever discovered was called the "Big Bonanza." It was located in the heart of Sonora and was first worked by Chilenos in 1851. In November, 1850, a company of Chileans in Sonora discovered two 'lumps,' one weighted 136 ounces, and /an/ other 113 ounces. (Giacobbi 1967:20)

Chilean work habits are described by Giacobbi:

> There are several ways in which the Chileans worked 'los placeres.' A majority of them probably mined individually or in groups of two to three, while others formed mining companies and worked in a common effort to extract the gold. Peóns often were employed by more enterprising Chileans . . . Such groupings were, by no means, unique to the Chilean gold seekers, but they seemed to be more successful with these methods than the Americans. Success was due to their superior equipment and sufficient qualifications . . . (Giacobbi 1967:20-21)

In 1852, according to a consultant, the South Carolina mine was leased by a Mexican woman named Madam Martine. She had Mexican miners working this Carson Hill mine for her; during the year she operated it herself.

Mexicans also worked under a patron. One local example of this system was at Martinez (five miles from the Project Area). There

Dona Martinez brought her peons from Mexico and mined for a lengthy period (Tuolumne County Historical Society 1973:28). Mexicans in the Project Area were also employed by Americans in the 1850's as noted by Borthwick:

> On the other side of the hill /from Carson Hill settlement/ however, was a claim on the same vein, which was in undisputed possession of a company of Americans, who employed a number of Mexicans to work it, under the direction of an experienced old Mexican miner.
> (Borthwick 1929:307)

Spanish-speaking miners were referred to as lazy in their work, though skilled (Perkins 1964:157). Though Perkins makes a distinction between Mexican and Chilean miners on this point (Perkins 1964:222), Gerstaecker comments:

> . . . Mexicans, I had formerly heard, were lazy and indolent, but . . . I never saw more industrious, and at the same time temperate people in the mines than they were. They are steady at work, digging away at some lonely spot, or driving pack mules up and down valleys. (Gerstaecker 1946:95)

Marryat and others commented on the differences in work routines between the Spanish-speaking miners and the Americans. The Latins "pass the night and early morning in working in their claims" (Marryat 1952:293-294).

Housing for the Spanish-speaking people during the Gold Rush was often makeshift as was the case for the majority of miners. Sonorans' houses are described as resembling a "temporary village of canvas and brush huts and little mud ovens' (Wells and Peterson 1949:137). Perkins described the Mexican families' homes as "brush houses." Daniel Woods spoke of a Chilean family living in a "rude home made of hides" (Woods 1857:99). Weston's description in 1850 of a Mexican camp near Murphys spoke of "brush ramadas and cloth tents" (Weston 1948:82). Monaghan, describes Sonora in the summer of 1849:

> Campo de Sonora . . . proved to be less imposing than from a distance. Many of the residences were built of brush with brilliant sarapes in the doorways. In fact the first adobe house, built by Chileans, was not finished until July /1849/.
> (Monaghan 1973:134)

Borthwick refers to the highly-spiced food of the Sonorans. A folk tale related that scavenger animals would not touch the body of a dead Mexican because the corpse would be so "peppered" (Borthwick 1929:137-138). The almost universal miner's diet of 1849 was composed primarily of "fresh beef, salt pork, and beans at least a couple of years old." Perkins also details a severe shortage of fresh vegetables in 1849 in Sonora (Perkins 1964:117). To these basics, the Latins added wheat and corn tortillas:

> Behind portable kitchens, were Mexican and Indian women, in their picturesque costumes, their head covered with the omnipresent rebosa occupied in making the national dish of meat and chili pepper, wrapped within two tortillas of wheaten flour, a delicacy for which the Mexican peon would sell his birthright. (Perkins 1964:106)

Monaghan takes issue with Perkins' implication that these "wheaten" tortillas are Mexican, however, and states they are definitely "Chilean" (Monaghan 1973:136).

The clothing of the Spanish-speaking people differed from that of the American and European mining immigrants and attracted the attention of several diarists. Mexican men were described by Dr. Gunn:

> . . . two pair of pants, white ones underneath, and over them a pair of leather, open up the outside from ankle to waistband and trimmed with two rows of brass or steel buttons. If it is cold, they can fasten them up, but usually they hang flopping about their legs. A long red crepe sash with fringe is fastened about the waist, and usually over one shoulder a large blanket is thrown. It is red and black, or of many colored stripes, and looks very gay. They sleep in those blankets at night. (Gunn 1928:150)

Borthwick describes Mexican men dressed in "variegated blankets and broad brimmed hats" (Borthwick 1929:314). Perkins' description includes male dress for both Mexican and South Americans.

> Amongst the Mexicans, some wore only cotton drawers, a shirt and zarape, with a huge sombrero hat, black outside and lined in green; the crown decorated with large patines of silver, round and convex. Others wore the vaquero dress: a leather jacket, double, with the outer surface scalloped out into fantastic patterns, showing red or blue figures on the under leather; half-tanned leathern trousers open down the leg on the

> outside, and adorned with rows of silver buttons; inside a pair of white cotton drawers, very wide and loose, and the leg encased to the knee in botas ornamented in the same manner as the jacket. In the botas is stuck the knife, the handle of which projects alongside of the leg, and, when the man is mounted, is most conveniently to hand. A pair of silver spurs, with rowels having the diameter of a good sized saucer, with the hat already described, complete the picture of the Mexican vaquero or Herdsman, (from vaca, cow). Others are entirely enveloped in a rich manga, which is a zarape made of fine cloth, and space in the centre round the slit for the head to pass through, heavy with gold and silver embroidery.
>
> The dress of the South Americans was something similar to the Mexicans . . . (Perkins 1964:102-103)

The women wore an everyday wardrobe of "white dresses" with rebosas (long shawls) (Borthwick 1929:314). The Peruvian women covered their faces as well as their heads with these shawls, exposing only one eye . . ." (Monaghan 1967:137). Perkins states:

> On Sundays . . . it seemed that the women, either Mexican or South American, . . . all possessed the richest description of dresses. The Mexican beauty wears a rich skirt trimmed with laboriously worked flounces, satin shoes, flesh-colored silk stockings and a gloriously bespangled shawl, glittering with all the Chinese arts of embroidery and colors. In the street the shawl is drawn over the head and thrown over the left shoulder, very gracefully. In the house it is worn more negligently, and the bosom is very freely exposed, as they wear no body to their dresses. (Perkins 1964:104)

One source in 1850 underlined the importance of jewelry to the costume of the "Mexican" woman (Tuolumne County Historical Society 1973: 34-35).

Sources of entertainment available to the Spanish-speaking immigrant during the Gold Rush were most often the same as that was available to Anglo miners in the Southern mines. Several of the principle entertainments were brought to the area by these people. Usual activities consisted of gambling, drinking and, where available, "whoring." In the literature, there are ample references to dancing, music and bullfights. All of these "debasements," according to Shinn, were available in Sonora, near the Project Area (Shinn 1948:133).

Perkins describes the scene in Sonora in 1849 on a Saturday:

> Tables loaded with dulces, sweetments of every description, cooling beverages, with snow from the Sierra Nevada floating in them, cakes and dried fruits, hot meats, pies, everything in the greatest abundance. . . .
>
> On either side of the street were ranged the gambling tables, generally covered with a rich scarlet gold embroidered cloth, in the centre of which would be displayed a bank of perhaps a thousand ounces, in silver dollars, gold doubloons or small bags of gold dust. Coin of both metals commanded a premium of ten, fifteen and sometimes twenty per cent, for gambling purposes in these times.
>
> The tables belonged to the different habitations outside of which they were placed. They were made of rough planks hewn out of logs with an axe. (Perkins 1964:105)

Colton describes a similar scene:

> The repast was hardly over, when the monte table, with its piles of gold, glimmered in the shade. It was the great camp of the Sonoranians /Sonora/ and hundreds were crowding around to reach the bank, and deposit their treasures on the turn of a card. They /Sonorans/ seemed to play for the excitement, and often doubled their stake whether they won or lost.
> (Colton 1949:296)

Diarists have commented at length on the Spanish-speaking people's fondness for these entertainments. Perkins states that when the Mexican miner returned to Sonora from a week of work in the gold fields he "commenced /on Saturday/ gambling and drinking and continued both until Monday, never thinking of sleep" (Perkins 1964:101). Perkins continues:

> Wherever there are plenty of Mexicans, these bloodsuckers /gamblers/ are sure to reap a good harvest. The poor wretches . . . dress themselves in their best on Saturday to come to town to get drunk, and lose all the gold dust they have collected during the week.
>
> But why commiserate them? They have no other idea of enjoyment. It is impossible to make them understand that money might bring them more comforts than those they have been accustomed to . . . Whatever may be the amount of money they possess, they use the same miserable dress, live in the

same filthy manner, and eat the same wretched fare. Pence and clacos they keep for food and clothing, silver and gold for dissipation and gambling. (Perkins 1964:215)

Freaner, a correspondent for the New Orleans Picayune, wrote in August of 1849 describing the Mexicans and South Americans in Sonora, ". . . they keep up all the customs and habits of their country-- bull fights, chicken fights, dancing, gambling, etc. on Sundays and feast days. In all the other 'diggings' /those not predominately Spanish-speaking/ Sundays are respected, though I have not heard of any preaching in any of them" (Perkins 1964:27). Marryat states, "The 'Greasers,' which term includes all Spanish Americans, will pass the night and early morning working in their claims, and then devote the day to gambling and sleeping and the evening to a Fandango or a horse stealing excursion . . ." (Marryat 1952:293-294). Borthwick speaks of the Mexicans fondness for tobacco and relaxation:

> . . . they spent most of their time in the passive enjoyment of the cigaritos, or in playing monte, and were consequently very soon run over and driven off the field by the rush of more industrious and resolute men.
>
> There were a considerable number of Mexicans to be seen at work around Sonora, but most of those living in the town seemed to do nothing but bask in the sun and loaf in the gambling-rooms. . . . I have no doubt they could subsist on cigaritos alone for several days at a time. (Borthwick 1929:312)

Colton adds:

> A Sonorian digs out gold simply and solely that he may have the wherewithal for gambling. . . . For this he labors, and cheerfully denies himself every comfort. (Colton 1949:302-303)

Perkins states that Sonoran women "like the men they are all addicted to gambling" (Perkins 1964:161).

Perkins describes the Argeninos as abstemious (they neither drank or gambled) and as lovers of music: "Almost every Argentine I know plays the guitar and sings" (Perkins 1964:222). As to Chilenos, Perkins states they are ". . . given to gambling and very lascivious, but seldom addicted to drink. This is the character of the better class. The lower class is . . . fond of gambling and drink, and are quarrelsome in their cups . . ." (Perkins 1964:222).

Gambling was so popular in this period that some of the earliest permanent buildings at both Sonora and Melones were devoted to gaming. "There was no lumber in the town, /Sonora/ so adobe making began, and the biggest buildings made were for dancing and gambling" (Wells and Peterson 1949:138). "One old adobe cabin, now gone, was a Mexican Gambling Den built in 'forty-nine'" (Weston 1948:82).

The most discussed gambling game of the Spanish-speaking people, one they introduced to American miners, was monte. "In Sonora the favorite gambling game was monte. Men played and drank all night by the light of sperm candles on tables made of hand-hewn logs covered with rich cloth" (Monaghan 1973:135). (For a detailed description of the game see Perkins 1964:214.)

Music was an important part of life for the Latins:

> Almost every house had its band of music /in Sonora/, such as it was. Some of the Mexicans display considerable talent in the art, and some bands, composed of a clarionet, a harp and a base guitar, did much credit to their members . . .
>
> The noise of drums, guitars, fiddles, and the ringing metalic thrum of the little Mexican lute, never for a moment ceased from Saturday to Monday . . .
> (Perkins 1964:106-107)

Perkins praises Latin grace: "How gracefully these Spaniards dance, men and women!" (Perkins 1964:163). He describes some dances in detail, such as the samacueca, a Chilian dance (Perkins 1964: 163-164). "Dances became magnificent affairs for those with 'dust,' while the have-nots, with sadness and envy in their faces, watched wistfully through open doors and windows" (Monaghan 1973:135).

The music of Argentine, according to Perkins, was "sweet and mournful," but:

> . . . the hymn of the Unitarios, or enemies of the Rosas /the dictatorship then in power/, is very stirring and martial. It is a call to the Argentine people to assemble and destroy the tyrant; and when sung by a dozen manly voices the effect is almost electric . . . (Perkins 1964:285)

References to drinking are most generally made in connection with one of the other forms of entertainment. The most commonly named drink was agua or aguardiente (Perkins 1964:107; Marryat 1952:237). Brandy is also mentioned:

> Behind the gambling tables were the counters . . . and on which were arranged all kinds of liquor . . . and it was nothing uncommon to see a Mexican enter, call for a bottle of brandy, which was worth an ounce, /of gold/ and taking a wine glass, deliberately pour the whole contents of the bottle into it, spilling of course all that the glass would not contain. (Perkins 1964:105)

Perkins also mentions brandy in connection with a party given by Spanish-speaking people which had both Chilenos and Argentinos in attendance (Perkins 1964:163). He points out:

> The most common and fatal result, however, of drunkeness is falling in to some of the thousands of deep pits, dug during the summer by the miners, and now /in winter/ full of water. Scarcely a week passes that two or three bodies be not fished out of these holes . . . (Perkins 1964:117)

There are no direct references to prostitution in the journals of the early diarists although there were Spanish-speaking prostitutes in the area. Pitt writes, "In addition to the California and Sonoran women who had come with their families, there were specially imported Latin-American women to work in the saloons, dancing the exotic fandango and selling drinks and themselves as well" (Pitt 1968:72). Women worked at fandango houses at Melones and Carson Hill, and Perkins speaks of a Spanish woman who ran an "ill-reputed" house at Columbia (Perkins 1964:221; Pitt 1968:72-73).

Bullfighting was brought to the gold fields by the Spanish-speaking people, and large rings were built at Sonora and at Mokelumne Hill. "On Sundays bullfights attracted crowds, the Chileans ignoring their national objection to the spectacle" (Monaghan 1973:135). Marryat describes a street scene in Sonora:

> The auction extending as it does across the street, will be interrupted most probably by a Mexican funeral procession, headed by a brass band, playing dolefully; scarcely has this filed by when the same band will return to a inspiriting tune, accompanied by merry-andrews and torredores, who proclaim the day's amusement in the bull arena.
>
> (Marryat 1952:245-246)

According to Borthwick:

> A company of Mexican bull-fighters were at this time performing in Sonora every Sunday afternoon. The ampitheater was a large

> well built place, erected for the purpose on a small hill behind the street. The arena was about thirty yards in diameter, and enclosed in a very strong six-barred fence, gradually rising from which, all around, were several tiers of seats, shaded from the sun by an awning. (Borthwick 1929:316)

(For a detailed description see Borthwick 1929:316-321.)

Disease was as prevalent among the Spanish-speaking as among miners as a whole. In 1849 in Sonora and the vicinity, lack of vitamin C in the diet resulted in a severe outbreak of scurvy. Citrus fruits and vegetables were generally not available in the mines.

> As soon as the rainy season of 1849-50 set in, multitudes of miners, many of them Mexicans, were attacked with scurvy, owing to their exclusive diet of salt meat, since vegetables could be obtained only in small quantities, and at enormous prices. (Shinn 1948:198)

Gunn talks of two Peruvians he treated near Jamestown for the 'ulcerating legs,' the most common manifestation of 'scurvy' (Gunn 1928:73). Perkins also mentions the poor general health of the Spanish-speaking people and says, "At this moment there is a great amount of sickness among the Mexicans. In temperance and exposure in a climate so much colder than their own, added to a total ignorance of medicinal remedies, are carrying them off in great numbers" (Perkins 1964:116).

There is little mention of Latin religious practices, though the majority were Catholic. Evidently, no churches were built in the immediate Project Area during the period of the Gold Rush or afterward. But one Catholic Church was erected in Sonora and others built at a few camps near the Project Area.

> They apparently connect no moral obliquity with the game [gambling]; one of them, who sleeps near my camping-tree, will kneel by the half hour on the sharp rock in his Ave Marias, while the keen night-wind cuts his scarce clad frame, then rise and stake his last dollar at monte'.
> Colton 1949:296)

Borthwick describes this scene that he came upon near Melones:

> Numerous small wooden crosses were placed throughout the mine [on the opposite side of Carson Hill from the town of the same name], in niches cut in the rock for their reception, and

> each separate part of the mine was named after a saint . . . The day before I visited the place had been some saint's day, and the Mexicans, who of course had made a holiday of it, had employed themselves in erecting, on the side of the hill over the mine, a large cross . . .
>
> (Borthwick 1929:235)

The difference between the economic philosophy of the Spanish-speaking people and typical American attitudes caused mixed feelings on the part of the Americans. The Americans, while decrying the spendthrift character of the Spanish-speaking people, took their money. "They are a people like the wild Indians; they never can be civilized according to our ideas of civilization" (Perkins 1964:215). ". . . a Mexican in the mines has no idea of saving money, but like the water-carrier of Bagdad, he will work one half of the day that he may spend the other half in indulgence" (Marryat 1952:294-295). However, Monaghan qualifies this generalization--"During the summer many Chileans, having made a fortune, left town quietly and returned to South America. Reports said they took as much as $15 million out of California by September, 1849" (Monaghan 1973:136).

> Yankee tradesmen of the southern mines came to see the Spanish Americans as particularly good customers. It occurred to them that, in contrast with the stingy Yankee who saved his money and sent it home, the Latin American invariably wanted to take home goods, not money; he spent all he had. Just as the Spaniard's eccentric work habits could be turned to the operator's profit, so could his spendthrift tendencies be turned to the advantage of the merchant. General Riley discovered that Americans, by their superior intelligence and shrewdness in business, generally contrived to turn to their own benefit the earnings of Mexicans, Chileans and Peruvians.
>
> (Pitt 1968:59)

Regarding the presence of women in Sonora, Perkins comments, ". . . Sonora was probably the only place in California where numbers of the gentler sex were to be found. I have mentioned that the camp was formed by immigration of families from Sonora, in Mexico; this accounts for the presence of women in the place" (Perkins 1964:103). Diarists dwell on the appearance of the Spanish women: "The numbers of Mexican women in their white dresses and sparkling black eyes were by no means an unpleasing addition to the crowd . . ." (Borthwick 1929:314).

Perkins writes of the Spanish women in Sonora:

> There are large numbers of women in town, some of them extremely handsome . . . Senora Abalos, once prima Donna in the Opera House in Mexico, and her little daughter Sophy; Senora Miranda, and some others are all magnificant women in a physical point of view, and if their occupations, of bar tenders, gambling-table keepers and actresses, are not exactly what might be termed respectable in our 'mighty particular' countries, it must be remembered there is no other way of making a living, and that there is many a gentlemen of education in California at the moment, driving an Ox team, or serving out liquor behind a bar. (Perkins 1964:251)

Perkins sees the Spanish women as ". . . the best behaved of the female population; that is they pay more respect to outward forms of respectability, are more modest and do not tipple" (Perkins 1964:268).

Colton describes a Sonoran woman, who was keeper of a monte table near the Project Area. Woods tells of a woman camping and mining with her whole family (Woods 1857:99). Perkins provides another glimpse into the life of the Latin woman:

> . . . I sat watching a party of Mexican women, who, in a little stream behind the house were busy in the occupation of washing clothes. There they were, all squatted on their haunches and naked to the waist, for they are obliged to disembarrass their arms and shoulders from the folds of the rebosa, and, as under this they wear only the loosest drapery, the upper part of the body is entirely exposed. In justice to them however, I must say that the young girls, that is, those from twelve to sixteen, are more modest . . . Around the washerwomen are always to be seen a number of lazy Greasers, with their zarapes thrown over their still dirtier shoulders, lounging upon the bank, and keeping up a continual chatter of not the most chaste conversation with the dark nymphs. (Perkins 1964:157-158)

The presence of Spanish-speaking women was considered an asset to a town:

> . . . dozens of women in brightly colored dresses were tripping merrily along the street /in Sonora/. Men saw nothing like this in San Francisco, where females seemed extinct. And even more important, Anglos admitted later that these Latin ladies were far more attractive than the angular, ill-dressed North American women who came with the first gold seekers. (Monaghan 1973:134)

They were, however, limited in relationships by their skin color:

> When Peruvian or Chilian women arrived in San Francisco, they soon found out that Sonora was the only place where their own sex were congregated in any number, and at once found their way to this vicinity. We have consequently always had an abundance of dark-skinned women amongst us, but white--none; except when some South American without much indian [sic] blood in her veins, made her appearance. These were generally china-blancas, metizo-claras or quinteras, and they formed our aristocratic society. A lady's social position with the white gentlemen was graduated by shades of color; although we would sometimes give the preference to a slightly brown complexion, if the race was unmixed with the negro--pure white and pure Indian. Thus the mestiza is a child of a white father by an Indian mother; rather dark; preferable however, to a china-blanca, who is the child of a white father, the mother being born of an indian father, and a negro or mulatto mother. The quintera is perfectly white, but comes from negro blood, through the cuarterona and mulatto. As for the Zambas, Zamba-claras, chinas-oscuras, indias mestizas etc, they were not admitted into refined society at all.
>
> It is evident that an intimate knowledge of ethnography was requisite to enable one to move in our society without soiling his dignity. (Perkins 1964:103-104)

Spanish-speaking women were thus socially restricted by their race, sex and the degree of color pigment apparent in their skin.

Violence was a part of life for the Spanish miner, his life or claim often threatened by Americans. Violence in defense of one's "honor" on the part of the Spanish males was comparable to the American custom of dueling practiced in the South. And, violence was present in Sonora:

> In settled countries men do not, in general, carry deadly weapons about their persons; in fits of rage they either pick up the first object that meets the hand, or else use their fists; in either case the probability is that life is not endangered.
>
> Here, every white man is armed, and, I may say, everyone; for those who do not carry pistols, the Mexicans and natives, always have formidable knives; so that when a row takes place, the aggregate of injury is not so great perhaps as in similar cases in other countries, but individual instances are more fatal.

> Since my arrival here /Sonora/, three Mexicans and one white man have been killed in street-fights; but we have not yet heard of a single cold-blooded murder having been committed . . . (Perkins 1964:114-115)

Perkins stated that Argentinos "shun brawls and drinking saloons" while the Chileno better class is described as being "noisy, quarrelsome, and with a sense of honor very obtuse . . ." The "lower class" Chilenos are "quarrelsome in their cups; ever ready to use the knife, and are not cowed by the insolence of the North American. Ferocious when engaged in frays, the Chileno is not vengeful like the Mexican. They are not assassins; if they strike it is in hot blood, and they are consequently to be trusted" (Perkins 1964:22). He adds that Mexicans are ". . . cruel, revengeful, sanguinary and cowardly" (Perkins 1964:223). Perkins continues:

> The callousness of the Mexicans in reference to shedding blood is scarcely to be credited. The men seem actually to delight in murder. No moral power restrains them . . . murdering a man, to a Mexican is nothing more than the butchering of a calf or a sheep. (Perkins 1964:153)

Apparently Mexicans carrying knives used them as willingly in duels as the Americans used their guns.

Protection of the female was one of the most culturally-accepted reasons for violence among Spanish-speaking cultures in the Project Area. "Although the Spanish-American women seemed unprotected to the Yankees, and they were often all too jealously protected--by a brother, a husband, or a lover . . . the defense of feminine honor among Spanish Americans could be a deadly cult" (Pitt 1968:72).

Violence over a woman had far-reaching consequences:

> Sexual jealousy could, and did, swell into major violence, especially at the 'Spanish houses' which soon dotted the entire northern landscape. A love triangle involving a Mexican mistress, a Mexican gambler, and a gringo kindled a sizable riot at Carson's Hill in June, 1851. The gambler was stabbed and his mistress was beaten, as war cries echoed from both the Mexican and Yankee camps. One gringo bystander was killed while engaged in a peace mission, and the Mexicans finally fled by the hundreds. (Pitt 1968:72)

Pitt may have been describing the same incident as Perkins and the Sonora Herald of June 1851, or perhaps a similar incident in the same

area during the same month. Perkins describes the "row" as follows:

> The row, thus commenced became general /between the Mexicans on one side and Americans on the other/; the first thing done by the Mexicans was to steal as many revolvers from the belts of Americans as possible. . . . and drove all the Americans, many severely wounded, out of the house.
>
> The latter soon returned with reinforcements and arms, and a bloody fight commenced, which terminated in the defeat of the Mexicans (there were also Chilenos), with three of their party killed and almost all wounded. . . .
>
> The Mexican who commenced the attack received three bullets in his body, and was then pinned to the dirt floor with his own sword, and in this position kept yelling 'Mata, mata a los C_____Yengis!' 'Kill kill the d_____d yankees!' until he was knocked on the head and silenced forever.
>
> (Perkins 1964:221)

This fight, as described by Perkins, was reported in the Sonora Herald and reprinted in the Alta California of June 16, 1851: ". . . a terrible affray took place at Meloney's Diggings, on Thursday evening last (June 12), in which one or two Americans and three or four Mexicans were killed, and number mortally wounded. The fight commenced about two women in a gambling saloon. . . ." (Perkins 1964:221). Another instance of sexually-related violence involved a Mexican whose friend had been courting the man's wife. The husband killed his friend and wounded his wife and was given a ten year sentence. The jury seemed to feel that the revenge taken by the husband was not merited since the wife was not worthy of her mate (Perkins 1964:152-153).

The Spanish-speaking miners were also often accused of crimes of violence and theft (particularly of horses). Apparently, there was some truth to these tales of crime since references to nationalities involved with crime are usually limited to Mexicans, Sonorans or Chilenos. Argentinos, Bolivians and Peruvians are not mentioned by national group. Marryat, who had a horse stolen and traced it to a small encampment of Mexicans, states,

> Most Mexicans of California are from Sonora, and horse-stealing is a characteristic weakness of that country. These people become such adepts at this trade, that I dare say if a party of them were to visit New York, they would steal the wooly colt out of Barnum's Museum . . . (Marryat 1952:259)

Many miners were cautious of the Spanish-speaking miner and gave him a wide berth on the road, "nor was this unnecessary," says Marryat, "for the Mexicans encamped around Tuttle-Town committed many murders, and my horse alone was sufficient inducement for them, independent of the sums of money that the necessities of my party required me to carry of a night" (Marryat 1952:265).

A Chilean miner near Jamestown was moved to violence when another miner abused and finally killed his partner's dog. When captured and brought to Sonora for trial, he was acquitted (Buckbee 1935:433). Another example of a crime believed committed by Mexicans took place at Tuttle's store in Tuttle-Town /about two miles from the Project Area/. "Three years after Tuttle had established his store /1852/ it was raided by a band of Mexican cutthroats, and Bill and his partner were severely injured. Although the camp was aroused to a frenzy of anger, and a desparate man hunt was carried on for months, no trace of the bandits was ever found" (Weston 1948:78). Caughey describes one final crime of violence which was attributed to a group of Chilenos near Sonora (June 1851):

> . . . a band of Chilenos plotted to rob and kill one George Snow. Enticing him to their tent, where they had dug a grave for his body, they fell upon him with knives. Mortally wounded, he managed to call for help . . . and the assailants fled. Two were overtaken, tried . . . and pronounced guilty. . . . were duly hanged, and buried in the grave they had thoughtfully prepared. (Caughey 1948:235)

A large number of violent crimes occurred near Murphy's:

> . . . Mexicans were proved guilty, or suspected at least, of many, and principally the crow-bar murders. Signs of Mexicans having done the deed were, however, found rather too frequently near the slain victims not to give just cause for suspicion that man of some other nation tried to escape in this way. Still I have no doubt that many Mexicans committed such deeds, especially if they could at the same time, revenge themselves upon an American. Thousands of Mexicans swarmed into the mountains . . . Americans came upon them . . . to drive them out of their claims . . . in order to take advantage of their labor. No wonder the Mexicans were driven at last to desparate deeds . . . (Gerstaecker 1946:90)

Despite these incidents, many refused to believe that the average Mexican was a violent murderer by nature. "They are always peaceable and good humored, and if they are at times treacherous, they probably have cause for it" (Gerstaecker 1946:94).

Prejudice, Violence, and the Spanish-Speaking People

The Spanish-speaking residents of California were the first to arrive in the gold fields, and quickly became experts in placer mining techniques. In the first two years of the rush, the Californios outnumbered the Yankees. The advantage of knowing where the gold was and how to extract it caused friction with the White miners (Pitt 1968:53). The Mexican War had predisposed many Anglos to malice toward all Spanish-speaking people, and their success at mining exacerbated the hostility between the two groups.

William Kelly, an English miner on Weber Creek, was witness to early mistreatment of Mexicans and Chilenos:

> Nine-tenths of the new arrivals were Americans, who resorted, as we did in the first instance, to the Chilenos and Mexicans for instruction and information which they gave with a cheerful alacrity; but as soon as Jonathan got an inkling of the system, he . . . chased them off the creek at the pistols mouth.
> (Faugsted 1973:26)

A large community of Chileans lived in the "Chilean Diggings," an open, leveled field near Sonora in 1849. They were successful miners in water and "dry washing" methods of extracting gold. This permitted them to work in the late summer when the rivers and creeks were low.

Claim jumping was common. Mexicans working a claim near Columbia were displaced by a group known as the Hildreth party (Wells and Peterson 1949:110). Walter Colton in his Three Years in California (1848) speaks of four New Yorkers who took over the dry diggings of a Sonoranian (Colton 1949:287). Two sources mention a group of Mexicans and Chilenos who banded together in 1853 because of their common language, religion, and fear of Yankee claim jumpers. Upon discovery of a rich quartz ledge, the miners sought advice in Sonora where they acquired three American partners who protected the claim from intruders. The Anglo-Mexican-Chilean partnership extracted $100,000.00 from their claim (Buckbee 1935:431; Wells and Peterson 1949:138).

The native Californians spread the word to the Spanish-speaking immigrants of the persecution they might expect at the hands of the Yankees. However, not everyone felt that criticism of Yankee miners was warranted:

> Hostility to everything American was originally engendered against us by the Mexicans, during the war of 1846, and had not died out in 1849. Nor is it to be wondered at that . . . other Spanish immigrants, should side with the Mexicans . . . daily regaled by the Mexicans with stories of the brutality and injustice they had received at the hands of the American people. It was no use for the whites to protest . . .
>
> (De Ferrari 1963:68)

Antonio Coronel was a Californio who arrived early on the scene. When he witnessed the savage beating of a close friend by a bear flagger, and the lynching of two Mexicans unable to speak English, he left the gold fields forever. Coronel was followed by other Californios whose pride prevented them from submitting to the alien hordes which descended upon California in 1849. Most native Californians had left the gold fields by the end of that year (Pitt 1966). ". . . they moved on, abandoning their claims to an ever pursuing army. It was easier to find new ones than fight" (Stellman 1934:34).

Writings of the period (1850's) are graphic in their description of the biased attitudes of Whites toward Latin Americans, referred to as "Greasers." In his journal about life in Sonora (1849 to 1852), William Perkins wrote:

> The 'Greaser' has all the characteristic vices of the Spaniard; jealous, revengeful and treacherous, with an absorbing passion for gambling; and he has still greater likeness to the inferior tribes of Indians; the same apathetic indolence; the same lounging thieving propensities; never caring for the morrow, and alike regardless of the past as of the future.
>
> (Perkins 1964:143-144)

Yet, the town of Sonora was not Americanized until 1850, and until that year the "Greasers" were in the majority. The first editor of the Sonora Herald declared in his diary "that he felt more respect for the Spanish-speaking people than for the coarse Anglo Argonauts" (Monaghan 1973:138).

As early as 1848 open conflict had occurred at Chili Gulch, Calaveras County in what was later termed "the Chilean War." A group of Yankees jumped a claim belonging to Chilean miners. The Chileans sought legal recourse in Stockton where a judge and the sheriff issued a restraining order against the Yankee claim jumpers. A publicized conflict developed between the two groups and the claim jumpers drew support from Calaveras County to Stockton. The judge and the sheriff were reportedly run out of town for siding with Chilenos in a legal dispute (Joy 1964:5).

In Columbia, Tuolumne County, however, the first case of a miner making a complaint against a Mexican resulted in the Yankee being fined for complaining "over such a trifle." The Mexican had stolen an old pair of leather leggings (Shinn 1948:176). Mexicans and Chileans were accused of "innate immorality": "Hubert Howe Bancroft's two-volume miscellany of popular tribunals clearly indicates the inordinately high number of Mexicans whipped, banished, or hanged from 1849 to 1860" (Pitt 1966:70). Thus, "immorality" became synonymous with "Mexican."

Cruel persecution was often given legal justification. A criminal trial gave the publican excuse to vent hostility in Jamestown when a Mexican was convicted of stealing. The sentence of the judge was a dozen lashes to be administered in the public square. The executioner administered thirty-six blows upon the unconscious victim who was lashed to a tree. Upon release his wounds were roughly washed with salt water, and he was warned to leave town the following morning under penalty of hanging (Tinkham 1915:130). This brutal incident was not atypical of the gross injustices perpetrated upon the Latin Americans. In cases of crimes (even alleged crimes), legal and extra-legal penalties for Mexicans tended to be harsh and extreme such as, "whipping, branding, ear cropping, banishment, and hanging" (Pitt 1968:70).

Attacks on Latin Americans assumed the tenor of a moral crusade, but it was the Mexican who earned a reputation for brutality. The prevalent violence in the southern mines in the 1850's was invariably attributed to Mexicans. A history of Tuolumne County published in 1882 reveals a common attitude toward Mexicans and Chileans:

> Others, again, were scattering themselves over the country, to commence the career of bloodshed and cold-blooded atrocity which for months afterward stained the pages of California history. Even those who were bound for home often left behind them, along the way, bloody traces of their deep-set hatred to Americans, or, perhaps, their natural thirst for massacre and pillage. (Tuolumne County Historical Society 1973:33)

A "bandido hysteria" swept northern California in the early 1850's. Yankees were alarmed that "amongst all the depredations, murders, robberies, etc. . . . the Americans were the only victims." Although obvious ethnic clues were often left at the scene of a crime as red herrings, Leonard Pitt believes that "most bandits really were Mexicans" (Pitt 1968:76). The most notorious of the Mexican bandits was Joaquin Murietta. He became an illusive, legendary, folk hero for Mexicans in California. He reportedly became a bandit motivated

by revenge, and was quoted in the San Joaquin Republican April 23, 1853, as saying "that he had been oppressed, robbed, persecuted, flogged, and maltreated without justice" (Wood 1949:82).

Americans began to organize against the so-called lawlessness of the foreigners. Although "the Mexicans and Chileans were greatly in the majority" in what is now the town of Sonora, a Yankee alcalde and sheriff were elected. Miners' meetings were held to make laws regarding mining claims--"only the closest organization prevented a reign of lawlessness" (Shinn 1948:120-121).

One hundred and fifty war veterans mining at Mormon Gulch selected a captain, donned their worn uniforms and marched to Sonora in support of the Foreign Miners' Tax. The anticipated clash with the Mexicans did not materialize, but a series of unsolved killings in the area prompted the "troops" to arrest one hundred and ten "Greasers" at nearby Green Flat. A trial was held in which the accused were acquitted and the temporary return to the colors was over for the Mormon Gulch miners (Pitt 1968:62,63; Shinn 1948:206-207; Gerstaecker 1946:89-90).

In a further attempt at establishing law and order, a public meeting was held in Sonora where resolutions were adopted concerning the control of foreigners. The resolutions required the immediate withdrawal of all foreigners from Tuolumne County except those of respectable character to whom permits were issued. Foreigners were also required to turn over their weapons to a committee of three to be chosen by the American citizens of each camp. Only the camps experiencing extreme violence put the restrictions into effect (Shinn 1948:206-207).

Sexual rivalry must be considered one factor in the clashes between Americans and Spanish-speaking immigrants. Spanish-speaking women often appeared to be unescorted and unprotected, but prospectors quickly discovered a jealous lover, or protective male relative lurking in the shadows. The defense of feminine honor formed a "deadly cult" among the Latin Americans (Pitt 1968:72).

The American community retaliated in its frustration by brutally persecuting Spanish-speaking women. Juanita of Downieville was lynched for killing a White man. The mob was so incensed that even the pleading of a future Justice of the Supreme Court, Stephen Field, could not save her life. She was described at her death as exhibiting more dignity than her executioners. Josiah Royce marked her death as a nadir of California history, "an instance of depravity not of Mexicans, but of 'respectable' Americans" (Pitt 1968:73-74).

Prejudice, greed and emotion completely clouded issues. The mining experience and talent of the Latin groups, the ease with which they found gold, and the presence of their women made them thorns in the side of the Americans. And, philosophical differences on almost every aspect of life aggravated the situation.

Violence flared at the slightest provocation, reinforcing the prejudices inspired, in part, by a war recently ended. All were guilty of overreacting, and the climate of violence and hatred escalated, culminating in the Foreign Miners' Tax and the exodus of thousands of Latins from the mines.

The Foreign Miners' Tax

Of all the ethnic groups in California during the Gold Rush, the Mexicans had the distinct disadvantage of being a "defeated enemy population" (Heizer and Almquist 1971:142). All Spanish-speaking immigrants were associated with the maligned native Californians. The prejudicial attitudes of the recently arrived Yankees, increased in direct relation to their growing numbers:

> In the southern mines, extending from Mariposa to Sonora, where water was more scarce and mining was much harder work, the Mexicans were not much bothered in 1848 when about 1,300 went to the mines and worked without notable friction with about 4,000 Yankees. By mid-1849 the picture had changed. There were now nearly 100,000 miners looking for gold, many of the richest placers were worked out, food was often difficult to get, many miners were having no luck at all, and a strong anti-foreign reaction set in.
>
> (Heizer and Almquist 1971:143)

One year later in 1849, the Yankee population had soared to 80,000, compared to an estimated 8,000 Mexicans. South Americans numbered about 5,000 and whether Peruvians or Chilenos, they, along with all Spanish-speaking people, were called "greasers," (Heizer and Almquist 1971:144).

In the wake of such a large influx of foreigners, a wave of nativism swept the state when California entered the Union as a free state. Miners adopted local codes excluding from their area any master-slave working arrangements. This exclusion was applied to Spanish-speaking miners as well, and served to fan the flames of animosity between the Anglo and Latin groups.

> . . . the plight of the Spanish Americans in the mines worsened momentarily. Their protagonists proclaimed that, if slaves were prohibited from the mines, then so should be the 'refuse population from Chile, Peru and Mexico and other parts of the world (who are) . . . as bad as any of the free negroes of the North, or the worst slaves of the South.' . . . The State Assembly, in no uncertain terms (by a vote of twenty-two to two), asked Congress to bar from the mines all persons of foreign birth, even naturalized citizens.
>
> (as quoted by Pitt 1968:58)

Thomas Butler King's report on California (1850) made an appeal for the "cause of national honor" in expelling foreigners from the "public domain":

> During the mining season of 1849, more than 15,000 foreigners, mostly Mexicans and Chilenos, came in armed bands into the mining district . . . carrying out of the country some $20,000,000 worth of gold dust, which belonged by purchase to the people of the United States. If not excluded by law, they will return and recommence the work of plunder.
>
> (King, as quoted by Faugsted 1973:29)

George Faugsted reports that Alonzo Delano believed that estimates of amounts of gold and numbers of miners were uncertain at best. Hubert Howe Bancroft estimated the total amount of gold produced in 1849 was about 40 million dollars. Further, the foreign miners who were not driven out early in the Rush "totaled less than 1/3 of the labor force in the mines." The King report, however, solicited support for California's statehood and prejudiced the U.S. citizenry against foreign miners (Faughsted 1973:31).

The superior mining abilities of the Latin Americans aggravated the already malevolent attitude toward them.

> When experienced miners from Latin America came into the California mining region, they quickly realized the obvious advantages which would accrue from the organization of mining companies to allow a systematic exploitation of mineral wealth. . . . In order to gain control of enough land to allow profitable operations, these groups adopted the practice of taking out claims in the names of their peons. Individual miners who stood in the way of the companies were shouldered aside . . . the Yankee miners now had a legitimate complaint against their foreign competitors. (Faugsted 1973:35)

Based on newspapers and evidence from pioneers, Charles Shinn concludes it was difficult for Americans to avoid treating Mexicans without a "contemptuous defiance." He sees Joaquin Murietta's criminal acts as a natural result of "blameworthy carelessness" on the part of a mining population who allowed the "viler elements" to enforce "rude race-hatred of the 'greasers'." A "tendency to despise, abuse, and override" the Spanish speakers was "one of the darkest" aspects of frontier government (Shinn 1948: 208). Yet, Yankee miners were defended by some writers. Perkins (1964:281) and Stellman (1934:34) excused the American miners' behavior by pointing to the supposedly great difference in ethics seen by them in the two groups.

The new state legislature which met in the winter and spring of 1849-1850 consisted of a variety of politicians, but few "native born Californians." The representation was heavily in the favor of the Caucasian mining population. In an attempt to please their constituency, the legislators adopted a bill which would not only limit the mining activity of foreigners, but was intended legally to drive them from the mines altogether.

"An Act for the Better Regulation of Mines, and the Government of Foreign Miners" refused non-citizens the right to mine without a license. The fee for a mining license was set at twenty dollars a month. This exhorbitant fee was established with the knowledge that the figure was well above the earnings of the average miner. The intent of the act was clear, and the circumstances of collection further illustrate the obviously oppressive nature of the Foreign Miners' Tax. In theory, the law was to compensate for the taxes levied against American citizens while thousands of untaxed foreigners mined America's mineral wealth. The following notice posted in Sonora in 1850 can be assumed typical of those in other mining areas in northern California:

> Notice - The Collector of Taxes for foreign miners announces that he is now authorized by the government to receive $20 for the privilege of laboring in the mines until the last day of December next, and to issue a license for that period. He is instructed to protect all who comply with this requisition,and punish all others as violators of the law. The Collector's office is at the head of Washington street, Sonora.
>
> Aug. 3, 1850. L. A. Besancon.
>
> (Tuolumne County Historical Society 1973:46-47)

The effects of this law passed on April 13, 1850, and executed by June of the same year were felt almost immediately. The Foreign

Miners' Tax drew great protest from the foreign camps of the Southern mines. Fear of an armed protest alarmed the Yankee miners and settlers who prepared for a counter assault:

> Appeals were made to George Work, the Sheriff of Tuolumne County, who eventually appeared with a force of 180 well-armed Yankee miners, gathered from the nearby camps of Mormon Creek and Sullivan's Diggings. At the direction of the Tuolumne County Miners' Tax Collector, L.A. Bensacon, /sic/ the Sheriff and his party moved against the foreign miners' camp, but found it already breaking up.
>
> (Faugsted 1973:42)

The new tax had a disastrous effect on the economy of mining communities, especially in the Southern mines. Foreigners comprised one-half of the population in that region. By the end of the summer of 1850, it is estimated that up to three-quarters of the Mexicans had left the area. An unusually dry winter served to increase the exodus of Latinos and ruined some of the Southern mining camps.

The cities most affected by the departure of the foreign miners were Stockton and Sonora. As early as May 25, 1850 the Stockton Times joined other California newspapers in demanding a reduction in the tax from $20.00 to $5.00. By June, the Times editorialized the distress:

> 'As we expected, the collection of the new tax is producing a ruinous effect upon the traders of the Southern mines. Business in many places is at a complete standstill; confidence is shaken; there exists a universal feeling of distruct among the miners; man is set against man.' (as quoted by Faugsted 1973:43)

August of 1850 saw the evacuation of from fifteen to twenty thousand Mexicans and a like number of Chilenos. San Francisco was overrun with foreigners leaving the mines. The Chilean consul attempted to deal with the situation by sending 800 Chilenos home on promise of reimbursement in Chile (Faugsted 1973:43). The Chileans exhibited a fierce independence in their reaction to the Foreign Miners' Tax. They met Yankee oppression with a refusal to submit to working for Yankee mining companies. Denied an equal chance in the diggings and "Faced with the fact of an established and legally protected gringo supremacy, most of the fifteen thousand Chilenos in California in 1850 packed up their belongings and returned home" (Faugsted 1973:45).

Pressure on the State Legislature from merchants in the mining camps and the Sacramento valley resulted in a revision of the Foreign Miners' Tax Law early in 1851 (Faugsted 1973:45; Pitt 1968:66) and eventual repeal (Chapter 3). Despite its repeal, and the fact that it failed to collect revenue for the state, the law accomplished its primary objective: "Yankee supremacy had been established in the gold regions of California, and the foreign miner was forced to accept a position of subservience" (Faugsted 1973:45).

Post Gold Rush Period (1860 - Present)

There is a paucity of information available on Spanish-speaking people in or near the Project Area for the period from 1860 to 1920. Although a consultant mentioned that one Mexican family, by the name of Haumte, lived in the area around 1910, this family left after several years. There had been a "few" other Mexican families who lived below Pine Log, on the South Fork of the Stanislaus. The fireplace foundations of these homesites are still standing. Nothing more was known about these families.

Two Spanish-speaking families living in the area during this period--Ponce (Chilean) and Morales (Peruvian and Mexican)--were involved in farming/ranching with subsidiary interests in mining (see Chapter 8, on Agriculture for other information). Surviving members of both families were contacted and provided information for the recent period.

The Ponce family came to the area on ship from Valparaiso, Chile. They feel that family anecdotes they were told by their grandfather, Necomaus Ponce, indicate that his family were members of the landed aristocracy in that country. Necomaus, whose brother was a lawyer and whose sister was a nun, spoke of his father as a rancher of wealth. He would order saddles for his children from England because they were more appropriate than the native vaquero saddles. One granddaughter of Necomaus stated that she had heard that most of the Chilenos came from "well to do" families, and had paid for their passage rather than coming as contract or indentured laborers.

Necomaus was the only member of his family to immigrate. He met and married a Chilean woman in Vallecito (two miles from the Project Area). She had come to California before the Rush with her first husband who died in Yerba Buena (San Francisco). Their children married, so far as is known, non-Spanish spouses. One of these sons mined along the Stanislaus above Parrotts Ferry. He married a non-Spanish wife and homesteaded first in Calaveras County, out of

the Project Area. They raised fruit, vegetables and livestock. Then they moved to the Tuolumne side of the river near Columbia, where the wife's family owned property. Descendent consultants of Necomaus Ponce stated that there were many Chileans in Calaveras County when their grandfather arrived during the Rush.

One consultant stated that Necomaus, unlike the Mexican immigrants, came to homestead and live. In any event, he was the only Chilean known to have done this, in the area immediately adjacent to the Project Area.

Descendents of Antone Morales state that he (their grandfather) immigrated from Mexico. Their grandmother, Dorothea, a Peruvian, was brought to San Francisco during the Rush while still a child. She was carried across the Andes by her father. When they reached San Francisco by ship, he left her with a family and went to the gold fields. He returned in a year and left money with the family for her care. He then went back to the gold fields and never returned. Dorothea made her way to Sonora where she met and married Antone Morales. They homesteaded in the Project Area and had eleven children. All died or left except one, Nicholsa, who married Ben Marshall. At one point their son, Frank, who inherited the ranch from his father, hired an older Chileno to run the ranch. This Chileno had been "cheated out of his land" in another area. He did all the heavy work of the ranch while Frank Marshall worked at a near-by mine (see Chapter 8, Agriculture for further information).

Consultants were unable to furnish any other information on Spanish-speaking people in the period from 1860 to 1920 when Mexicans were hired to work for the Melones mine. Around 1920 Mexicans began to return to the area, but came by the hundreds rather than by the thousands as in the Rush period. Consultants for this section were primarily non-Spanish speaking residents of Melones during the period from 1920 to the mine closing in 1926.

One Mexican-American consultant's (E. Paredes) mother ran a boardinghouse in Melones from about 1922 till 1927. At this time, E. Paredes was between the ages of 13 and 18 and attending school. She graduated from high school in 1926 at Angels Camp. E. Paredes stated that most of the Mexicans in Melones at this time were from Mexico and were single men, and this is supported by all consultants. However, E. Paredes' parents were born in California, her mother near San Jose. All the men were employees of the mining company and were brought in, according to one consultant, because the mine owners thought they would be too stupid to be good high graders, but the Mexicans turned out to be the best high graders of all. There

were about six Mexican families in Melones at this time. And, one consultant mentioned that he had known several Mexican miners at Melones who claimed to be part Yaqui Indian, but none who claimed to be all Yaqui.

According to other consultants, Mexicans had the lowest paying jobs in the mines. One stated that this was due "not to discrimination" but to the fact that Mexican miners were more transient than other groups. Although Mexicans were available to work in greater numbers, they were not seen as a labor threat. Some said, however, they received the same pay for the same job as a "White" man. Three consultants agreed that when the mine closed around 1926, many Mexicans moved on to jobs at the mines in Jackson which were still operating. E. Paredes' mother moved to Jackson and opened another boardinghouse when the Melones mine closed.

The Mexicans were aware that the inhalation of dust in the mine was dangerous and wore masks for protection and tried to warn other miners as well. However, accidents were still a severe problem for them as for the other miners. One consultant stated that the Mexicans never stayed long but left through accident attrition (they were killed or crippled) or just migrated on to another place (back to Mexico, speculated the consultant). (See Chapter 7 on working conditions in the mine for further information.)

Mexicans worked on some jobs outside the mine and mill. Two consultants discussed instances of this. One told of a group of Mexicans who lived near Carson's Hill. They were a crew who kept the mine's railroad tracks in repair and shared a house. A woman, probably the wife of one, was housekeeper and cook.

Milo Bird wrote of an incident involving a Mexican driver for a mine-owned freight wagon. It exemplifies the potential danger to Mexicans who did not keep to "their place" as well as being illustrative of Mexican employment patterns. Milo's father was supervising a team composed of the Mexican driver and an Anglo brakeman. The Anglo was new to the job and inexperienced:

> After the new brakeman had nearly caused several wrecks by not handling the brake properly the Mexican driver yelled, 'Can't you get it through your thick skull how to handle that brake? The brake man pulled the brake up tight and yelled back, 'Why you dirty greaser, I killed a man once for less than that.' When the Mexican driver reported that, Dad told him to go to the railway station and bring back a load of steel,

> a task which would take an hour and a half. Trusting Dad, the Mexican driver did as he was told. Upon his return to the blacksmith shop area, the wagon was met by the county sheriff who arrested the brakeman and deported him to Butte, Montana, where he was wanted for murder.
>
> (Milo Bird n.d.:8)

The ethnic composition of the mine and town at that time was about one-third Mexican.

Spanish-speaking women evidently were hired only as domestics. One Pomposa Sasilla, worked for the Bird family. She did housework and also showed Mrs. Bird how to fry squash blossoms, make tortillas and chilibeans, tamales and polenta con fungi (an Italian dish of chicken and mushrooms).

Mrs. Paredes was the only example of a self-employed Mexican. She ran a boardinghouse and a bunk house which she rented from an Italian. Her customers were mostly Mexican men for whom she and her daughters washed the bed linen by hand, cooked and served two meals daily and prepared box lunches for each man, feeding over thirty men each day. E. Paredes believed the charge was about $30 a month for board.

Single miners also lived at company-owned bunkhouses and at the Ginsetti boardinghouse upriver from Melones. The Giansetti's had forty to fifty boarders, but the percentage who were Mexican is not known. Families lived in company houses, but consultants differ in their opinion of the location of the houses. Some say they were above the town on the hill. One source said they lived in or near the adobes; another that they lived near the town hall. E. Paredes said her family lived on the flat by the river, upstream from the mill.

The language difference and resultant problems were viewed differently by various consultants. Several stated that the Mexicans spoke little or no English. Ernest Raggio remembered an incident in which a Mexican woman had to resort to sign language to communicate that she wanted to purchase tripe from his store. E. Paredes, however, said that her family always spoke Spanish at home and with other Mexicans to preserve the language. She believed all the Mexican families spoke English and that the children had no language problems in school. Howard Canevaro thought that at least some of the Mexicans feigned a lack of English. He related one incident in which a Mexican man refused to tell him what he wanted in English, forcing him to make several trips to the

back of the store to locate the correct item. On his third trip back, he became suspicious and peeked out at the Mexican customer. He saw him putting a razor into his pocket. He did not confront the Mexican but spoke to his employer about the incident. The razor was subsequently returned to the store as a result of pressure from the mine or shift boss. One other consultant also stated that the Mexicans spoke some Italian as well. Storekeepers learned some Spanish, particularly the names of goods frequently bought by Mexican customers.

The store in Melones (owned by the company but rented out) stocked goods particularly for the Mexican miners. Ernest Raggio, who helped run the store during this period, stated that they kept clothes and shoes in sizes smaller than for American customers. Mexicans wore boots two sizes smaller than the other miners. Mr. Raggio also remembers that Mexican customers bought mostly coal oil, lard, tomato sauce, beans, flour, rice and candles and occasionally meats. Often they did their shopping by pointing at the goods they wanted or improvised in sign language.

Ted Bird stated the Mexicans never held any festivals at Melones. However, Howard Canevaro remembers that the Mexicans held a festival every year with free food, music, drink and dancing. It lasted for five days, and the entire town was invited. A fifteen-piece orchestra was brought in from the valley. He did not remember the time of year or reason for the festivities.

The children of the Mexican families are remembered by Milo Bird as "models of decorum." However, another consultant stated that the Mexican children beat him up when he stopped offering to buy them presents. They attended the elementary school at Melones where they mixed with the other children. One consultant remembers that her children used to trade lunches with them because they liked the bean sandwiches the Mexican children brought.

The Mexicans were socially isolated to some degree, but according to one Mexican consultant, she and her family attended the dances held at the town hall. She also remembers that when there were deaths in the town her mother would take food to the family--sometimes Mexican but often not. While the family of the deceased and others attended services and burial in Angels Camp, her family might clean up the house for the family as an expression of sympathy.

The Mexican miners had access to the same entertainment available to the other miners. (See section on social life of the

mines for further information.) One consultant mentioned that Mexicans gambled at the pool halls in Melones. Two discussed their use of the prostitutes in the area. In addition, consultants discussed their seing prostitutes or "Senoritas" in their rooms at the bunkhouse and one boardinghouse. Other consultants mentioned that the Mexican men drank, the same as the other miners. A unique form of entertainment for some of the Mexican populace at Melones (although only males were mentioned in this connection) was the smoking of marijuana. Two consultants mentioned the use of marijuana. They agreed that it was grown at Melones (around the area of the bunkhouses, along the river) and that its use was limited to the Mexicans. It was an accepted practice in both the Mexican community and by the other groups. However, both consultants felt the drug made the Mexican men "crazy" or different than they usually were, drunk or sober. They stated that this use of marijuana by the Mexicans was widely known in the town of Melones.

One consultant said that the Mexican miners had a nickname for payday--El Dia de Santo Pago (The day of Saint 'I pay'). It was felt to be a humorous reference to the prevalence of spiritual saints' days. When they did get paid, they often saved some in an account at the store. Ernest Raggio related that they waited until a large amount ($100) was accumulated. They would then withdraw it and send the total to an El Centro bank. He guessed that they sent it back to families in Mexico.

Several consultants mentioned incidents of violence involving Mexican miners, at least one of whom was married and had a family. Howard Canevaro related that Henry Asadi was stabbed to death with a miner's candlestick in a fight with another Mexican miner. Another consultant stated that the Mexican miners tried to fight a lot at the Giansetti boardinghouse. Yet, they were respectful of Mrs. Giansetti, who would threaten them with a butcher knife when they began fighting.

Howard Canevaro related two incidents involving Mexicans which occurred while he was a constable (1920's) for Melones. He happened to be standing outside Abbott's Pool Hall when an Anglo miner he knew walked up and stood next to him. A few moments later as a Mexican walked from the Pool Hall, the Anglo miner drew a shotgun and shot at him. Howard grabbed the gun and disarmed the man. The Mexican was unhurt. The Anglo felt the Mexican had cheated him in the game at the pool hall. The Anglo was not charged although the reasons are not known. On another occasion, Howard Canevaro broke up a fight between two Mexican miners who were cousins. They had been fighting with knives, and one was badly cut in the face. They refused to discuss it either with Howard or

the Spanish-speaking deputy. The sheriff came from San Andreas and took them to jail there. They did not return to Melones, but there was no known trial.

The Mexicans left Melones when the mine closed in the mid-twenties. The Paredes family was the last known in the area, leaving in 1927. It was felt that those who could got jobs at Jackson, and the others moved on to new areas or back to Mexico. There are at present no Spanish-speaking people in the Project Area, but descendents of both the Ponce and Morales families live nearby. These two families appear to have been fully assimilated into the dominant culture through long association and intermarriage. Although proud of their Chilean, Peruvian and Mexican ancestry, their conception of themselves is American, not Spanish American.

CHAPTER 5

SETTLEMENTS IN THE PROJECT AREA

Many small settlements sprang up along the Stanislaus River. This chapter includes information discovered about the camps known to have existed in the Project Area. Melones is treated in separate chapters (Chapters 6 and 7). The settlements are discussed in order, beginning from the northern end to the southern end of the Project Area.

Camp Nine

Camp Nine (Stanislaus on the USGS maps) is located just inside Tuolumne County, adjacent to the Stanislaus River (T3N; R15E; Sect. 6, Columbia Quad., USGS 15', 1948), at the extreme northeastern tip of the Project Area.

According to Miwok consultants, the area was used extensively prior to 1900 as a location for gathering sourberries and trapping salmon.[1] It has been suggested that on the river "up above" the Camp Nine area there is a Miwok burial site. According to both Miwok and non-Indian consultants, the area was used as a source of deer in the winter time. There is no known Miwok occupation of the area since 1900, and possibly earlier. During the Gold Rush, Clark Flat, directly across the river, was mined by both Spanish and Mexicans. There have been mining claims in the vicinity ever since, but the area has never been known for other than "poor diggin's." According to a consultant, there were one or two miners living in the canyon prior to Camp Nine construction. There is a lack of specific data concerning the Clark Flat area except that it was inhabited by several families during the 1880's and 1890's. A chronological history of Camp Nine is given in Table 3.

---

[1] There is also an Archaeological Site Survey Record in the Stanislaus National Forest, U.S. Forest Service, Records (Forest Service No. 05-I6-52-28; 4-22-74; formerly Cal-S347) that specifically lists the Clark Flat area as a ". . . village or base camp-permanent occupation used by Miwok . . ." and includes as features of the site ". . . possible roundhouse, mortars, projectile points, obsidian flakes, scrapers, manos."

Table 3

Time Chart of Construction at Camp Nine

1906--Union Construction Company established headquarters at Vallecito; Stanislaus Electric Power Company formed to take over physical facilities upon completion of powerhouse.

Oct. 10, 1906--Camp Nine Road finished from Parrotts Ferry Road in Vallecito to Camp Nine. (One source suggests that work took place during late 1906, and early 1907).

1907--Financial panic of backers caused Stanislaus Electric Power Company to be taken over by Sierra and San Francisco Power Company. (One source places this in 1909 after completion.)

Oct. 14, 1908--Camp Nine (Stanislaus) Powerhouse began operation to provide power to electric trollies of Union RR in San Francisco; to provide power to the Upper San Joaquin Valley; and to provide water to the San Domingo hydraulic mine in Dogtown, via a ditch to Cataract Gulch, through a tunnel to Coyote Creek, on to Altaville, then to Dogtown.[1]

1909--Dam and flume finished; 800' of flume lost in a slide; miners' strike in Angels Camp. (One source lists this as the date of the first power to San Francisco.)

1920--Pacific Gas and Electric began leasing from the Sierra and San Francisco Power Company.

1927--P G & E acquires the Sierra and San Francisco Power Company.

1939--15 miles of flume from Sandbar Dam to Forebay above Camp Nine replaced by 11 miles of tunnel. (One source lists 1937 for tunnel; length of flume varies slightly from source to source, as do dimensions.

1953--Oliver Garcia took over as superintendent at Camp Nine from Mathew McNamara.

1961--Camp Nine generators completely rebuilt by P G & E.

---

[1]This last aspect of the powerhouse was abandoned after construction of several miles of ditches and one half mile of tunnel when the value of the San Domingo Mine proved to be less than expected.

Sources: Joy 1975; P.G. & E. Life 1960; Consultants; Fred Leighton, Vic and Ruth Soleri.

According to Fred Leighton, the primary consultant on Camp Nine history, employees at the Union Construction Company's headquarters, located on the Meinecke Ranch in Vallecito, numbered about 75 full-time persons. There were about 30 employees in the Camp Nine area itself, and several hundred more in camps from Camp Nine up to the Relief Bay, specifically at Camps A-4, C-4, and D-4. Several ethnic groups were represented (the cooking crew at Vallecito was composed of Japanese, Chinese and Mexicans). Originally, it was exclusively Japanese, but a strike led the personnel crew to mix the groups.

The Camp Nine Road was built almost exclusively by "the hundred Slavonians" (Plate 3, p. 147) under their leader Vukasinovich (Joy 1975:34), all recent arrivals to California who spoke no English. The road is still the principal access to the powerhouse and more recent cement operations in the area. It can be assumed from other employment practices in the area that several other ethnic groups were represented, but data are lacking.

Although Leighton got his job as assistant bookkeeper through a friend, Tom Conlin, who worked for the Tuolumne Water Company, the Union Construction Company maintained a "mancatcher" to secure employees. John Spaich, a Slavonian, would go to Stockton for potential employees and as far as San Francisco when specialists were required. Living conditions for the employees varied from company bunk and boardinghouses and mess halls at both Vallecito and Camp Nine, where each man had his own room, to tents erected at various construction sites and private boardinghouses, one owned by the Canepas at the junction of the Camp Nine Road and Parrotts Ferry Road, and another owned by the Soleris in Vallecito.

After operations began, Camp Nine became "quite a little town" according to one consultant and included houses for employees and their families (the number varying from 11 to 20 depending upon the consultant) as well as bunkhouses and boardinghouses. Residences were built on both the Calaveras and Tuolumne sides of the river. A club house, one of the first buildings constructed, was used for employee Christmas parties and special meetings for executives. Some social events were open only to employees, while others were attended by both employees and residents of Vallecito and Murphys. Consultants referred to a dance hall at the Camp, but it is unclear whether this is the club house or a separate building. Visitors to the powerhouse often ate and spent the night at the club house. According to P G & E Life,

> Stanislaus Powerhouse for many years was famous for the picnics held there over Labor Day weekend, at which hundreds of P G & E'ers would sleep on the lawn, on ticks stuffed with straw, dine at long tables set on the bridge across the river, take breath-taking rides on the tram, swim, dance and play. (P G & E Life 1960:32)

Working conditions vary by source. Leighton gives ten hours per day, seven days per week for flume carpenters who earned 22-1/2 to 30 cents per hour. Men needed no recreation facilities since they had no time. Soleri gives a six-day work week with Sundays reserved for baseball games at Clarks Flat where men from Murphys would occasionally play. This is supported by Howard Canevaro, who in 1914 as catcher for the Melones baseball team, was invited to play ball there one Sunday afternoon. Leighton's information usually refers to the earliest construction periods, while Canevaro's refers to 1914 and Soleri merely to "pre World War I."

Since the early 1900's, travel to Camp Nine has been by the Camp Nine Road, and during the early stages of construction, transportation of supplies and equipment was almost exclusively by draft animal, less expensive than the traction engine that was employed for a short while. The route was from Angels Camp where loads were picked up, to Vallecito where the drivers would spend the night because there were no facilities at the powerhouse to house the line teams. Employees did not commute to Camp Nine until the 1920's when the automobile came to this area. One consultant mentioned that men from the Murphys area walked to work, stayed their six-day shift and walked back weekly. Surreys and buggies were reserved for dances and baseball games.

After completion of the initial construction phase, demand for employees continued. According to Leighton, immediately after the powerhouse began supplying power, about 800 feet of wooden flume was washed out in a slide, and Slavic miners from Angels Camp, out of work because of a miners' strike, were hired to do the repairs. The flume, which needed about two billion board feet of lumber for its construction, required about a million more per year for maintenance. A consultant talked about walking the sixteen miles of flume during the winter of 1926, keeping snow and ice from stopping the flow. There was a sawmill erected during the earliest stages of construction of the flume to provide 60,000 board feet per day (P G & E Life 1960:32). A Miwok consultant, who wound the jerk line on the lumber wagons when he was ten years old, claims Manuel's Sawmill provided lumber for the Camp Nine sawmill, bringing it from Averys in Calaveras County. The Union Construction

Company was also involved with the Standard Lumber Company in Tuolumne County (Joy 1975:35).

Until World War II, ". . . many of the local residents depended upon P. G. & E. for seasonal work to supplement the incomes from their ranches or other part-time work" (Joy 1975:42). According to Vic and Ruth Soleri, the biggest boom in the area was in 1937 when the flume, difficult to clear in winter, was replaced by a tunnel. Once again, workers stayed in tents at both Vallecito and Camp Nine. During the winter, operations would shut down except for a few white-collar jobs; except for a few at Vallecito all employees would be laid off and would leave the area.

When the project was finished, the entire camp at Vallecito was disassembled, and most of the non-resident workers left. The eight or ten operators who remained were married men with families who lived in houses at the powerhouse site (three men per shift were required).

In 1961 a new powerhouse was constructed by P. G. & E., the old facilities and residences removed, the new plant being "essentially automatic" and serviced by personnel from Angels (Joy 1975:40).

Rose Creek

Very little information is available from published sources or from consultants regarding Rose Creek (Location: T3N, R14E, N.E. boundary of Sect. 23, Columbia Quad.,USGS 15' 1948). One consultant recalled that there was a cable car at Rose Creek that crossed the river from a point near the Camp Nine road. "You could ride into the canyon on the Camp Nine road and take the cable car across the river." The creek witnessed some mining activity at one time, for another consultant noted: "Woodman and Jones had a small stamp mill at Rose Creek, that had an overshot wheel. They only mined the surface."

Duck Bar

Duck Bar, located about midway between the Camp Nine powerhouse and the Parrotts Ferry bridge, was the scene of cattle and horse rustling between the counties of Calaveras and Tuolumne. It was, according to several consultants, one of the few places on the river where there was no rough water, and therefore facilitated

movement of cattle. But, information from the literature is lacking, and consultants were usually hesitant to give details. (Location: T3N, R14E, E side of NE 1/4, of the SE 1/4, Sect. 27, Columbia Quad., USGS 15', 1948).

Pine Log

Located on the south fork of the Stanislaus River, north of Columbia and near Experimental Gulch (T3N, R14E, center of Sect. 36, Columbia Quad., USGS, 15', 1948), Pine Log, once known as Pine Crossing and Paso del Pino, was a thriving, rich mining camp in the 1850's, the first recorded on the south fork of the Stanislaus River. Gold was discovered here between the summer of 1848 and October of 1849. So secluded was this camp that travelers came upon Pine Log almost by accident while on their way to Sonora, in 1849:

> I shall never forget our joy when, after having struggled up the river range, we looked down, and at the depth of between four and five thousand feet, we discovered nestled among the trees, half a dozen white tents. . .
>
> We all with one accord, gave a shout that drew the tired miners to the doors of their tents. Short work was it descending to the river, the which, crossing on a bridge formed with two immense 'pine logs' . . .
>
> (Perkins 1964:126)

Pine Log was the only level stretch of ground near the river for several miles in either direction.

Downstream from and west of Pine Log, there was a settlement of Mexicans in the first gulch east of the Stanislaus River. According to one consultant, this encampment was called American Gulch. Fireplace foundations are all that remain there today.

The Miwok Indians of the area had known about the Pine Log crossing years before the Whites came, using it as a natural fording place in times of high water. The Pine Log trail was the original Miwok trail which led to a village site located north of the Columbia brewery site.

As the mining at Pine Log became successful, people poured into this camp, swelling the population and finally spilling into the surrounding areas. The Native Americans who inhabited the fringe areas

were crowded out: ". . . between August 1848 and October 1849, Indians, Mexicans, and Americans had either used the Pine Log Indian trail or prospected the area, or both" (Young 1969:281). And, many Chinese people are said to have come to Pine Log in search of rich diggings.

In the fall of 1849 G. S. Evans and C. M. Radcliff owned the "Texas Claim" at Pine Log, but one month later, Evans sold out to Radcliff. The latter lived and worked at Pine Log from October of 1849 to July of 1850. Both he and Major Farnsworth owned stores in Pine Log, Gold Springs and Columbia in the prosperous April of 1850. Radcliff was first alcalde at Pine Log, and elected Justice of the Peace. In 1850 Pine Log boasted a population estimated at 1,500 people primarily seasonal residents since heavy winter rains swelled the river and drove many away with the threat of floods.

A man named Harris was elected Secretary of the Miners' Organization in 1850 at Pine Log. This powerful organization kept Indian and miner skirmishes to a minimum; violence in the camp was almost unheard of. The leaders of this organization, able to execute any command, never abused their powers. The local Indians, however, unafraid of the organization, raided Pine Log and stole cattle from the miners, forcing them to work their claims, ". . . with their rifles at hand" (Young 1969:282).

Law and order did not continue for very long at Pine Log despite the miners' organization, and one month after the foreign miners' tax went into effect, "Several robberies and . . . murders had been committed within a few days by Mexican desparados" (Young 1969:282).

By February of 1850, Pine Log was comprised of only, ". . . a trading tent, eating tent, gambling tent and a few miners' tents nestled among the pine trees" (Young 1969:281). Three months later, several men established the earliest set of mining laws for Pine Log, dated May 23, 1850 (also the date of Pine Log's first recorded bill of sale).

> On April 16, 1850, a list of precincts was submitted to the legislature naming, 'Sonora, Shaws, Hills, Pine Crossing, American /Columbia/ and Sullivans & territory between and in the vicinity' as those camps comprising precinct No. 1, indicating the camp was prosperous despite the difficulties caused by the high river. (Young 1969:282)

By 1853 the population once again rose to 500 miners "in the immediate area." This same year, the Tuolumne County Water

Company's map showed twelve wooden dwellings on the west side of the river and four on the east side, indicating permanency. The miners still had difficulties working the river bars since the high waters hampered their endeavors: ". . . in August the Columbia Gazette reported thirty miners were 'making preparations to turn the river into a stone flume on one side" (Young 1969:283). The miners were successful in their attempt and:

> Five hundred miners were busy seeking the yellow 'oro' in the bed of the South Fork in August, 1852. Nearly all were doing well. Two large nuggets of five to six ounces each were taken out of the Union claim just above Pine Crossing.
>
> (Young 1969:283)

Claims were limited to 100' by 100'. One claim could be owned by right of possession, but more could be owned by right of purchase, provided they were worked one out of three days except during low water, or high water, when mining proved impossible.

Early in April 1857 three miners with three sluice boxes washed out thirty ounces of gold in three days. Five other men sluiced fifteen pounds "of pure gold dust" (Young 1969:283) in one week. Two pounds of gold were picked from the topsoil thrown into the sluice box. But the miners' good fortune was short lived. In July of 1857 one of Tuolumne County's Water Companies' three reservoirs broke, and the rushing water drowned twelve men working at Italian Bar and four men at Pine Log. Damages were estimated from $61.00 to $500.00. Labor cost to return the claims to working order after the loss of equipment was estimated at $4.00 per day per man.

In September, 1857 Hutchings California Magazine ran a feature story on Pine Log. It noted that only one or two trees remained on the west side of the river. Perkins' earlier description says, ". . . white tents nestled in the trees." Extensive use of the river area resources by the miners is clear.

In mid-January 1862, disaster again struck Pine Log. The Dailey Alta reported that the entire settlement, consisting of "a store, saloon, blacksmith shop, eight or ten private residences and a good deal of mining property, all . . . was destroyed" (Young 1969:283) by an onrushing flood, caused by winter rains. This ended Pine Log as a mining town: "Pine Log settled overnight, disintegrated as quickly when the miners departed" (Kenton 1973:241).

Transitory though it was, Pine Log is remembered for the amounts of gold the miners withdrew from her river bars and banks.

Pine Log, combined with Italian Bar, and Experimental Gulch collectively produced 3.5 million dollars.

At a gathering on New Year's Day in 1880, many of the old timers who once lived and worked at Pine Log recalled past experiences and the amounts of gold each had found. Several Indian consultants have different views and memories of this old mining camp. One remembered her youth when she swam and fished from the area of Pine Log Crossing. The original Indian trail went by her parents' home. When she was a child one cabin belonged to August Whitican, a German 49'er, who ran a picture shop. She remembered a trail from Pine Log Crossing to American Camp: ". . . the Pine Log stores were half-way between Columbia and American Camp . . . it was originally an Indian pack trail."

Stages were the common mode of transportation when she was growing up, but buggies and horses were also important. The consultant went to grammar school in Columbia for seven years, and high school in Sonora where she boarded for one year. During her last year in high school, she drove to school in a horse and buggy. Her family, she said, "didn't go to town often." People speak of Pine Log today as "'dead,' . . . not even a ghost town" (Young 1969:284).

Columbia Marble Quarries

Columbia Marble Quarries, located immediately southwest of the junction of the South Fork and the Stanislaus River (T3N, R14E, N 1/2 of SW 1/4 Sect. 34, Columbia Quad., USGS, 15', 1948), began operations in the 1850's producing what consultants referred to as very good quality marble.

The quarry employed thirty men, one blacksmith (to make and maintain the drills used in cutting), and teams of horses usually consisting of 18-20 horses each. No quarry employees were found, yet one consultant claimed that her father and both of her brothers were blacksmiths there at one time. /The Coffill family operated the quarries from the 1890's through 1928./

The marble was cut into slabs measuring eight by sixteen feet, and two inches thick, weighing ten tons each. These were transported by horses out of the area and shipped by rail from Sonora to San Francisco where the final wheel polishing was done.

The sidewalks in front of houses in nearby Columbia were created from the early cuts of marble, which the quarry gave away. Later, many monuments in the old Sonora cemetery were also made from this marble and buildings in both Sonora and San Francisco used the marble.

Native Americans reportedly never sought employment at the quarries for fear of finding the bones of their relatives there. But, the possibility of Native American burials in the immediate vicinity is not supported by non-Native American consultants.

According to consultants, there was a powerhouse in the same area, located near both the quarries and the Abbey Ferry location; any relationship between these three is unknown.

Columbia Powerhouse

The Columbia Powerhouse (location: T2N; R14E; Sect. 34), built by the Coffill family, supplied power to run their privately owned marble quarries and Springfield Mine. The powerhouse, originally operated by the Coffills, was unique as first "high head" plant in California. The buckets employed were of brass and had to be replaced every few days because of the high water pressure. Al Ponce mentioned that operators of this powerhouse lived in the canyon in one of two houses. He said the powerhouse was powered by water from Lord Springs, Vine Springs, and Gold Springs and named the company employing the power as the Tuolumne Power and Light Company.

Abbey's Ferry

Abbey's Ferry, the northern-most ferry within the Project Area, is located below the south fork of the Stanislaus River approximately two miles above the location of Parrotts Ferry bridge. It operated from March 1852 through May, 1863 (Nau 1971:350). A deed associated with one of the sales of the property listed a saloon, dwelling house and a stable being connected with the ferry (Nau 1971:350). A consultant located the ferry in the vicinity of the Columbia Marble quarries and added that there was once a powerhouse at the same location, but the association between these is unknown. (Location: T3N, R14E, SW 1/4 Sect. 34, or T2N, R14E, NW 1/4 Sect. 3, Columbia Quad., USGS 15', 1948.)

Parrotts Ferry

At one time, this ferry was one of several transporting both people and goods between Calaveras and Tuolumne. The original ferry has been replaced by a bridge, still one of the means of crossing the Stanislaus. Consultants place the first operations of this ferry in the late 1850's or early 1860's when the roads on both sides of the river were improved. The original owner (Pendola) made little money in the ferry business, soon sold out to Parrott and went to Melones where he engaged in placer mining. (He made enough money to purchase what is now known as the Pendola Ranch--see Chapter 8, Agriculture.) The ferry changed hands several times until Tuolumne and Calaveras counties built a bridge there in 1903. In 1937 this bridge washed out, and the following year a second was constructed, slightly upstream from the previous location (Nau 1971:349) (Location: T2N, R14E, Sect. 9, Columbia Quad., 15' USGS 1948).

There was a residence at Parrotts Ferry as late as 1871 when Parrott died and left the ferry to his daughter (Nau 1971:349). One consultant claimed that the Kennick family also lived there, but dates for this residence are lacking.

Several consultants remembered events which took place at the ferry. One said her father and friends used to spear salmon, plentiful there during certain seasons. Another said he remembered herding cattle in the area, specifically up "Parrotts Ferry Grade." A third consultant mentioned that there were "big doin's" at the construction of the bridge but does not remember any details since she was a child at the time. She and other children would wade across the river in the area surrounding the ferry since the water was never very high. The dam which provided water for the Melones flume was immediately downstream from the ferry.

Norwegian Gulch and Mine

A mining claim was operated after the turn of the century by a group of Norwegian miners. According to one consultant, the mine was located, "up behind the Williams place" on the opposite side of the river from Melones (Location: T2N, R14E, Sections 19 and 30, Columbia Quad., USGS 15', 1948). Locals called it a "pocket mine." It was, however, a quartz mine, and they milled the quartz out on the Tuolumne side of the river. The families who operated it constructed a tunnel in the mine and were able to make a comfortable living. One consultant recalled, "A fellow named of Nelson took a lot of gold out of it."

Another consultant remembers four or five houses in the vicinity of Norwegian Gulch and Mine. Although not strictly a part of the town of Melones, the Norwegians did conduct business there. Another consultant delivered groceries to the Norwegian families in earlier days from Melones: "We took orders for groceries when we delivered groceries." (Chapter 6.)

Coyote Creek

Coyote Creek originates in Table Mountain, running in a southwesterly direction through the town of Vallecito, continuing south through T3N, R14E, Sections 30 and 31, and meandering along the line between R13E and 14E, Sections 6 and 7, in a southerly direction, where it enters the Stanislaus river in T2N, R13E, Sect. 24, Columbia Quad., USGS, 15', 1948. Coyote Creek was known and used by both the Miwok Indians and the 49'ers (Plate 4). It is probably best known for the stories about it. One Indian consultant, while on a walking/driving tour with a researcher, pointed to some very distinctive marble outcroppings where the creek turns west from Highway 49 and commented, "This is where old Jack Bodeen used to live, down in the canyon on the creek. He had a vineyard there and use to make wine which he sold to the Indians." He remembered riding on horseback with a group of Indians from Murphys down to Jack Bodeens to get wine when he was about five years old. According to another consultant, years before the 49'ers arrived in Coyote Creek, the Miwok buried their dead "all the way up Coyote Creek."

There is little written about mining activity along Coyote Creek. Borthwick comments only upon living conditions of certain miners there:

> The only miners on the Creek were Frenchmen, two or three of whom lived in a very neat log cabin, close to the tunnel. Behind it was a small kitchen-garden in a high state of cultivation, and alongside was a very diminutive fac-simile of the cabin itself, which was tenanted by a knowing-looking little terrier-dog.
>
> The whole establishment had a finished and civilized air about it, and was got up with a regard to appearance which was quite unusual. (Borthwick 1929:342)

A consultant who runs a store in Vallecito recalled once that she and her husband grubstaked a miner who went into Coyote Creek seeking gold. "He came back with very little gold, but he did find several rubies."

Natural Bridges

The natural bridges located at the northern tip of Coyote Creek in the Project Area will be affected by inundation (Location: T2N, R14E, SE 1/4 of Sect. 6, Columbia Quad., 15', USGS, 1948). One consultant, who previously owned the property and was forced to sell to the Army Corps of Engineers, claimed that the lower of the series of bridges will be underwater, should the proposed high water line become a reality.

During the 1850's, when many Mexicans and Chinese peoples were forced to vacate the Vallecito area, many Mexicans chose to resettle in the Natural Bridges vicinity. What became of the evicted Chinese population is not known. After the turn of the century, L. A. Barnes, known locally as "old Bach," lived at the bridges and introduced himself to everyone who came to the area. The area was used extensively by various groups for picnics, many of which included organized events such as horseshoes and tug-of-wars.

Another consultant stated there was also a hotel at the bridges that was considered popular in the "early days." Vallecito History also claimed that the bridges were considered one of the "Natural Wonders of Calaveras County along with the limestone caves and Calaveras Big Trees" (Richards 1974:68). "Old Bach," who did some cursory experimentation in the area, estimated that the formation may have taken as long as 40 million years to achieve its present state (Richards 1974:70).

Campo Seco

"About a mile south of Jamestown, between Woods and Sullivan's Creeks, Campo Seco was settled in 1848" (Buckbee 1935:445). Among those who first settled here were a group of men recently discharged from Stevenson's Regiment (Buckbee 1935:445) in September of that same year, and who arrived in hopes of ". . . launching forth on careers as miners . . ." (Buckbee 1935:446).

Two years later, these and other miners excavated water ditches capable of providing ". . . a ten ton stream from Woods Creek" (Buckbee 1935:446). They called their endeavor, "Seco Company's Race." The miners at Campo Seco were then the first to experiment with the Long Tom sluice box--long lines of miners stood on either side of the box, sharing the washing of the immense amounts of dirt carried through this sluice. Not many became wealthy, and transients were numerous. One consultant remembered, "many at Melones came from Campo Seco."

Having a reputation for progressiveness, Campo Seco (also called "Little Italy") soon witnessed the arrival of other adventurers who sought a different type of wealth. The rich fields of oats, barley, and wheat which sprang up were profitable for the farmers. These grain fields are still under cultivation.

In 1851 G. T. Richardson erected the first theater built in the Southern Mines at Campo Seco. Made of clapboard and canvas, it boasted a bar and other "fixings" necessary for both dramatic and comic entertainment. "W. B. Chapman and his sisters, Caroline and Mary, made their first appearance in the mines in this primitive playhouse" (Buckbee 1935:446).

Not much is known about Campo Seco or its businesses in the years after the Gold Rush. One consultant recalled, "Before World War I a woman named Hattie had a whorehouse here" (Chapter 6).

Jackass Gulch

Jackass Gulch, first organized in 1848, was "in one of the richest ravines known to the early miners" (Shinn 1948:225). It is not located on the 1948 U.S. Geological Survey maps, and no field data was available on this Gulch from consultants. It is believed to be the Gulch immediately north of Soldier Gulch by one-quarter mile and immediately west of Jackass Hill (T2N, R13E, Sect. 25, Columbia Quad., USGS, 15', 1948). Shinn(1948) notes that Soldier Gulch and Jackass Gulch are located about one-quarter mile apart and are treated by the miners as one diggings, and the miners' law adapted in 1851 extends over both Gulches and their tributaries (Shinn 1948:226) (see page 135). The camp was thriving in 1851, "crowded with miners by the hundred" (Shinn 1948:226), but the population rapidly decreased; by 1856 there were only twenty-two voters. As a result of the limited population, few services were available to those who lived and worked in the area, and one consultant commented that his grandfather had mined at Jackass Hill and was badly injured. Injured men were carried by foot on a litter by their fellow workers to the nearest source of medical attention in Sonora, some five miles distant. "Grandfather never recovered and died several months later."

Indian Gulch

Indian Gulch, located immediately west of the town of Melones, was used by a Mexican family named Morales who grazed their sheep

on the western slopes. No other information is available from the consultants nor from published material (Location: T2N, R13G, SW 1/4, Sect. 24, San Andreas Quad., USGS, 15', 1962).

Soldier Gulch

Soldier Gulch was located within the Project Area approximately one mile south of Melones on the Tuolumne County side of Stanislaus (Location T2N, R13E, Sect. 25, Sonora Quad., USGS, 15', 1948). A short-lived mining camp of the Gold Rush period, it had almost disappeared as a settlement by the mid-1850's. Soldier Gulch in 1848 was a particularly rich diggings along with Carson and Mormon Gulch (Perkins 1964:28).

Shinn refers to the enactment in 1848 of mining laws for Jackass Gulch and Soldier Gulch, located about one-quarter mile and treated by the miners as a single diggings. (No other reference to this written camp law remains.) Since a square of ten feet of ground here might yield as much as $10,000 by placer methods, this was the maximum size claim allowed until 1851. After 1851 the laws of this digging were:

> First, That each person can hold one claim by virtue of occupation, but it must not exceed one hundred feet square.
>
> Second, That a claim or claims, if held by purchase, must be under bill of sale, and certified to by two disinterested persons as to the genuiness of signature and of the consideration given.
>
> Third, That a jury of five persons shall decide any question arising under the previous article.
>
> Fourth, That notices of claims must be renewed every ten days until water to work the said claims is to be had.
>
> Fifth, That, as soon as there is sufficiency of water for working a claim, five days' absence from said claim, except in case of sickness, accident, or reasonable excuse, shall forfeit the property.
>
> Sixth, That these rules shall extend over Jackass and Soldier Gulches, and their tributaries. (Shinn 1948:226)

The lessened value of the ground is shown by the enlargement of the claims from ten to one hundred square feet. In less than ten years, Soldier Gulch, like most other settlements along the Stanislaus during the Rush, was virtually deserted.

Carson Creek

"One of the richest placers in California was an extensive sloping flat near the center of Calaveras County, at the foot of a range of quartz mountains separating it from the valley of the Stanislaus River " (Quaife 1949:207) (T2N, R13E, Sections 14, 23, San Andreas Quad., USGS 15', 1962). Carson's Creek, named after the man who first settled there, boasted a small camp called Carsons Flat along one of its banks, which lured miners, gamblers, and businessmen alike when gold was first discovered there early in 1851. Mexicans, employed by Americans, arrived in 1852 to mine along the creek (Borthwick 1929). Many Chinese also came with hopes of making their fortunes. "There were mounds of dirt along the creek" according to one consultant, and "these were indications of where the Chinese mined in the 1850's and afterwards."

In the late 1850's mining became a prosperous endeavor for some along Carson Creek:

> . . . built a one stamp mill at what is known as the Water Fall, one-fourth mile below Carson Hill on Carson Creek, where the water ditch takes off to the old Stevenot homestead. The ore that was crushed . . . came from the Reserve Mine on Carson Hill. (Stevenot 1955:n.p.)

Stevenot interested a number of people in building a ditch from one area along Coyote Creek (Vallecito) to Carson Hill and on to the Stevenot homestead. The ditch was finally extended to the Jones Mine further down Carson Creek. He used the water to operate water wheels which furnished power for the stamp mills.

The Jones mine was located a short distance downstream from the site of Melones. The mine, at the confluence of Carson Creek and the Stanislaus River, was large and operated its own stamp mill with a full crew. There were ten family houses and a boardinghouse located here. The town was complete with a saloon run by Dominic Bertolino and a commissary run by the mine, and a smelter foundation near is there today. The Marshall family spent some time at the mine in 1904 while a Mr. Flint was the mine superintendent, and most recollections date from this time.

Goods were delivered to the town on a regular basis from Angels Camp and many businesses prospered. An instance illustrative of the times was a suit involving two Jews at Carson's Creek:

> These two sons of Isreal had carried on a shop in partnership, and had realized a fortune, but in their settlement, there were twenty-two hundred dollars in dispute between them, and it was given to the alcalde for settlement, and he referred it to the decision of a jury. The miners knew that the men had realized their pile from the labor of others, and were determined that the litigants should at least pay for all the law they received. . . . The bill of costs was soon made up, and amounted to eighteen hundred dollars. This the Jews refused to pay but the verdict of the jury and the money were both in the hands of the alcalde, and he informed them that his oath of office compelled him to execute the jury's decision; he therefore paid from their bag the cost, and equally divided between them the remainder. They did not "go their way rejoicing," but went off swearing a string of Hebrew curses which portended no good to the lawgivers."
>
> (Carson 1950:44-45)

The Miwok Indians also made use of Carson Creek. According to a consultant, the Miwok buried their dead "up by Smokeys in a field by Carson Creek," but the gravestones are "all broken and gone, I hear." The railroad track which used to run near this graveyard is also gone. When the consultant was a youngster, she walked past the graves along the creek many times; but the area is inaccessible today.

Bostwick Bar

No November rains and general dry conditions made the Stanislaus River lower than usual during the winter (1975), exposing evidence of a town near the old Melones Dam (Plates 5 - 9, pages 151 through 159). Consultants confirmed it as Bostwick Bar, a Chinese settlement located at the mouth of Angels Creek where it flows into the Stanislaus River (T1N, R13E, NE 1/4, Sect. 3, Copperopolis Quad., USGS, 15', 1962). The settlement was located on only one map of the area made by Owen C. Coy in 1948. Coy does not, however, discuss Bostwick Bar in his text. Settled early in Gold Rush days, Bostwick Bar, although boasting a large population of Chinese settlers, did not enjoy a long life as a mining town. According to one consultant,

> the Chinese mined a gravel bar . . . it was all ground sluicing in that area, all along the river on both sides, from Mormon Creek to the Bostwick Bar area . . . the banks of the river alone had been worked for six to eight feet back from the river for the gold. These were all tailings from ground sluicing.

The Chinese inhabitants of Bostwick Bar tried several methods to obtain gold from this area, and they tried to alter the course of the river to get access to the ancient channel beds. A consultant remembered, ". . . they /Chinese miners/ tried to put in a tunnel at Bostwick Bar to divert the river around Bostwick Bar and drain the channel, but it did not work because the tunnel caved in."

There was also a ditch which came out at Bostwick Bar, running from Mormon Creek to Bostwick Bar, supplying water to a placer mine operation. The water was sold to the mine. The consultant said, "I think it was built during the Gold Rush time. I heard the man who built the ditch died shortly after it was completed, then someone else took it over."

The Chinese were not the only ones who tried their luck at Bostwick Bar. One consultant recalled a mining company which went in after the Chinese left and tried to dry up the bend in the river at Bostwick Bar, but apparently ". . . it proved out, just failed and flopped." When the company packed up and left, Portuguese working for this company remained behind to try their own methods. According to a consultant, "this is how they came to have the land on the river, in the area of the river." Another man who stayed behind when the company left was named Sworere. "He did some mining in the area of Bostwick Bar after the mining company proved out. Never heard any more on him." The only other mention of any mining activity at Bostwick Bar was: "two men named Ratto and Gruller worked the area around Bostwick Bar. They ran cattle there also."

Other endeavors at Bostwick Bar were successful. Many Chinese were able to put in gardens and profit from the produce they raised by selling vegetables to neighboring people. Ah Yet, a well known Chinese man had a garden there until 1906 or 1907 (Bird n.d.: 1,2). Another consultant recalled, "a man by the name of Francis /surname/ raised vegetables in the area of Bostwick Bar bend when I was a little kid /ca. 1900/ and he would carry them to Columbia . . . /He raised/ peanuts, alfalfa, sweet potatoes and melons."

Consultants did not know exactly when this town became deserted or when the last miners gave up and left. One consultant thought the town was named after one of the first settlers on this particular bend in the river, "but I'm not certain," he added.

Reynolds Ferry

According to consultants, at one time Reynolds Ferry was owned by the Rolleri family who operated a butcher shop on the Calaveras side of the river, and later sold out to the Airola family. The adjacent area was homesteaded by John Francis (date unknown) for a few years. Sometime after he left, it was inundated by the old Melones reservoir. Consultants mentioned that there was a small settlement there although the nature of the settlement or the ethnic composition of its population is unknown. One consultant stated Black Bart was captured at this site. It was ". . . his twenty-eighth and final holdup near the ferry in the early 1800's" (Kenton 1973:254).

The exact location of Reynolds Ferry is a matter of dispute. One consultant placed it beneath the old Melones powerhouse; another located it in T2N, R13E, Sect. 34, Copperopolis Quad., USGS, 15', 1962. Kenton claims it ". . . was located on an old stage road near California Highway 49 at Jackass Hill, northwest of Tuttletown a few miles" (Kenton 1973:254).

Mormon Camp

Mormon Camp was located in the Project Area at the confluence of the Stanislaus River and Mormon Creek (T1N, R13E, SW 1/4, Sect. 1, Copperopolis Quad., USGS, 15', 1962). An important and rich camp of the Rush period, some of its area is currently under the Melones Reservoir, which would make archeological reconstruction impossible.

There were various "Mormon" sites located along Mormon Creek from its mouth on the Stanislaus to its source near Columbia (Perkins 1964:154). They were known as Mormon Camp, Creek, Gulch and Diggings. According to one consultant, the first Mormon camp was near present-day Tuttletown (renamed for Judge Tuttle, according to consultants), and it was soon moved to a location near the mouth of the creek in 1848. This new location corresponds to Gunn's description of the Mormon diggings being located within five miles of Wood's Diggings (Jamestown) and Sullivan's Diggings (south of Jamestown) (Gunn 1928:61). Woods also states that the Mormon Diggings were located between the Stanislaus and the Tuolumne rivers in 1850-1851 (Woods 1857:94-95). Finally, Gunn mentions Mormon Diggings as being in the precinct with Peoria--directly south of Mormon Creek's mouth--and McLean's Ferry--location unknown but probably lying south of Mormon Creek, since ferries north of that location are known (Gunn 1928:83).

The settlement was a viable town from 1848, when it first appears in the literature (Perkins 1964:154), until 1851, when it last appears in connection with the Foreign Miners' Tax and associated disturbances. Its existence was based on placer mining, and its demise corresponds roughly with the decline of this method of mining in the Project Area with the exhaustion of gold.

According to one consultant, the encampment was begun by three military units of Mormons who had arrived in California in 1846 (two came overland and one around Cape Horn). Since statehood was attained without full-scale military intervention, they eventually dispersed, and the members went to the gold fields. The creek, camp and gulch retain their name although there is no evidence that the Mormons remained in large members even as early as 1849.

James Carson in 1848 said, ". . . Mormon Gulch, Soldiers' Gulch, Sullivan's Diggings and the Rich Gulch of Moquelumne, had been rich discoveries, made during the fall and winter, and were now centers of attraction" (Perkins 1964:28). Mormon Gulch is further described in 1850 as having ". . . trading tents and dwellings of the miners, chiefly of canvas, with some log and hide houses, and one or two frame dwellings" (Woods 1857:94-95). Woods also states:

> Feb. 14th, Mormon Gulch. . . . came to this place. This is a settlement about four miles from Curtis's. . . . All the winter encampments are breaking up. The miners are on the move. The log and stone houses, and sometimes the tents, are deserted. Within a short distance, we saw over three hundred pack-mules, moving about in every direction. (Woods 1857:113)

In 1855 Marryat reports it as deserted but says it had been a site of earlier, rich placer diggings and activity (Marryat 1952:274).

In 1849 it was described by Dr. Gunn as a place where law was bought with gold:

> September 7. Were turned out of our hole /Mormon Camp/ by two others who said they had a prior claim. There is no alcalde here, and a jury trial costs sixteen ounces /of gold/, one to each juror, two to the judge, one for the sheriff, and one to the secretary. (Gunn 1928:68)

In July, 1850 the Sonora Herald writes of it in connection with the first mention of gardening in the area of the Southern Mines:

"Among the items printed in The Herald soon after its establishment was the fact that 'Oliver Twist of Mormon Camp has a garden with melons growing'" (Stellman 1934:57).

One consultant remembered J. G. Kress, a Portuguese, who had a 160 parcel on Mormon Creek. No other mention is made as to the nature of this land or what was done to it.

There was medical treatment available there as early as 1849 when Dr. Gunn arrived. In October of 1849 he treated his very first patient there, a Missourian with "remittent fever" who recovered (Gunn 1928:70-71). In November of the same year he treated a case of typhus in Mormon Camp with "powders," later leaving medicine for the patient for four days (Gunn 1928:72).

Although there were no known stage or freight routes into the Mormon Camp, it was apparently not a difficult trip from Jamestown. Dr. Gunn reports several instances when he went from one to the other and returned the same day after a day's work (Gunn 1928:66, 67,72). As a consequence, the stores, gambling-saloons and brothels of Jamestown were readily available to miners at Mormon Camp.

In 1850 when feeling against the "foreigners" was running high, Bancroft reports that "By mid-summer of 1850 anarchy prevailed in the southern mines with alarming proportions. At Mormon Gulch resolutions were passed that all Mexicans should quit these diggings within fifteen days, or be forcibly expelled. However, this was the action of foreigners, not Americans" (Bancroft 1880:235). In Sonora a committee was formed, when the tax act was a reality, to deal with what was feared would be a "war." A Mr. W. C. Wade of Mormon Gulch was on this committee (Lang 1882:44).

When the tax collector arrived in Sonora, feelings between "foreigners" and "Americans" culminated in the formation of antagonistic camps of miners. The "foreigners" held meetings and gathered outside Sonora to protest and meet with officials. There was an incident, and as a result the "foreigners" withdrew from town. The town's people, fearing reprisals, sent messages to Jamestown, Sullivan's, and Mormon Camp for assistance (Perkins 1964:154,327).

> The citizens armed themselves /Sonorans/, and expresses were sent to Mormon Creek and Sullivan's Diggings, from which places about five hundred well armed Americans arrived . . . The demonstration was sufficient; the crowds in the vicinity soon dispersed, and quiet was restored.
>
> (Perkins 1964:397)

Along the route, coming and going, the men observed the "foreigners" in their camps to be peaceful.

The next day there was another incident in which a Mexican man attempted to kill the tax collector with a knife but was himself virtually decapitated by a bystander named Clark (Perkins 1964:38). Subsequently, "Thirty armed Americans soon arrived from Mormon Gulch, and the whole American population were on alert all night" (Perkins 1964:38), then the would-be rescuers returned to Mormon Camp.

The incidents of the Foreign Tax "war" are the last mention of Mormon Camp in the literature. It, like other 49'er camps in the Project Area (and throughout the Mother Lode), disappeared over the next few years as its inhabitants moved to other gold sites such as the Comstock. Businessmen, craftsmen and professionals moved to larger, more permanent settlements--Dr. Gunn, for instance, moved first to Jamestown and then to Sonora in the early 1850's (Gunn 1928:84).

Bear Creek

In Bear Creek a cyanide operation attempted to recover gold from the sands. The operation was unsuccessful and short lived. The father of one consultant was employed in the operation, and the consultant located the site as T1N, R14E, NW 1/4 of Sect. 18 (Sonora Quad., USGS, 15', 1948). This consultant claimed that some Mexicans and Chileans mined the creek, but it was never considered rich. The consultant's grandmother sold the water rights to a local irrigation district.

PLATE 3

The "One Hundred Slavonians" with their leader Vukasinovich who were hired to construct the Camp Nine Road. This road, seven miles long extended from Vallecito to Camp Nine, and was built in 1906. Their rock retaining walls are still visible along this road which is still in use.

Courtesy of Fred Leighton,
Sonora

PLATE 4

This is an aerial view looking south of Coyote Creek which is located north of the town of Melones. Remains of mining activity can be seen in the lower left portion of the photograph. The cyanide/quartz tailings of the Carson Hill mine can be seen at the upper left. Coyote Creek was an important residential area when the town of Melones was "booming" (1900-1930). The majority of the houses occurred near the mouth of the Creek and the Stanislaus River which can be seen in the upper central portion of the photograph.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 5

Bostwick Bar. An aerial view of the river bend on which Bostwick Bar is located. Two structures, several rock walls and earth works are visible.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, Infrared
black and white, December 1975

PLATE 6

Bostwick Bar. An aerial view of the Bostwick Bar area, looking toward the southwest. Visible are the remains of the settlement which flourished during the Gold Rush and was used as a garden area until approximately 1900. This peninsula of land was, at one time, a bar formed on the inside of a large bend of the Stanislaus River. The bend was a natural mining area and was physically large enough and rich enough to support a town. Also visible are the rectangular remains of two structures, both of which are at the water's edge. Extensive rock walls and earth works remain also. The use of the structures, walls, and earthworks are unknown, although they were no doubt associated with the mining of the river bend.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 7

Bostwick Bar. This is a westerly view of the extensive stone remains of Bostwick Bar. The area pictured is normally inundated, therefore the visible remains are covered with a thick layer of sediment.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 8

The remains of a structure at Bostwick Bar, including a door frame and walls. This is one of two such structures found at the site. The site is on the southwest side of the old channel of the Stanislaus River, approximately two miles northwest of the proposed dam site. This site has been inundated since the construction of the "Old Melones Dam," and is above water only during dry spells. Other remains in the area included rock walls, some of which are visible behind the structural remains.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 9

The remains of the most westerly of the two structures at Bostwick Bar is rectangular and is constructed of both river cobbles and flat stones. It is at approximately the same elevation as the other structural remains on the bend and is therefore usually under the water of Melones Lake. The structure is associated with rock walls which can be seen in the aerial photographs of the area. Ethnographic crew member Ruth Gardner stands behind the remains.

New Melones Ethnographic
Research Photograph, December 1975



PLATE 3

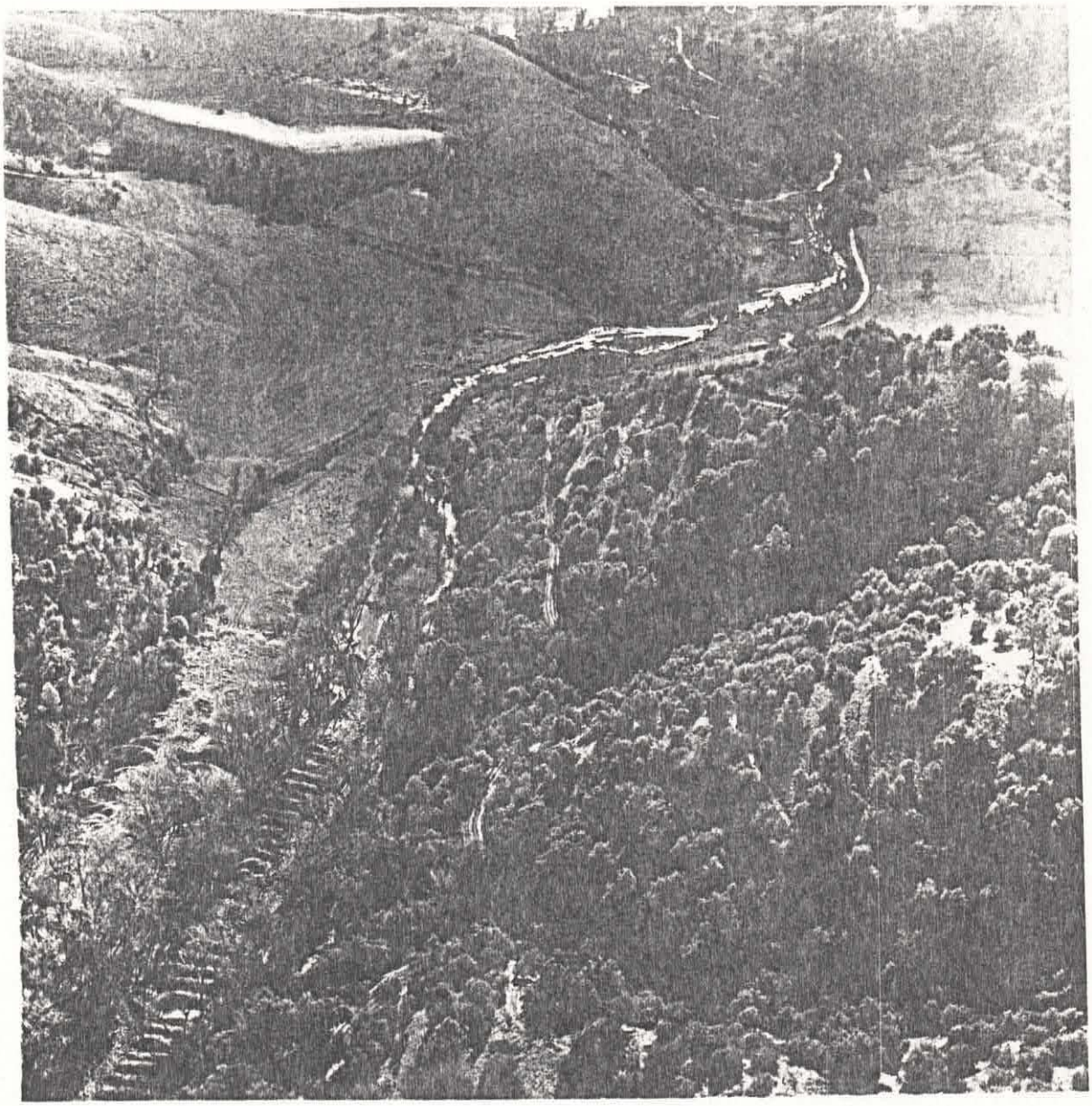


PLATE 4



PLATE 5

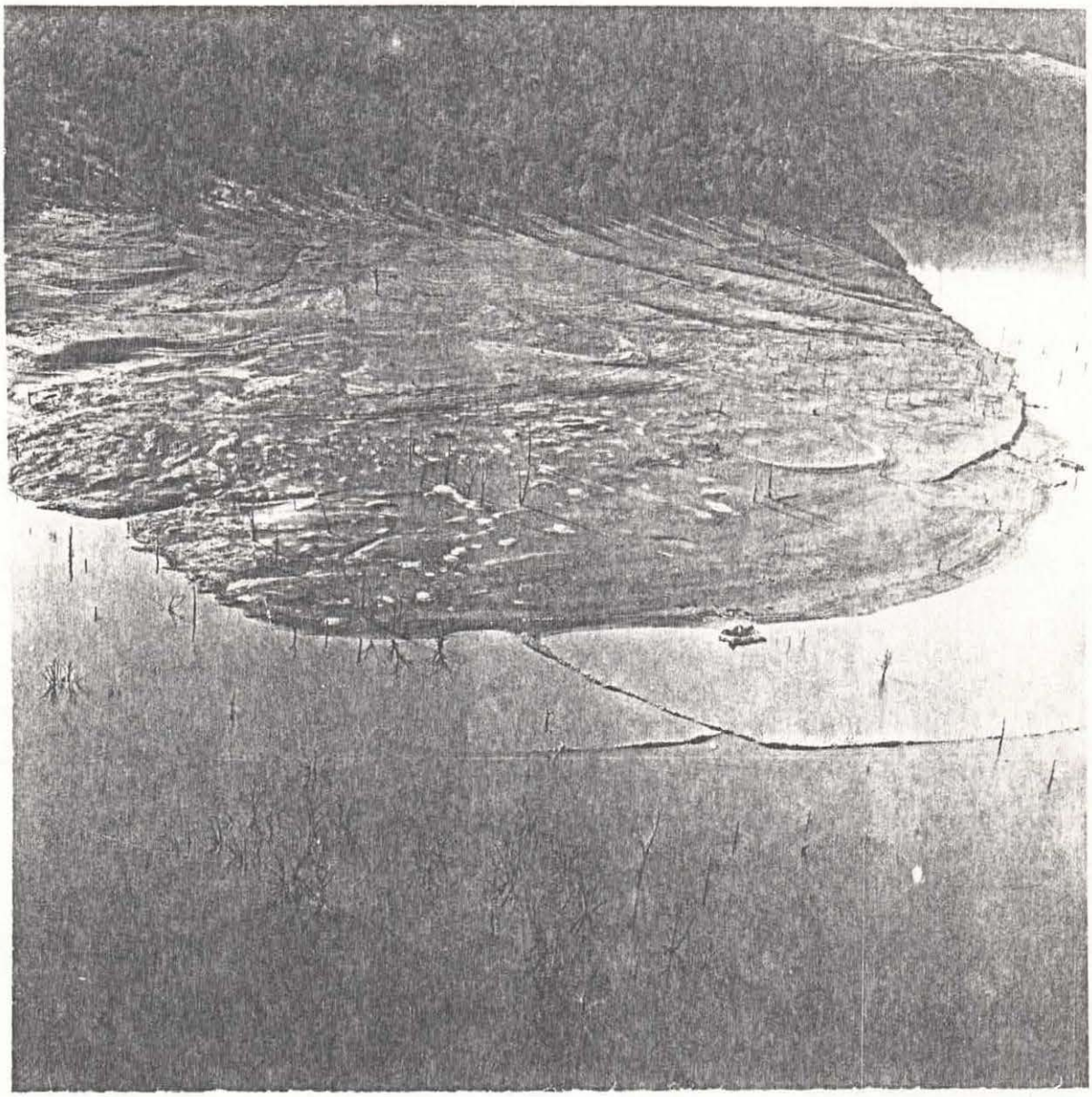


PLATE 6

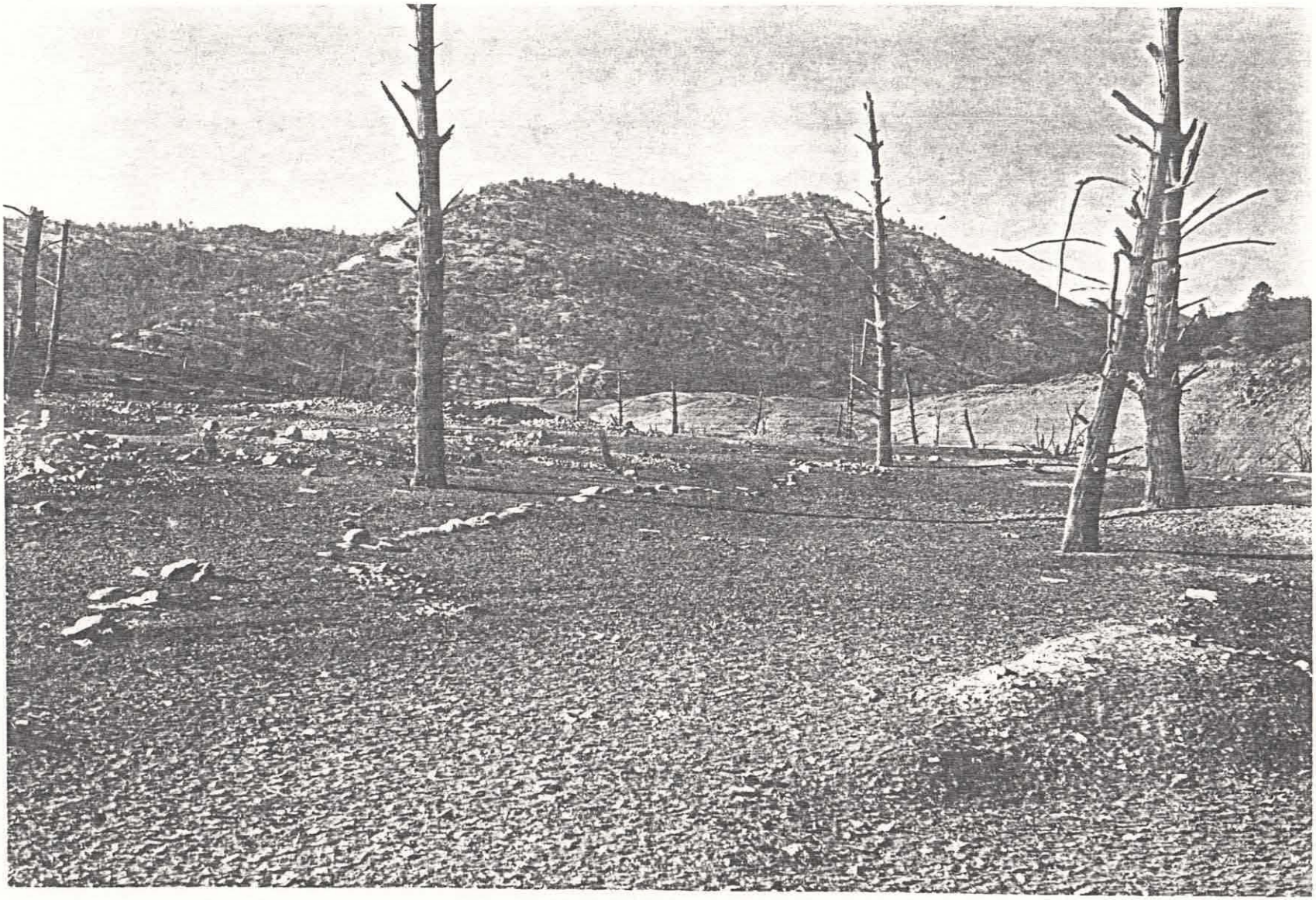


PLATE 7



PLATE 8



PLATE 9

CHAPTER 6

MELONES

Historical Background

The settlement of Robinson's Ferry, later officially known as Melones, dates from the earliest days of the California Gold Rush. The written record paints a scene of missed opportunities, a boom town (or perhaps several boom towns), and a ferry business which became a fixture of life along the Stanislaus River prior to the turn of the century. The written record is often confusing since both the origin of the name Melones and the location of the original townsite cannot be known for certain. The information becomes more specific as the Gold Rush era merges with the era of large corporate mining ventures, such as the Melones or Carson Hill mining companies. In these later days grew a "company town" much different in appearance from the early Rush town of the Mother Lode. The company town of Melones is well remembered by consultants. Although the older settlements are rarely remembered, but the written record gives a sketchy portrait of the area.

The first mention of the Melones area comes from James Carson who, on an expedition which had originated near Placerville in August of 1848, came upon rich placer mining diggings in what later became known as Carson Creek. Carson's expedition, including George Angel and Dan and John Murphy (for whom Murphys is named) broke up what later became Angels Camp (named for George Angel). Wood summarizes Carson's experiences as follows:

> George Angel mined Angels Creek and established a trading post that was to become Angels Camp. James Carson went on south and panned the gravel in a little creek, tributary to the Stanislaus, which later became Carson Creek. In a period of ten days his party took out an average of 180 ounces of gold each, which was rich mining. Little did Carson realize that in the hill to the east of the site he was panning, later known as Carson Hill, the richest quartz vein in the world would soon be discovered. (Wood 1949:23)

Carson moved on to Tuolumne County and left the Carson Hill vein to be discovered in 1850 by William Hance (Wood 1949:23). Before the discovery, however, the gravels of Carson Creek attracted a stampede of miners which resulted in a "boom town" and the construction of a ferry across the Stanislaus. The Stanislaus in this

region runs a rough, swift course, and proved difficult to cross for parties of miners attempting to reach Carson Creek from the South bank of the river. Stellman mentions that the Stanislaus was ". . . a dangerous stream to ford; men as well as horses not infrequently drowned in the attempt" (Stellman 1934:89). Therefore, a ferry was established across the Stanislaus (at approximately the location of the present Highway 49 bridge) and operated until 1913.

Goodman's introduction to the Recollections of Harvey Wood gives the earliest date for the establishment of this ferry--1848. Wood, a later owner and operator of the ferry, recalls arriving in the area on August 15, 1849, to find the ferry and a store operated by John Robinson and Stephen Mead (Wood 1955). A common story told by consultants and supported by the written record is that Robinson and Mead made $10,000 in fares during a six-week period of the rush to Carson Creek (Stellman 1934:90). Stellman describes the ferry operations:

> It was a bit precarious, but safe enough if not overloaded. To keep it from being jammed was Robinson's most difficult task during the Slumgullion /probably Melones/ stampede. The whole world seemed bound for Carson's Creek. They thronged the southern shore of the Stanislaus six deep . . . (Stellman 1934:89-90)

The settlement of miners around the Carson Creek diggings was a placer camp similar to many others in the Mother Lode:

> A small town was built where Carson's Creek discharged into the Stanislaus, goods came pouring in, Jew clothiers, rum-dealers, and gamblers followed the crowds of working men, and in a month every foot of ground, supposed to be auriferous was appropriated. (Quaife 1949:208)

The town seems to have declined almost as rapidly as it grew when the placers were worked out, and a new discovery was probably made elsewhere.

There are no firm population estimates for this placer camp, however, Goodman states that a camp two miles west of Robinsons Ferry had a population of three to five thousand persons in 1849. Goodman's location of this camp is very close to the confluence of Carson Creek and the Stanislaus River, and he names it "Melones" (Goodman 1955). The rush of Melones was downstream from Robinson's Ferry, and the implication is that Melones and Carson

Creek may actually have been the town. One consultant and former resident of Melones states that the early rush town was located at Robinson's Ferry and that the population was 3500, which included 2000 Chinese (Bird n.d.:23). However, it is impossible to determine from the available data if early Melones was the same community as the Gold Rush town of Carson Creek. If Goodman was correct, the chances are that the two towns were the same located downstream from the later company town of Melones.

On the origin of the name Melones, three theories emerge from consultants' statements and from written sources. Weston (1948), Bird (n.d.) and most consultants reiterated the Spanish origin of the name. Weston maintains that "Melones" was located in the spring of '48, by Mexican miners: "The Mexicans called the camp 'Melones,' because the gold found there was so coarse it reminded them of melon seeds" (Weston 1948:78). Bird refers to the first settlement as having been ". . . alluded to as Spanish Diggings" (yet another settlement name) prior to its becoming Robinson's Ferry.

Tucker, in a recent historical survey of the Stanislaus River Area, associates the name with the melon-shaped gold:

> Robinson's trading post became known as Melones and later the name was moved to the actual ferry crossing where a small settlement had been established. Eduard Vischer stated that the entire Carson Hill was known as el Cerro de Melones (Hill of Melons) by the Mexican miners.
>
> (Tucker 1969:11)

It is not known if Vischer was a consultant of Tucker or if he speaks from some written source. Although the account gives more credence to the melon seed theory, it does confuse the location of the town. Wood places the store run by Robinson and Mead in the area of Indian Gulch which connects with the Stanislaus about one-half mile downstream from the site of the present bridge. Therefore, the name of the community may have been moved upstream by one-half mile to the location of the ferry.

Bird also advances a less common notion about the origin of the name--that the name is taken from the mineral Melonite discovered in the mines in Carson Hill. Melonite (composed of 75% tellurium, 21% nickel and 4% silver) might also have been discovered or first recognized at Carson Hill and named for the town near its base (an idea supported by one consultant).

Another consultant and the William Perkins Journal (1964) support a third possibility. Willard Fuller felt that the name Melones was a corruption of the name Maloney. Maloney, an Irish miner, had a "place" known as "Maloney's Diggins'". Mr. Fuller did not give an exact location for the Diggins, but he did mention that the name may have been applied later to a different community or location. Possibly, the name Melones was transferred from temporary camp to camp until it was used to denote the recent company town. (The present use of the name Melones for the town is the result of a petition on the part of the Melones Mining Company to the U.S. Post Office to change the name to Melones from Robinson's Ferry.) Perkins' Journal refers to "A fearful row" which took place at "Melones" on June 12, 1851. A report of the row appeared in the Alta California of June 16, 1851: "A terrible affray took place at Maloney's Diggings on Thursday evening last. . ." (Perkins 1964: footnote 221). The "Melones" of Perkins and the "Maloney's" of the Alta California (a reprint of an earlier report in the Sonora Herald) are therefore the same. There are the unlikely possibilities that both names were used coterminously for the same settlement or that the name Maloney is the creation of the newspaper.

Another consultant, Carlo M. DeFerrari, feels that the Melones name is a corruption of the maiden name of the wife of Robinson, the ferry operator. DeFerrari says the brother of Robinson's wife ran a bar in the area, referred to as Maloney's by the miners. Further, DeFerrari locates the original townsite upstream from the Stanislaus on Coyote Creek.

The data available present problems concerning both the location and naming of Melones. The contradictions in the record about Melones, Maloney's Diggings, Carson Creek, Spanish Diggings, and Slumgullion or the Roaring Camp referred to by Bret Harte are caused in large part to general features of the Gold Rush. Towns and camps exploded and quickly collapsed wherever there were placer deposits. The area around the present Melones is veined with promising gulches, creeks and the Stanislaus itself. No doubt several encampments appeared in the area of Carson Hill, Carson Creek and on several points along the Stanislaus. Since the name Melones was applied later to a large company-owned associated town, there may have been a tendency to place the old town of Melones at the same site. The most viable solution is to combine these archival and consultant findings with a careful historical and archeological survey.

Despite the confusion concerning "Old" Melones, a fairly good account of the fate of Robinson's Ferry does exist. Wood describes the Robinson and Mead business as being "near Indian Gulch"

(Wood 1955), roughly the area of the present bridge on the Calaveras County side of the Stanislaus River. Besides the ferry operation, Robinson and Mead had a tent store when Wood arrived in 1849. Wood remarks that Robinson and Mead welcomed them and quickly offered them credit at the store. Although Wood had first mined on the Merced River, he found the diggings better in the area of Robinson's Ferry and provisions from Robinson and Mead far cheaper than on the Merced: 50¢ per pound for all provisions compared with $1 to $1.50 per pound on the Merced. The specific areas Wood found to be good placer sites were Carson Creek, Indian Gulch, and El Dorado Bar, all in Calavaras County, and Jackass Gulch in Tuolumne County. Speaking of the diggings at El Dorado Bar (located on the Stanislaus above the mouth of Coyote Creek), Wood says that the "Independent Twelve Company" was retrieving 24-36 ounces of gold per day from the river. That this was all done prior to 10 A.M. when the daily drunk began (Wood 1955). Wood remained in the area and after the Gold Rush (1856) purchased an interest in the ferry.

A detailed account of the ferry business in 1852, almost undoubtedly of Robinson and Mead, is given:

> I crossed the Stanislaus--a large river, which does not at any part of its course afford very rich diggings--by a ferry which was the property of two or three Englishmen, who had lived for many years in the Sandwich Islands. The force of the current was here very strong . . . A stout cable was stretched across the river, and traversing on this were two blocks, to which were made fast the head and stern of a large scow. By lengthening the stern line, the scow assumed a diagonal position, and, under the influence of the current and of the opposing force of the cable, she traveled rapidly across the river, very much on the same principle on which a ship holds her course with the wind abeam.
>
> Ferries or bridges, on the much-traveled roads, were very valuable property. They were erected at those points on the rivers where the mountain on each side offered a tolerably easy ascent, and where, in consequence, a line of travel had commenced. But very frequently more easy routes were found than the one first adopted; opposition ferries were then started, and the public got the full benefit of the competition between the rival proprietors . . .
>
> In opposition to this ferry on the Stanislaus, another had been started a few miles down the river; so the Englishmen, in order to keep up the value of their property and maintain the

superiority of their route, had made a good wagon-road, more than a mile in length, from the river to the summit of the mountain. (Borthwick 1929:309-10)

Life in early Melones is somewhat less well known than the details of operation of the Ferry, and Perkins' Journal for the years 1849-1852 gives the only detailed account. It is interesting to note that almost without exception Perkins' references to Melones involve violence or the threat of violence. One day Perkins went to Melones and described the Spanish-Anglo hostility he found there:

SATURDAY, FOURTEENTH. They all went down to San Francisco today, and I rode over to "Melones." There are here a considerable number of Mexicans, and a very strong feeling exists in reference to the fatal affray I have described in another place, in which there were ten or twelve Mexicans killed and wounded. There fortunately are enough white men to neutralize any danger except that of midnight assassination, which occurs only too often. (Perkins 1963:226)

He presents "Melones" as a settlement beset with violence with a population composed of Mexicans, Chilenos, and "Americans." The violence he describes was apparently common in the area, and Perkins chronicles the rise of the Vigilance Committee in Sonora. One day an old miner by the name of Snow was murdered in Shaws Flat (near Sonora), allegedly by four Mexican miners. The vigilance committee executed two of the miners and had located another in Melones:

FRIDAY, TWENTIETH. /1851/ Yesterday the Committee was fortunate enough to secure another of the murderers of Snow, at Melones. This man is known to have been a bad character. The Committee went over in solemn procession. The man was positively sworn to, and accused also of many other crimes. He did not deny his guilt, but kept an obstinate silence. He was pronounced guilty, and shared the same fate of his companions.

. . . A few seconds before he was run up, he asked to have his hands partly unloosed in order to make up a cigarrito; a paisano gave him a light . . . he signified his readiness, and in a few moments, there was another villain the less in the country. (Perkins 1963:22930)

Perkins mentions Melones again when he had been visiting a friend, Navarro, at a mine across the Stanislaus River from Sonora.

Navarro, an Argentino, put on a display of Argentine horsemanship and broke his collarbone in the process. Perkins mounted the unhurt mare and ". . . galloped to 'Melones'; here I left my mare, hired another horse and was in Sonora by dinner time" (Perkins 1964:246). Melones either had a livery stable or someone willing to rent a horse to Perkins in his emergency. Navarro was aided by a portly French doctor from Sonora who had had to ride back across the Stanislaus through the night to get to him. The doctor was so overcome by the rigors of the trip that he was escorted back to Sonora by the patient. Perkins does not refer to the settlement of Melones after this time although there is one mention of going to a Quartz mine that he and a partner apparently owned (probably near or on Carson Hill).

Borthwick refers to a mining operation on the east side of Carson Hill, probably near the present town of Melones, perhaps higher in elevation on the slope of the hill:

> On the other side of the hill . . . was a claim on the same vein, which was in undisputed possession of a company of Americans, who employed a number of Mexicans to work it, under the direction of an experienced old Mexican miner. They had three shafts sunk in the solid rock, in a line with each other, to the depth of two hundred feet, from which galleries extended at different points, where the gold-bearing quartz was found in the greatest abundance. No ropes or windlasses were used for descending the shafts; but at every thirty feet or so there was a sort of step or platform, resting on which was a pole with a number of notches cut all down one side of it; and the rock excavated in the various parts of the mine was brought up in leathern sacks on the shoulders of men who had to make the ascent by climbing a succession of these poles. . . . The whole operation seemed to be conducted at a most unnecessary expenditure of labor; but the mine was rich . . .
>
> Numerous small wooden crosses were placed throughout the mine, in niches cut in the rock for their reception, and each separate part of the mine was named after a saint who was supposed to take those working in it under his immediate protection. . . . (Borthwick 1929:307-8)

Borthwick does not associate these mines with a particular settlement although there is the possibility that the Mexican miners lived at the present site of the town of Melones. Consultants have mentioned that two "Mexican Adobes" existed in Melones in later years and that these structures dated from the Gold Rush days and

had been lived in by Mexican miners (Map 1). The presence of the Mexican hard rock miners may have been associated with the application of the term, "Spanish Diggings," to the area at the base of Carson Hill and Coyote Creek by Bird (n.d.) and others (Plate 10).

The rush began to diminish in the first half of the decade following the discovery of gold because of depletion of the gold placers and the imposition of the Foreign Miners' Tax. Significant uprisings of ethnic miners occurred, and the tax resulted in an outmigration of some ethnic groups. The written record of the area declined. Gold Rush journals such as Perkins' were no longer kept (perhaps many of these have not been made available to the public), and the time period is beyond the memory of living consultants. Events at Melones from 1852 to 1900 are sparsely recorded.

The recollections of Harvey Wood complete the story of Robinson's Ferry. The Mead interest in the Ferry was sold to George Graham in 1853 for $10,000. The Graham interest was "conveyed" to a man named French who later sold it to Wood for an unknown price in 1856. It is not recorded if the tent store of Robinson and Mead was included in the sale. Wood owned the Ferry business for the rest of his life and became involved in the quartz mines beginning to honeycomb Carson Hill. Wood remarks that he was an "agent" for the South Carolina Quartz Mine (the duties of an "agent" were not determined). He was also the owner of the Adelaide Mine (named for his wife), and the remains of the tunnel entrance are still visible in the town of Melones (see site survey for the exact location of these remains). Other than these references, little is known of Robinson's Ferry/Melones/Carson Creek/Slumgullion/ Spanish Diggings until the area became the company town serving the large quartz venture tunnelling for gold in the veins of Carson Hill. (For historic photographs of the Wood Ferry operation see Plates 11, 12, 13).

Melones' fate did not rest entirely on placer gold for its subsistence base. Rather, the huge quartz veins of Carson Hill became the mainstay of the town, and in the period of 1900 to 1940 were the basis for the formation of a large and thriving company town. At the onset of the second world war, the mine closed and only a handful of people remained in the town. Today the area is a tangle of walls, foundations, mine tunnels, tailing heaps, and a few homes which remain standing and are still occupied.

As the placer deposits in the immediate area dwindled, a huge gold-bearing quartz vein was discovered within Carson Hill, which stands adjacent to the present site of the town and was exploited

from the very earliest days by a number of mining companies under numerous claims. Hard rock mining requires the expenditure of a great deal of capital and energy before the realization of any return. This is in marked contrast to the transiency of placer mining, where mobility appeared to be the most advantageous lifestyle.

Large scale mining of Carson Hill began about 1890. Although mining had gone on prior to that, it was at this time that operations with extensive corporate backing came on the scene. The Melones Mining Co. and its successor, the Calaveras Gold Mining Company, were both corporations which effected major changes in the landscape (both physical and social) in their search for gold. The area of Robinsons Ferry was the base of operations for the Melones Company, and the town appears to have grown in proportion to the growth of the company.

Permanent residents in the town included managers, superintendents, and skilled workers including construction personnel, shift bosses, and mine and mill foremen. The influx of workers to the Melones mine seems to have begun in earnest around the turn of the century. Mexican, Slavic, and southern Italian men formed the bulk of this immigration. Their presence created a need for housing for single men and in some cases the families of the immigrants. The company constructed bunkhouses for the single miners, and, small bat and board houses for the families of miners. These small houses served as a fringe benefit for employees who were promoted to positions of responsibility.

A great deal of the town's growth occurred prior to the turn of the century. Howard Canevero remembered the following list of structures in the town at that time.

1. Commercial structures:

Wood's Ferry building
Rolleri Restaurant
Livery Stable
Shoemaker's shop
Cecconello's first store
Herb Williams' saloon and restaurant
Chinese Laundry

2. Residential structures:

Green's Cabin	Canevaro home
Wood's Garage	Chinese house
Grandma Wood's house	Loring home
Percy Wood's home	Bird home
Libby home	Stevenot home
Vascysh home	Devereaux home

3. Additional structures:

3 bunkhouses (presumably company owned)
5 rental houses owned by Percey Wood

The growth of the town was shaped by the presence of certain environmental and physical factors which could not be altered. Between the fast-moving Stanislaus River and the steep base of Carson Hill there was only a narrow strip of land suitable for structures. The only major road in the town paralleled the river. Periodic flooding of the Stanislaus prevented permanent structures on the river bank itself, and during the 1908 flood several structures were damaged or threatened by the flood waters. The company owned the land in the town (with the exception of the Pendola and Wood holdings), and a great deal of the best residential land was used as sites for the large mills and chemical processing plants. The majority of the residences were either in the vicinity of Robinsons Ferry (The Wood end of town) or along Coyote Creek to the north of the mine structures. (Plates 14, 15, 16 for a general visual orientation to the town.)

The town continued to expand until the mine closed in the mid-1920's. At that time Percey Wood owned and maintained at least 12 houses. The mining company had also continued to build houses. Coyote Creek and the area along Highway 49 near the entrance to the mine were filled with houses. Most of these homes were apparently occupied by persons of some occupational responsibility at the time, including foremen, shift bosses, and skilled workmen such as machinists and assayors. The mine itself continued to expand. Shops were built near the entrance to the mine and additional processing plants were built in the vicinity of the 100-stamp mill in the central section of town. The residential sections of the town seem to have been subject to the expansion plans of the mining company.

Company houses were constructed with lumber processed at a saw mill which was associated with the mine. Ted Bird recalled

that when their company house burned there was a construction crew on the site the next day building a new house for the Bird family. The company-constructed houses seem to have been nothing more than a lumber shell constructed of 12" pine boards with bats over the cracks. The residents were apparently left to insulate the house and otherwise make it livable by their own means (Plates 17,18). Ted and Milo Bird recalled that their mother often tried to add trees and flower gardens to the properties where their company houses were built.

Company homes appear to have been somewhat temporary structures. Foundations, according to Ted Bird, were lines of stones, and not cement which was used in the more elaborate homes in town, (i.e., the Woods, Loring, Stevenot or Devereaux homes). Some of the residences in Melones seem to have been "shantys" constructed of whatever materials were available in the town. Charlie Trollinger, Ah Yet, Ah Tong, and the homes in Little Italy fall into this category.

Commercial structures in the town seem to occur in a central cluster along the main road. Several general stores, dry goods stores, saloons, restaurants, two pool halls, and a butcher shop existed at one time (Plate 19). Again, these are discussed more fully in the Town Survey.

The present appearance of the town (or more properly the remains of the town) is the result of the closing of two consecutive mining ventures, natural disasters, neglect and vandalism. The Melones Mining Company closed in the late 1920's, and the town seems to have closed with it. One consultant remarked that when the mine closed many of the men and families were gone within a few days. Further, he remembered that many of the houses were dismantled and removed at the same time. These were company houses, and probably some of the "shanty" houses constructed on mine company property. Even when the mine reopened in the 1930's, however, very few families moved back into the town. Many consultants remarked that miners would commute in car pools from nearby towns which had more to offer than the half-deserted town of Melones.

Two major fires also destroyed many of the structures in the town. In 1948 the mill structures burned in a highly publicized fire, and many of the remaining houses were destroyed as well. Another fire which occurred in 1950 destroyed the Wood homes and presumably many other structures in the town. Since the mine had closed again in 1942 with the onset of World War II, the mill structures were not in use and no attempt was made to reconstruct them after the fire.

Ethnicity in Melones

Melones can be characterized as a multi-ethnic and a multi-language community of miners, miners' families and business people, all of whom were dependent upon the quartz mines of Carson Hill. From its beginnings the town of Melones has been the site of an intermingling of people of various national origins. In the earliest days of the Gold Rush, Mexicans, Chilenos and Americans lived together (and battled each other), exploited the placer claims of Carson Creek and Coyote Creek and worked the hard rock mines of Carson Hill (just being opened on the side and top). The composition of the town's population becomes clearer in the period within the memory of living consultants. Ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations emerge continually as factors which more than any other shaped the spirit of the community. Melones included from 1890 to 1942 the following national or ethnic groups: Slavic peoples (including Serbians, Herzegovinians and possibly Slovenians and Slavonians and other national areas from the Adriatic), Italians, Mexicans, Chinese, Cornish, English, Irish, French, Norwegians and Native Americans (Miwok).

Actual population figures are difficult to determine since consultants were rarely able to give a complete list of persons or families in any particular group because of the passage of years and the transient nature of the employees at the mines and the mine-related businesses. For example, the bunkhouses and bordinghouses served "lots of Mexicans," but no one is sure of the actual number. The same is true for consultants' lists of the families in each of the ethnic groups. Most did not know all the people or did not know the division between families (e.g., the families of two brothers may be considered as one even though they lived in separate houses or at opposite ends of town). Most consultants were vague about population figures. One said he believed that the town was composed mostly of Italians and Mexicans. Another said that she primarily remembered Spanish and Italians in the town. Mark Hanna, a consultant erudite on matters concerning the life of the miner, placed the ethnic populations of miners in 1925 as one-third Italian and Anglo-American, one-third Slavic and one-third Mexican. Milo Bird remembers that when he started school in Melones in the early 1900's most of his fellow students were Mexican and Italian. The population composition is based on consultant estimates. Exact figures can be obtained only through a thorough search of the census files for the area, naturalization files or voter registration files.

The ethnic groups in a town such as Melones represent many areas of interest both demographically and ethnographically. What

caused these groups to immigrate to a foreign country, especially to an area within that country such as the hard rock mine area of Carson Hill? Conditions in the home environment could have been harsh and unfavorable enough to drive the emigrants from their homes. An equally plausible hypothesis is that the image of America as a land of golden opportunity and unlimited space could have been the main impetus to immigration. A combination of these two motives seems the most likely cause of immigration to America. Europe began to suffer the effects of altered population trends in the latter half of the 19th Century with an imbalance of fertility and mortality rates. While fertility rates (which had been high by later standards) remained the same, the general mortality rate had begun to decline. Medical sanitation practices increased the size of the population in all age categories with disastrous results.

In agricultural areas the land was divided among heirs beyond its utility, and farms and structures fell far below the requirements of the smallest family unit. Those who were forced off the land went to work in the overcrowded cities or as servants for those who had accumulated enough land to sustain an agricultural enterprise. The landless populations were experiencing acute underemployment, and the spectre of famine was ever present. Although birth rates eventually began to balance with mortality figures, for several countries the greatest relief came in the form of emigration to the U.S. with its opportunity for seemingly endless agricultural expansion. Another impetus to early emigration was the opportunity to work as wage laborers. Railroads and other large work projects supplied a market for immigrant labor and were dependent for their success upon the low wage scale applied to immigrant labor.

Immigration to the California Mother Lode is closely associated with the general pattern of immigration to the United States as a whole. The first rush of immigrants were lured by the promise of easy riches, often staying only long enough to "make their pile" or to find out that someone else had made it before them. Sickness, hard times, and the imposition of the Foreign Miners' Tax led to the evacuation of many of these foreign groups from the gold fields. However, some members of the first gold-seeking parties remained in the gold fields to start businesses and to settle into family and community life.

The development of the mines as large corporate entities based on the maximum use of manpower was also an inducement to come to California. Laborers were often recruited to work in the mines, among them the Cornish miners in the Soulsbyville area, approximately 15 miles east of the Project Area. One consultant remarked that the

Cornish were considered excellent hard rock miners in their native Cornwall, England, and that a promoter named Soulsby recruited them for a group migration to this country. The community of Cornish people has remained in the area to the present although the mines themselves closed.

The mines of the Carson Hill area were also important centers of immigrant employment. During a fifty-year span, the mines offered employment opportunities to large numbers of people, coinciding with the influx of labor from the Southern and Southeastern areas of Europe. Indeed, the large mining corporations may have owed their solvency to the exploitation of the immigrant groups of miners who left the home environment completely in search of work in other countries, which is probably the case of the majority of the ethnic populations in Melones.

These people experienced somewhat different conditions both in the homeland (the "old country") and in Melones. Fortunately, many consultants were able to remember the lives of these immigrants. Several consultants were descendants of immigrants, however, only one immigrant from Serbia was located. This man had lived primarily in Angels Camp and knew very little about the settlement of Melones. Milo Bird has provided a manuscript which details the daily lives of the people of Melones, and much of his information applies directly to the lives of the immigrant groups of Melones.

With this information it is possible to discuss each of the groups in the town, and it is also possible to determine how these groups related to each other in terms of friendships, associations, conflicts and competition. Information on some groups is meagre in relation to the size of the group, while there is fairly extensive information for a fringe group such as Gypsies, who merely passed through the town of Melones.

Italians

The Italians occupy a unique place in the history of the town of Melones and the Mother Lode. The first reference to the Italian presence in the Melones area comes from a consultant about Lorenzo Pendola who had come to the gold fields directly from Genoa, Italy. According to the consultant, Pendola mined along the Stanislaus River and "did fairly well." He built the original Parrotts Ferry (now the site of the Parrotts Ferry Bridge) with his earnings as a miner, and the construction and improvement of the trails to the ferry were completed in the early 1860's. Finding that the return for his efforts

and investment were insufficient, he sold the ferry and returned downstream to the Melones/Robinson's Ferry area, mined for a period, and then bought what later became the Pendola Ranch (Map 1). The ranch began operation in the late 1860's or early 70's and for a number of years was a major supplier of vegetables to the Melones and surrounding area (Chapter 8 provides further information on the Pendola ranch). This consultant as well as several others mentioned that the majority of the farming familes in the Mother Lode area were from Genoa.

The financial transactions of Lorenzo Pendola are well documented in the Calaveras County Book of Deeds. Names associated with the Pendola transactions indicate that persons of Italian descent were in the Robinson's Ferry area at an early date. In July of 1860 Lorenzo Pendola sold a stone building in the "camp of Robinson's Ferry" to Emanuela Airola and Ambriozio Viguola "of Robinson's Ferry." The stone building was a store situated between the adobe store of Bacigaluppi and Solari and the butcher shop of Calbro and Sasspana (Calaveras County Book of Deeds, Book E, Page 601, recorded July 27, 1860).

The next mention of Pendola is in connection with the sale of the ferry at Walkers Bar to Harvey Wood (owner of Robinson's Ferry) and S. J. Newton for the sum of $2,000. The ferry at that time was known as the Coltar and Pendola Ferry (Walker Bar is now the site of the Parrotts Ferry bridge). Frame houses associated with the ferry were also sold to Wood and Newton. Apparently the ferry was later sold to the Parrott family for whom it was named and whose name it still bears. The transactions of the Pendola family can be traced to the turn of the century, however, the important point is the presence of such a large number of Italian persons in the small camp of Robinson's Ferry.

The following was taken from the Book of Deeds of Calaveras County, dated July 27, 1860:

> I, Lorenzo Pendola of Robinson's Ferry, Co. of Calaveras, State of California, for and on consideration of the sum of $1500 paid by Emanuela Airola and Ambriozio Viguola of Robinsons Ferry, A certain stone store north from the building attached together with stable and lot, situated in the Camp of Robinsons Ferry, County and state aforesaid. Bounded on one side by the adobe store of Bacigaluppi and Solari and on the other side by the butcher shop of Calbro and Sasspana.

The presence of these specialized businesses in the town at this date would seem to indicate a population large enough to support them. Further, the structures, which are of both wood and adobe, are an indication of the permanence of this portion of the settlement. Stone remains were found (Map 1, Site 15) which might correspond to the stone store mentioned above, and two adobe structures were remembered by consultants indicating that they were used until at least the turn of the century, possibly longer.

There is very little information on the Italian community at Robinson's Ferry during the period between 1870 and 1900. The Pendola family prospered: Lorenzo married and had five daughters, one of whom is the mother of the present owner of the Pendola Ranch. The Bacigaluppi mentioned in the first transaction listed above may be the same name which appears on the 1925 list of residents of Melones. However, since the name given there is spelled Bescaluppi, there is no assurance that they are the same family name. Several other families and individuals living in the town in later years can be identified as Italian. Howard Canevaro was able to give the following names, which represent Italian individuals, as being residents of Melones in or about the year 1900: Libby, Canevaro, Rolleri and Cecconello. Mr. Canevaro believed that the first store owned by Cecconello was located in Melones by that time. The Rolleri restaurant was also standing at that time (Map 1 provides the locations of Melones businesses).

The representation of the Italian community in the years following 1900 is somewhat more extensive. At this time the town of Melones had grown in proportion to the growth of the mine. The lists of structures given by Ted Bird included these associated with members of the Italian group: the Botto, Libby, Bescaluppi, Canevaro, Foppiano and Pendola homes, the Tramontrini and Canepa store (which later became the Raggio and Carlo Store), the Cecconello store, the Cecconello bunkhouse and the Lillie Restaurant (Map 1).

There is very little evidence concerning the regional origin of those people who appear in post-1920 Melones. There is some evidence which points to an early emigration from the Genoa area of northwest Italy and some evidence that the Italians who became part of the mining force in Melones may have been from a later emigration, probably from other areas of Italy. Three field consultants, who can be considered a part of the earlier emigration, mentioned that the Italian miners in Melones belonged to a group different from themselves. One consultant referred to them as "Wops" although he had earlier mentioned that his family had emigrated from Genoa in the early days (the consultant seemed to use the word as a term of reference not of

degradation). The miners in Melones may represent a segment of the famous "wave" of emigration from southern Europe which took place from 1880 to 1920.

There appears to be some residential segregation in the town of Melones among the Italian group. Milo and Ted Bird mentioned that a section east of Melones known as "Little Italy" was considered as part of the town. There were six to eight houses or "shanties" in this area occupied by Italian families but subsequently destroyed by fire. However, Little Italy (also referred to as "Camp Seco") represents an interesting social situation. Ted Bird referred to the settlement as an Italian colony and stressed that their desire to stay in this one area was due to their "customs" and that because of these they were "distinct from the remainder of the town of Melones." The phrase, "Little Italy," according to Ted Bird, was purely a term of reference and was not used when a resident of that area was present. The settlement was located on the Calaveras (west) side of the Stanislaus River just to the southeast of the large sand deposits from the Melones Mine. Another consultant remembered that there was a "colony" around the "Pendola place." This may have been a confusion between the Pendola Ranch which is located on the west side of Coyote Creek and "Little Italy" which has been placed by the Birds on the east side of the creek. It is also possible that the Pendola Ranch served as a gathering place or even the residence of members of the Italian community in Melones. Milo Bird said the settlement of "Little Italy" had a population of 40-50 in 1920-21. Destroyed by fire once, it was quickly rebuilt. A thorough archaeological survey of the area might aid in the understanding of the physical relationship of the settlement to the remainder of the town of Melones.

Although very little information was available concerning the activities which were unique to the Italian community in Melones, a few important facts do emerge. Ted Bird remembered that the Lillie Restaurant near the Cecconello store was a favorite eating place for the Italian miners. There seems little doubt that the entire Cecconello complex was a place where the members of the Italian community came to mingle, transact business and be entertained.

Ted Bird mentioned that the Italians from the colony had flat-bottomed boats which they used for prospecting on the Tuolumne County (east) side of the river. These boats were unstable in the swift currents of the Stanislaus, and the bodies of several prospectors were found downstream after their boats had capsized. Ted Bird also related the story of the drowning of a ten-year old Italian girl. The child and her mother had been fishing in the center of the river,

then the mother had rowed back to the shore. The child had been knocked into the water when the boat beached, and the body had to be recovered by blasting.

Swimming appears to be the major summer pastime of children in Melones. Ted Bird says the Italians usually had basements which were used for making wine. He recalls swimming in the Stanislaus when young and ending up in Little Italy with the other children, drinking from the spout in the bottom of the wine barrel. Ted remarked that they never drank to get drunk but used wine as a beverage.

The Italian community was obviously far more diverse than the sparse information presented here would indicate. Businesses such as the Tremontini and Canepa store or the Cecconello store were important community centers, especially for the Italians of the area. Although there is no specific information on the subject, the single miners who may have arrived recently from the "old country" probably suffered from homesickness and loneliness. An Italian restaurant, a store or perhaps the saloon that was a part of the Cecconello complex would offer comfort and a place of common identity with other Italians.

Slavic Peoples

More than any other group, the Slavic peoples who worked in the mines in Melones typify the fate of the immigrants who came to America as laborers. The Slavs are a significant group in the history of the town: consultant Mark Hanna believed that in 1925 one-third of the labor force in the mine was Slavic. The Slavs are an internally diverse group, representing varying geographical points of origin, reasons for immigration to the U.S., lengths of residence in this country and religious preferences. The Slavic community at Melones is part of a greater settlement of Slavic peoples in the southern Mother Lode. Therefore, the information available for the community at Melones has a significant relationship to the formation and maintenance of the Slavic communities which remain in such nearby towns as Angels Camp and Jackson. Of the several consultants able to discuss the Slavs of Melones, particular help was given by Boscoe Jaich of Angels Camp. Mr. Jaich was born and raised in Melones and worked briefly in the second opening of the mine. Milo Bird was also able to remember several Slavic families in Melones and discussed the celebration of Orthodox Christmas in the town.

The Slavic group in Melones is referred to by several common names. Boscoe Jaich referred to the group as a whole as "Slavs"

(pronounced as in "pass"), referring to persons from the area now known as Yugoslavia. Milo Bird refers to the group as Serbians (Serbia is one of the independent states of Yugoslavia), but Mr. Bird may have been using the term in general for those emigrants from any of the Slavic states. Another consultant referred to the group as Slavonians (a regional section of Yugoslavia). Ted Bird and others used "Austrian" often, and Mr. Bird felt that the Austrian group included Czechoslovakians, Yugoslavs and those from around the Adriatic Sea. He also mentioned that the derogatory term for Austrians was "Bo-Hunk" or "Bull-Hunk" which in most areas is applied to Hungarian workers. One probable explanation for the use of Austrian in this case is the fact that much of the area which is now Yugoslavia was under the control of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Information indicates that two areas of emigration were paramount among the Slavic peoples who were in Melones. The first of these is the Trebinje and Belic areas of Herzegovina. These towns are located in the extreme southern section of Herzegovina near the northern sections of Mongenegro. The Jaich families from Belic included William, Eli and Chris Jaich. William Jaich was the father of Boscoe Jaich, and Eli and Chris were his cousins. The wife of William Jaich was from Trebinje, a few miles to the north of Belic. The other important area of emigration is the Fiume area of Croatia, a northwesterly province of Yugoslavia. The Marinovich family, Mrs. Mallisovich and Nick and Pete Vonich were from this area (Mr. Mallisovich was from Serbia). This partial list of Slavic residents does not include many of the miners who were less well known residents of Melones, especially those who were residents of rooming houses or company bunkhouses.

William Jaich was probably first drawn to the area by his sister and brother-in-law who arrived there in the early 1890's. William Jaich immigrated to the U.S. in 1903 and shortly after came to the West Coast. (Boscoe Jaich felt that his father may have spent some time working on the Brooklyn Bridge before coming to the Melones area.) William Jaich's life in the "old country" (Herzegovina) was characterized by his son as "very poor." William had been employed in vineyards and on railroad construction crews, always working for "the rich folks." Mr. Jaich wanted a new position in the hierachy but was unable to achieve it in the "old country."

Many of the immigrant Slavs apparently returned to the "old country" after working here. Boscoe Jaich remembered that in the period of 1910 to 1920 there were a lot of single Slavic men in the boardinghouses in Melones. Mr. Jaich believed that when these

men had saved enough money they returned to their homes. This belief is supported by the statement of Howard Canevaro that the town was heavily populated by Slavs prior to 1915. Other consultants, including Vera Carley, Milo Bird and Ted Bird agreed that the Slavic peoples comprised a very large group in the town of Melones.

In other cases immigrants would visit the home country and then return to California as Milo Bird relates in the story of Tom M., a Serbian. Tom had returned to Serbia to see his parents, but when he arrived there learned that he might be drafted. He was only able to see his parents for a brief time and then was forced to return to California. He ran to the house, kissed and greeted his parents, then ran to the boat for the return trip. He had intended to find a wife in Serbia; however, since he did not have time, a wife was arranged for him, and she traveled to Melones. Boscoe Jaich, although a second generation Slav, returned recently to the birthplace of his father and his father's cousins. The same trip was made recently by an older immigrant from Angels Camp who had not returned to his homeland since he immigrated in about 1910. All of these trips seem to indicate that a strong bond exists to the home country and to the relatives of the home community.

The Slavs in Melones expressed a national identity and, in some cases, a religious identity. Milo Bird remembers that the Serbs in Melones read the newspaper Crbski Dnvnik. He recalled that a favorite dish of the Serbians was "castradina" (boiled dried goat meat and kale). The Serbians even cured their own goat meat in the backs of their homes by smoking it over fires of green oak.

The Slavic group, especially the Serbians, represent a unique religious identity in comparison to the other groups in the town. Much of what is now Yugoslavia was (and is) Serbian Eastern Orthodox. The data indicate that the miners in Melones were strongly Orthodox in their celebrations and religious holidays and maintained Orthodox faith and practices for many years in the town. Through religious affiliation, many of the communities in the Mother Lode remained in contact with each other.

The Serbian Orthodox Church of Angels Camp was apparently the center for religious activity of the Slavs in Melones. Boscoe Jaich, now the president of the Church there, related its history. The church was originally built in 1910 or 1911 (Mr. Jaich was unsure of the exact date of the construction), and the first couple to be married in the church was his uncle and aunt. Since the time of construction, there has been no full-time priest in the church,

consequently many of the marriages were performed by Justices of the Peace. Ted Bird recalls that when a priest was needed for special occasions he would be called from San Francisco. Ted apparently did not think that the community utilized the church for important functions since weddings were usually held in the home of one of the parents and funerals were usually graveside services.

Christmas and Easter seem to have been very special events for the Orthodox people of Melones, involving the entire community. Christmas, called Little Christmas by outsiders and Epiphany by the Orthodox, was celebrated on January 7. Ted Bird recalled the events of Epiphany quite clearly from his youth. Each family in the Orthodox community prepared a feast and offered it as a kind of "Smorgasbord" to visitors, usually consisting of vegetables, breads and a small animal such as a small pig or a lamb roasted whole. The community went from house to house eating the meal offered at each, drinking and singing as well (the celebration lasted all night). Ted Bird recalls that at first the next day's celebrations were open to the whole community regardless of religious affiliation. The Bird family often attended the meals and felt very much at home. Later, Ted recalled, some non-Orthodox in the community began to take advantage of the spirit of the celebration, and curtailed it somewhat. The offenders became rowdy in the feasts, often wasting the food and drinking excessively. Ted summed it up by saying, "They just did not respect the custom." The celebration was probably less open after that time (1915 to 1920).

Ted Bird recalls that the "Austrians" boiled eggs each Easter and made the rounds of the town and tapped the ends of their eggs against the eggs of others. The object of the custom was to have the last uncracked egg in the community. The religious observance of Easter in the Orthodox (as well as Western) Churches is the most important holy day of the religious calendar. Miners did not receive a holiday at Easter, and neither the Serbians nor Orthodox Slavs received the January 7 date of Christmas as a holiday.

Ties with the homeland and cultural identity were reinforced by a constant flow of new immigrants bringing news of the homeland, especially important during World War I. Edith Ratkovich, (wife of Nick Ratkovich of Angels Camp) a Slav born in Jackson of immigrant parents, told of the arrival of a new immigrant into the community. She remarked that he was immediately brought into someone's home and questioned for hours about conditions at home. This was especially true if the newcomer was a relative. Another important contact with the home community was the arrangement of marriages for the single miners. One consultant recalled that on occasion

young girls would be sent to this country on their own with the expectation that a marriage would be arranged for them or that they would find a husband among the single miners. Often, the consultant remarked, the girls would be so young that they got off the train or the stage and began to play with the children in the community, acting not at all like the adult women they were expected to be. The marriage of the parents of one consultant may be an example of this kind of arrangement. The couple met in a Slavic boardinghouse in Angels Camp and were married there. The woman had been sponsored from the "old country" by the family running the boardinghouse. It is possible that similar events took place in the town of Melones.

Residential segregation does not seem to have been extreme for the Slavs in Melones. There does not appear to have been a section in the town analogous to Little Italy although some consultants were able to point out areas where many Slavs traditionally lived. These areas were in the central section of Melones, interspersed among the homes of non-Slavic peoples. One consultant, Louis Giansetto, remembered that the Slavs lived "up near the old schoolhouse" (Map 1). Another consultant remembered that one of the Jaich families lived in the "Adobe" below the location of the Devereaux mansion. The Slavs may have lived on the Carson Hill side of the Main Street of Melones, however, this is based on limited evidence.

The consultants who were familiar with the mines in Melones all reported the worst working conditions imaginable. The laborer was the victim of the conditions and paid with his health, often with his life. Ted Bird recalls that many of the "Austrian" immigrants came to the Melones Area in their twenties to work in the mines. Those who were blasting and drilling in the rock breathed the glass-like quartz slivers into their lungs. According to Ted Bird, they "usually didn't last very long."

Mexicans

Two very distinct periods seem to characterize the history of the Mexicans in Melones. The early period of the Gold Rush saw a huge immigration of various Spanish-speaking peoples. The Spanish-speaking group was not only involved in the early placer mining but also in the early efforts at mining the quartz of Carson Hill.

The Mexican population in Melones after the turn of the century seems to have been composed primarily of immigrant laborers. There was very little mention of Mexican families in the Melones area although almost all consultants agreed that in the later years of the mine operation (prior to its closing in the late 20's) there was an influx of young single Mexican men who were employed as miners. One consultant remarked that the Mexicans had been "brought in to work at the mines," in 1921-1923. The majority of these Mexican miners lived at the boardinghouses in town. Angela Elivi remembered that in this period 40-50 Mexicans stayed at her parents' boarding-house. Another consultant remarked that the Mexicans lived across from the old theater in Melones in "the boardinghouses," indicating that they occupied more than one of the houses.

Pete Vonich indicates that the increase in the population of Mexican miners continued until the time he left the town in 1926. Still another consultant remarked that 1923 and 1924 were the biggest years of increase in Mexican laborers. This consultant remarked that they were "cheaper labor," (and that they were coming into the area of Jackson as well as Melones). It is probably safe to estimate that over one hundred Mexican miners were in the town. There were two identifiable Mexican families as well, the Morales family who had a ranch within the town area, and the Pedestra family who occupied an importance place in the social life of the Mexican miners in town.

The Mexican population of California, particularly the Mother Lode region, seems to have fallen victim to a great deal of "ethnic-typing." They are often characterized in the literature and by consultants as a group for whom violence within the group and with other groups was a pastime. It is impossible to determine the degree of truth in these statements precisely because there may be a tendency simply to repeat them, with no regard for their inherent truth. In general, Mexicans suffered as did all other groups in the mines as a result of Company efforts to procure as much gold as possible regardless of the consequences to individuals.

English (including Cornish)

Several other European nationalities were represented in the population of Melones. While none of these was as large as the Slavic or Italian groups, they did appear as distinct entities to the consultants.

The English and Cornish (a county in extreme Southwest Wales) were definitely a viable group in Melones. Three consultants remarked

that they knew of their working in the Melones mine, and "Doc" Danbacker remarked that he believed there were Cornish miners involved in the hard rock mines of Melones. Bird indicates that there were Cornish families in the town. He talks of the favorite dish of the Cornish, beef pasties:

> We had some Cornish friends whose favorite dish was pasties. Those boys had bragged to us so many times about their pasties that we were greatly disappointed when we learned that they were nothing but individual beef pies cooked turn-over style. We were also disappointed when they let us sample their saffron cake. . . .
>
> Just as the Libby boys were crazy about their pasties and saffron cake, we Birds went nuts over sauerkraut and pickled pigs feet. (Bird n.d.:80-1)

Harry Libby was a mine supervisor at the time of the second opening and it is possible that this is the same Libby family.

The presence of the Cornish in Melones seems quite natural since they were famed hard rock miners. In fact, there is some evidence that whenever a tunnel or hard rock mine shaft was to be sunk, the Cornish were the preferred workers. The common reference term for the Cornish was "Cousin Jack," a term of third-person reference rather than one of address.

There is also evidence of the presence of English (other than Cornish) in the Melones area. One consultant remembered that a family named Moile lived in the town and that the Moiles were English. The residence was located and can be found on Map 1.

Irish

Although it is known that the Irish were also represented in the town, very little information was learned about them. The only Irish name discovered through field data was that of Mrs. McLaughlin. This name was mentioned when a consultant remarked that the English Moiles family did not get along with her.

Germans and French

Milo Bird, in his unpublished manuscripts, mentions one Frenchman and one German "family." Henry Boscas was mentioned by Bird in reference to French cooking. Boscas taught Milo's mother to prepare stockfish, a salted dried fish from the Atlantic. There is no mention of his having a family or what his occupation was. Bird also mentions that the one German family in Melones was that of Pete Zimmer. The family consisted of Zimmer, his wife and children by a previous marriage, but there is no indication of the position of Zimmer in either the mine or town.

Norwegians

A small Norwegian settlement was located on the opposite side of the Stanislaus River from the town of Melones. Recent maps refer to this location as Norwegian Gulch and consultants also referred to the site as the location of the Norwegian Mine. Ted Bird described this settlement as located on the Tuolumne side of the River near the "Williams place" at the site of Norwegian Gulch. The community consisted of three or four houses, all occupied by Norwegian families and derived economic support from the produce of a mine in the same area. Ted Bird believed that the Norwegians were not really part of the community of Melones even though they were physically close to the town and had easy access across the train trestle or the bridge.

Chinese

The Chinese have a very long history in the Melones area of the Stanislaus River. In Melones, after 1890 when the large mines were opened, there were several Chinese men well-remembered by consultants. These men were probably left from the very large population of Chinese who had previously lived on the Stanislaus. Four were remembered by name: Ah Yet, Ah Tong, Ah Lee and Yet Ben Nam. Each is remembered in varying detail by consultants.

Ah Lee is usually remembered for his laundry in Melones. Consultant Howard Canevaro remembered that Ah Lee was at first a cook for mine Superintendent Langford then began his laundry business. Mr. Canevaro also mentioned that the laundry washed out in the 1908 flood on the Stanislaus River. Other consultants remarked that Ah Lee then went to the Angels Camp area where he became a cook in a restaurant. One consultant referred to the

Chinese Laundry as belonging to Ah Tong which might mean that the business changed hands either before or after the flood of 1908 or that there were two Chinese launderers. Others said Ah Lee went out of business when women bought washing machines and began to do their own washing. He is said to have gone back to San Francisco about 1908-09.

The life of Ah Tong is somewhat better known than that of Ah Lee. Ah Tong was primarily a miner when Milo Bird came to know him. Bird, a youngster at that time, became fascinated with the process Ah Tong used to separate the gold from the gravels of Coyote Creek.

Yet Ben Nam ran a restaurant in Melones from 1910 to 1915. Milo Bird remembers working in the restaurant for a time. Yet Ben Nam had lost one of the kitchen staff, a cook, and Milo was used as an interum laborer until another Chinese was available for the job. The Chinese staff consisted of a cook, a waiter and a dish-washer and Milo remarked that the second cook did not speak any English. In later years a man named Powell had a restaurant in that same building, but there is no information concerning the fate of Yet Ben Nam.

The best-remembered Chinese man in Melones was undoubtedly Ah Yet. Ah Yet, Ah Lee and Ah Tong had been living in the laundry house used by Ah Lee in his business. Ah Yet eventually left Ah Tong and built a shack next to the old laundry house, and both structures are recorded on Map 1.

In Melones the Chinese, with the exception of Yet Ben Nam, lived in the same area near Coyote Creek in crude shacks. Yet, Milo Bird maintains that Ah Yet was a very respected and loved character in the town, and the evidence he presents seems to indicate this to be true. With the exception of the miner Ah Tong, all were in a business of some sort in the town.

Native Americans

Few Indians are known to have resided in the Melones area after 1848 (the beginning of the historical period). There are indications of occupation on the river bottom area during the pre-contact period, however, this did not continue into the historic period. In Melones consultants remembered one Native-American woman by name and possibly one other woman whose name is not conclusively known.

Three consultants remembered a Native-American woman named "Indian" Lillie who lived in the Coyote Creek area. Her home was located near those of Ah Yet and Ah Tong. There are conflicting stories regarding Indian Lillie's role in Melones. Two consultants remarked that Indian Lillie may have taken in laundry from the miners in Melones. One of these consultants remarked that she often had "parties" to which her "boyfriends would come." Ted Bird also remembers that a woman by the name of "Pixie" lived in the vicinity of Carson Creek. Mr. Bird was not sure of the name or if she was associated with "Indian" Lillie.

The other Native-Americans in the Melones area were laborers. Ted Bird remembered that a Native-American woman who worked at the Bird home as a domestic came from the area on the "other side" of Carson Hill, probably the area of the town of Carson Hill. Both Indian Lillie and Pixie and the domestic from Carson Hill were probably in Melones in the 20's and perhaps earlier. One consultant remarked that after the mine shut down (probably the late 20's closing) Indian Lillie went to Jackson like many of the miners.

Gypsies

The most unusual group to visit the Melones area were the Gypsies who came to town almost every year. Milo Bird has described incidents involving the Gypsies in the following story:

GYPSIES

I don't know why I should write about Gypsies except that Melones was plagued by them twice a year the same as they were by chillblains in winter and mosquitos in summer. We managed to survive their twice annual visits, but the restaurant and the grocery store would have preferred to have them barred from getting into town.

I was washing dishes in Ben Nam's restaurant one noon when he let out a shriek in Chinese and grabbed his big carving knife. I looked into the dining room in time to see three Gypsie men burst through the front door and rush along a row of tables gathering all the catsup bottles as they ran. While Ben chased one of them, the others drank catsup from the bottles they had and put the empties back on the tables. The third man managed to get out the door with several bottles of catsup in his pockets. Ben told me afterward that the last group to come through had drunk his Worchestershire sauce as well as all the catsup on the tables.

In the general store, they were models of decorum while they made small purchases. But after they left, the grocer invariably discovered that they had got away with everything that wasn't nailed down.

No Gypsie ever stole anything at our house. I guess we looked as poor as they were. But every time they came through town, one of them would come to the house and want to tell Mother's fortune for 50 cents. Mom didn't mind having her fortune told but she always thought of all the things she could buy with that much money. If mother couldn't jew the woman down she would give her some small peace offering and the woman would leave.

One time, the Gypsy got Mother's curiosity so keyed up that she gave the woman fifty cents to tell her fortune. The woman told Mom that she already had five boys and that she would have another within a year. Ted was born ten months later.

Relations between Ethnic Groups

The relations between the many ethnic or national groups in Melones was a topic often discussed with consultants during interviews. The early settlement, like most Gold Rush camps, was the scene of considerable violence. The company town of Melones seems to have been the scene of some violence, but there is disagreement between consultants as to its origin and extent although some clashes may have stemmed from friction between ethnic groups in the town. Ethnic groups of miners may have competed for the most favorable jobs or the hiring of one of their own group rather than one from another group.

Residential segregation indicates the existence of ethnic group boundaries. Little Italy and the congregation of Mexicans in certain boardinghouses serve as examples of this, and the fact that consultants were aware of these residential areas also indicates that the groups were recognized in the community as distinct entities. The impression is that consultants knew where everyone in the town stood in relation to some ethnic grouping. The community's perception of ethnic identity and the intergroup conflict of nationalities seems to have worked together to strengthen group identity. As Milo Bird observes, Melones was not a microcosm of the great "American Melting Pot":

> Normally, a town containing many nationalities would be a part of the great international melting pot that characterizes America. But Melones was not a melting pot in any sense of the word because each nationality, jealous of its own country of origin, refused to admit the existence of any other. Thus, those peoples perpetuated their own national integrity. (Bird n.d.:5)

There was so little intermingling of nationalities that interfusion of ideas and cultures was virtually non-existent.

The English speaking peoples read the San Francisco Examiner, the Chronicle or the Bulletin, the Italians Il Voce del Popolo, the Serbs Crbski Dnynik, the Chinese a newspaper which arrived once a month from San Francisco, and each newspaper spoke for people of its own ethnic background. And, none of the Catholics would have any more discourse with the Protestants than was absolutely necessary:

> In spite of all that mistrust and animosity, very few international or inter-religious quarrels occurred simply because each group kept as much as possible to itself. Some minor skirmishes did occur at the local grocery store and in the poolroom and the saloons but cooler heads did fairly well at keeping combatants under control. (Bird n.d.:8)

Consultants often referred to the apparent peacefulness of the town, "We all (or they all) seemed to get along, like one big family." This tranquility may have been simply the result of avoidance of each other. Since the work day at the mine was back-breaking, and the mill ran year round except for one or two major holidays, inter-group avoidance might also have been a function of restricted free time. One consultant mentioned that the Italians and the Slavs had picnic days for which they may have even been given time off from the mine. These were held separately at first, however, the consultant remarked that after a time they were held jointly and considered one event. This may indicate that some elements in the two groups cooperated (possibly the women were the ones most involved).

Basic Town Layout

The town of Melones is at once a company town of a series of large, corporate mining ventures and a small town with its roots in the Gold Rush period of the Mother Lode. During 1890-1942, the "company" was the dominant influence in the town. When the mine was operating, the town boomed; but when the mine closed, the town closed with it. With few exceptions, everyone in the town depended on the mine for wages or on the business generated by those wages. Businesses in the town included boardinghouses, general stores, restaurants, pool halls, saloons and gambling parlors.

The town itself conforms to the northwest shore of the Stanislaus River and Coyote Creek, and the town's main road followed the Stanislaus River and continued along the bank of Coyote Creek. Habitations were also built on the northwest shore of the Stanislaus to the east of Coyote Creek (known both as Little Italy and Campo Seco). Some structures and habitation areas did occur on the opposite sides of the creek and the river, notably the railroad depot and the homes of the Chinese men, Ah Yet and Ah Tong. The small, isolated community of Norwegian miners and their families was located in the general area of Norwegian Gulch, on the opposite bank of the Stanislaus from the Little Italy settlement.

The location of the mine structures influenced the placement of residential and business structures in the town. Several homes were built very close to the entrance to the mine including those of the mine owner/manager, the superintendent and the "top boss" of the mine. This location placed them very close to the workings of the mine and any trouble that might arise. Ted Bird indicated that his father, who was responsible for several phases of construction and repair of mine equipment and structures, was on call twenty-four hours a day--living close to the mine entrance and the mills was a necessity.

The location of the roads also contributed to the placement of structures in the town. The company built several homes for employees' families on the side of the road that is now State Highway 49.

Social Stratification

The people who lived on the hill near the mine offices were the town "elite," including the mine's owner, supervisors and the bosses. Perhaps most conspicuous was the home of the owner of the Melones Mine prior to its shutdown in 1926. Howard Canevaro remembered that the owner, Mr. Devereaux, his son and his son's wife were in residence in Melones for portions of the year. The Devereaux house, was almost uniformly referred to as a "mansion" with leopard skin rugs, tennis courts and Negro and Japanese servants. Mr. Canevaro recalls the elderly Mr. Devereaux being chauffeured by his Negro servant while Ted Bird remembers being asked by the younger Mr. Devereaux to teach his two Japanese household servants to play tennis so Mr. Devereaux would have someone to play with. Mr. Canevaro recalled that the younger Mr. Devereaux was also a polo player and left town at times during the year to play polo.

Mr. Canevaro recalled that the wife of the younger Devereaux was the "idol" of the young girls in the town for her beauty and poise. The consultants did not seem to object to the family's wealth, however. Milo Bird relates the following story which seems to indicate that the wealthy owners of the mine were liked by the Bird family:

> Outstanding in my memory are four men for whom I have had a lasting affectionate regard. One man and his wife carried their wealth as easily as we endured our poverty. They talked to everybody, rich or poor, educated or ignorant, young or old. But since their background was so foreign to that of most of the people in Melones, they never mingled with them socially. Once a year they came out from Boston to look after their interest in the mine and it seemed that they tolerated townspeople only as long as they had to. That sounds like double talk, but greatness is in the eye of the beholder. They did talk to everybody but it seemed that those contacts were more a matter of public relations than of friendliness. However, their contacts with the Bird family seemed to us to be on a different level. We were the only family in town whom they visited on their annual trips to the mine. They always made a point of spending one evening with us on our big front porch. Unwittingly, I presume, we patronized them by asking about life on the outside. And they talked easily and fluently about friends and acquaintances whose names we saw occasionally in the San Francisco Examiner. And that man and his wife knew the names of all six Bird boys and called us by name wherever they saw us. (Bird n.d.:219-220)

High status in the community did not seem to be limited to the wealthy mine owners. The mine superintendents, such as Archie Stevenot, were considered by the consultants to have been among the "important people" of the community, and other high officials of the company also fell into this category. Community decisions seemed to originate from those who made decisions for the company. Ted Bird recalls being summoned from school along with the other boys in his class by Archie Stevenot. They went, not knowing if they were to be punished or rewarded. Actually, they had been called to help fight a fire that had started on a hillside above the town and was threatening both the town and the mine structures. Stevenot organized the boys and, after the fire was put out, rewarded them with generous sums of money for their work.

Other families considered "significant" by some consultants were the large landowners in the town. These included the Wood and the Pendola families. Neither seems to have derived income or amassed wealth directly from the mine, but rather benefited from the presence of the mine. In addition to the revenue from their ferry, the Wood family also owned a great deal of property close to the ferry and improved this property with rental homes, also running a small store and service station. As independent landowners, the Wood family was very "unusual" in the town of Melones where almost all property and housing was under the control of the mining company. The Pendola family can also be considered unusual in this respect, for they owned a significant acreage of valuable garden land in the area of Coyote Creek and used this land for an extensive produce business.

Both the Wood family and the Pendola family represent long-term occupation in the Melones area, beginning prior to the advent of the large mining concerns which transformed the town. Their position as older residents of the area and their control of some of the land in the town seem to have afforded them a position of higher status, according to consultants.

Other mine personnel, such as "top bosses" and shift bosses were also accorded high status in the community. They were paid little more than the other laborers although the company did compensate them with such fringe benefits as housing. Perhaps because the mine laborers were in daily contact with these bosses, they were remembered by name and reputation by several consultants.

There is very little information concerning the status of the remaining members or groups in the population of Melones. It was generally agreed that the bulk of hard labor in the mines fell upon

the shoulders of the large immigrant population. Mark Hanna referred to the workers as "serfs" who were "brother to the ox" because of the conditions of their labor.

There is little information concerning the hierarchy of the ethnic groups in the town or whether the low occupational status of the Mexicans also translated into low social status for this group. There is some indication of ethnic residential and social segregation (Little Italy).

Relationship to other Communities

The town of Melones did not have the status or development of such surrounding communities as Sonora, Angels Camp or Vallecito. The town was primarily a company town while the others were communities with a more diversified economic base, even though large mines did furnish a portion of that base. Consequently, the town of Melones did not offer several essential services to the population there which either had to do without or commute to the neighboring towns for these services. In some cases, businesses in other towns would come to the people of Melones and offer their services. In the 1920's there was apparently a need for grocers to send wagon loads of goods to Melones from Angels Camp and Carson Hill. Among the essential services not available in Melones was education beyond the eighth-grade level. Since Melones lies on the Calaveras side of the Stanislaus River, the young people who chose to go on to high school commuted to Angels Camp and attended Bret Harte High School.

The major connection in the early years between towns was the Sierra railroad and, later, the road which is now Highway 49. The railroad not only brought supplies into the town but also provided transportation for short shopping or business excursions to neighboring towns. The majority of these trips appear to have been made to the Angels Camp area, rather than to the large town of Sonora.

Several consultants mentioned that the red light district in Jamestown was the largest around, and miners would often spend all their time and money there after working hours. There was never any indication from the consultants that the people of Melones had connections with any of the larger towns outside the immediate area (Stockton, Sacramento or San Francisco). The heavy work schedule of the mines may have prevented the long trips necessary to reach these larger cities.

Movement of populations between towns of the Mother Lode region seems to have been a common practice. One consultant remarked that a lot of families, including her own, came to the Melones mine in the early 1920's when the mine at Campo Seco (located south of Jamestown) closed down. Similarly, many of the families were forced to move to other towns when the Melones mine shut down in the 1920's. Consultants mentioned that many miners moved to the Jackson area, which had several large mining operations, while others were forced to leave mining altogether and go to larger cities in search of employment. One consultant mentioned that many of the Slavic peoples moved to Los Angeles in search of work, while others moved to Angels Camp and Jackson in an attempt to remain in mining. Ted Bird recalled that his own family moved to Angels Camp in the 1920's because of the lack of social life and entertainment in Melones.

Environmental Conditions and Hazards

The climate of Melones, as discussed by both Milo Bird and Howard Canevaro, was often brutal. Extreme cold and wind in the winter were followed by typical California heat in the summer, reaching 115°F at times. The location of the town in the steep river canyon meant that humidity was often high. This increased the discomfort residents felt, especially those who were forced to sleep during the day because they worked the late shifts in the mine or mill.

Flooding also appears to have been a problem, especially in 1908. Consultants mentioned this year as one of heavy flooding and consequent destruction. Howard Canevaro remarked that the flood waters washed up to the back porch of the home of Percy Wood and that the bridge which was under construction was washed away.

Other than flooding, the river contained those dangers always present near rivers with swift currents. Milo Bird writes that several Italian prospectors from the area of Little Italy were drowned when their flat-bottomed boats capsized in the river. Milo and Ted Bird also remembered a drowning in the river near Little Italy involving a small child who had been near the river with her mother, and Milo Bird remembered another time a boy who was crossing the river on a cable. The river was high; and as the boy reached the center of the span, he found the cable wet and slippery. A large log was bearing down on him born by the high waters. The boy barely made it out of the log's path and across the rest of the span of cable, to the relief, by now, of most of the town.

The mill and mine were the source of chemical and noise pollution. Almost all consultants remarked that when they were children attending the school at Melones, the silence created when the stamp mill (near the school) stopped caused so much disruption in the classroom that class had to be halted or let out. Other consultants remarked that the sudden silence would wake a person from a sound sleep. The mill ran at all times, stopping only long enough to effect repairs. Workers in the mill were deafened for hours after their shift ended, and those families who lived close to the mill probably suffered some hearing loss. One consultant remarked that if the wind were right, the sound of the stamp mill carried as far as the town of Columbia.

Mercury was used from the time of the early Gold Rush to collect fine particles of gold which passed over it and was also used extensively in the stamp mills to collect the gold particles freed by the stamps from the quartz ore. Mervin Wood remarked that at one time he saw a great deal of this liquid mercury flowing down from the mill toward the river. Milo Bird, who became a chemical engineer after growing up in Melones, recently remarked that a considerable amount of liquid mercury may still be lying in the bottom of the Stanislaus River, as far as two miles below the town of Melones. While there is no report of personal damage due to mercury pollution, cumulative exposure to the element might have had some long-term effect.

Cyanide also posed a serious threat to the population, especially those who worked or lived close to the stamp mill. Potassium cyanide was used to extract the very fine particles of gold which were not collected by the mercury. The cyanide process was developed later than the mercury process and seems to have posed a greater threat to the community. The cyanide process took place in two large tanks near the main streat of the town of Melones at the base of the one-hundred stamp mill. These tanks were approximately forty feet high and stood within ten feet of the main street of the town. One consultant remembered that on occasion the quartz sand which had been treated with cyanide overflowed the edges of the flume which carried it from the cyanide tanks and then spilled on to the main street. The consultant remarked that it was not unusual for school children to have to wade through this cyanide treated quartz "mud" on their way to school. Howard Canevaro recalled that he once saw a cow graze too closely to the outlet of the cyanide tanks. The cow died almost instantly when it came in contact with the contaminated area. One couple is reported to have committed suicide with cyanide obtained from the cyanide plant.

Housing

The majority of the housing in the town of Melones was owned by the mining company. The remainder, while privately owned, was rented or leased to employees of the mine. There were several types of housing available, including company-owned bunkhouses, boarding-houses, company-owned homes, rental homes (most were owned by the Wood family) and rooms in private residences.

The most common type of residence in the town appears to have been the bunkhouse. Ted Bird recalled that the mine furnished these quarters for single miners; another consultant remarked that the residents were predominantly Mexican. Several of these houses were located near the river in the central portion of town (Map 1). Information from consultants indicates that the mine had some control over the miners' activities in the bunkhouses. In one instance, a Mexican miner had asked a woman to his room in the bunkhouse; and when she became pregnant, the company official became quite angry. The company-owned bunkhouses did not offer board to the miners, therefore they ate at other boardinghouses on a contract basis.

Boardinghouses make up a large portion of the housing in Melones, and Emilia Paredes described the boardinghouse run by her mother in the 1920's. The boarders slept in a bunkhouse which was separated from the boardinghouse where the boarders ate. Board and room included sleeping quarters, three meals per day and the laundering of any bedding. The miners who took one meal in the mine could arrange for a lunch to take with them. The miners were responsible for their own personal laundry, and Mrs. Paredes remarked that they usually sent their laundry to Angels Camp or had it done by an individual within the town of Melones.

The food in the boardinghouses was served family style, although there were times when Mrs. Paredes would fill an individual request. Consultants also remembered Mable Buckley's boardinghouse where food was served in much the same way.

Boardinghouses seem to have served food to a greater number of persons than they had registered as full-time residents since the bunkhouses did not offer such a service. Angeline Elevi remembers helping her mother prepare lunches in her boardinghouse. There were forty to fifty of these lunch boxes which they filled with coffee, sandwiches and sweets on top.

Families in the town who lived in private residences often took in boarders, and Milo Bird remarked that most of the families in town, especially those who were Italian or Slavic had two or three boarders

in their homes. Mr. Bird did not mention what financial arrangements were made, or what duties the family had toward the boarder.

Some families owned their own homes in the Melones area. The Pendola family is one of these, as were the Winklers, both located near Coyote Creek. It is not known whether the houses in the area of Little Italy were company-owned or owned by the families themselves, however, since the area has been described as a "shanty town" by some consultants, these structures were probably built by the residents themselves. This is definitely the case for the house built by Ah Yet, constructed from the town "junk." Many of the poorer residents of the town probably had similar make-shift housing.

Family Life

Details of home or family life are the most difficult information to obtain. Fortunately some consultants remembered what it was like "at home" in Melones.

Families in Melones were faced with a variety of problems. Miners were on duty seven days a week, often on night shifts. The environmental hazards they faced shortened and constantly threatened their lives, and they were paid low wages for exhausting, dangerous work. Their families faced, as well, the environmental hazards. Adjustments made by the people to these conditions are the most striking feature of home life in the area.

Births were attended by midwives from the town. Ted and Milo Bird remembered that their mother was often called out in the middle of the night to attend to a woman in labor. Howard Canevaro remembered that Mrs. Marinovich was also a midwife (perhaps at an earlier date than Mrs. Bird). The nearest doctor was in Angels Camp; although he could be called by the one telephone in town, it was still a long horse and buggy journey down into the river canyon. The doctor did make regular visits to the town, was primarily to treat the complaints of miners (each of whom had payed $1 a month as "insurance"). Families were not covered by insurance at this time and, except for extreme emergencies, were on their own. While no information was available on the subject, it can be assumed that household or folk remedies and the use of patent medicines was common in Melones as it was in other rural areas during the same period. Ted Bird recalled that a dentist came to town and would set up his shop on the front porch of the Bird home, using a drill operated by a foot treadle.

Milo Bird and his brother Ted represent life in Melones as a constant struggle against the environment and poverty. In the Bird family, every family member was aware of all possible means of obtaining goods and extra money. Ted collected sawdust from a blow pipe which came out of the sawmill and sold this for 5¢ a bag for home insulation. The mine also paid 5¢ a bag for cobbles which were to be used in the ore crushing process, and Ted was there to collect the rocks when the plant needed them.

Milo Bird gives further information on ways in which children in Melones made extra money in a story he entitled "Earning Money":

> Although everybody in Melones was poor as Job's turkey, there always seemed to be ways for kids to earn money. If a kid was really sincere and willing to work diligently he could keep busy all the time. His earning capacity was not high, but 25¢ in those days looked like a fortune. The ways I list here are those I used before graduating from grammar school.
>
> We had lived in Robinsons Ferry only a few weeks when a weather beaten old man driving a glue factory nag to a creaky old wagon stopped at the house and announced that he was a junkman and was willing to buy almost anything we had around the place.
>
> I can't recall the prices he was willing to pay, but copper was about 2¢ a pound, brass 1-1/2¢, lead 1¢, rubber boots 2¢ each, rubberized rain coats 2¢, rags 1/2¢ per pound and 5-gallon kerosene cans 5¢ each. He would also buy old bones at 1/2¢ a pound.
>
> We kids scrounged enough things from the old barn behind the house to earn a few cents, and then we hounded Mother to let us sift through an old garbage dump that we knew about. By the time that old fellow came to town again we loaded him down to the tune of nearly fifty cents. From that day on, we Bird boys regularly visited every dump in town and just as regularly found enough junk to get a few cents out of the old man every time he showed up.
>
> I couldn't have been more than ten years old when Mr. Percy Wood asked me to help with his haying. He didn't expect me to pitch hay from the ground into his wagon but he wanted me to spread it out in the wagon so he could get a decent load each trip. For a full day's work, I got 50 cents, and none of the other kids in town could touch me with that proverbial ten-foot pole.

Not long after that I got a babysitting job while the parents went to a dance. At about 4:30 next morning the baby's father shook me awake in a rocking chair, shoved fifty cents into my hand and sent me home. Again, I was untouchable. I had many babysitting jobs after that, but some parents would pay only 25 cents while others gladly paid my standard fee of 50 cents for staying with their children from 9 p.m. until 4:30 or 5:00 the next morning.

I was thirteen years old when I got the idea that there would be money in selling the Saturday Evening Post. In those days, I paid 3 cents for the Posts and sold them for five. I also got a bonus if I sold more than a certain number each month.

After selling the Post for a couple of months I became aware that only men bought it. I thought there certainly ought to be something the women would like to read. And one day I saw an ad for the Ladies Home Journal. I immediately began to sell it. Again, I noticed that farmers and ranchers didn't buy either the Post or the Journal. After I had agitated my brain about that for a while I hit upon the idea of selling The Country Gentleman.

Carrying all of those magazines around was making me stoop shouldered and it was hard work lugging them all over those hills. And still again, I agitated my brain marrow and came up with the idea of taking subscriptions to those three magazines. It would be a lot easier to carry three subscription pads around than a hundred pounds of magazines.

I was going great guns with the subsctiption business when the dishwasher at the Chinese restaurant quit and Ben Nam asked me to take on the job until he could get another Chinese boy up from San Francisco. Ben offered me $1.00 per day and board. I jumped at the chance before learning what the hours were. He expected me to be ready to wait on tables by 5:00 a.m. I could eat breakfast by cramming something down my throat at any dull moment. By 8:00 I was to start washing dishes and could leave for school at 8:55. I had to be back in the restaurant at 12:00 and mix waiting on tables with dish washing until 12:55 when I could leave for school again. I had to be back in the restaurant at 5:00 p.m. and work until 8:00.

Ben might have broken even if he had paid me more money and not given me my meals. In those days my legs were so hollow that he must have lost money on me. Fortunately for Ben another Chinese showed up in about two weeks

and took my job for $5.00 a week and board and room. Meanwhile, somebody had preempted my territory and was taking subscriptions for dozens of different magazines including my three.

Ben Nam then hired Ralph and me to cut wood for him. He had bought some cord wood (four foot long pieces) and wanted us to cut it into 2-foot lengths for his big range. We were to get $1.50 per cord for cutting and splitting and 25 cents a cord for stacking it. I didn't realize how hard it was for a thirteen year old kid to cut a cord of wood until Ralph left me one day and went out to play baseball. When I quit that evening I told Ben to get somebody else to cut his wood because it was too hard for me.

A few days later, the superintendent of the mine asked me if I would like to have a job sweeping out the office twice a week for $3.00 a month. The job didn't take much time but cleaning out all those spittoons certainly couldn't be classed as very elevating employment. However, since that was always done at night, it didn't interfere with any of my daytime activities.

From the time I was twelve years old until I went to work for the mine at age fifteen years and two months, Ralph and I painted on contract. People would come to us and ask how much we would charge to paint their roofs, or their porches or some portion of their houses. We would look at the job and make our bid. A roof was usually $4.00, the side of a house was $2.00, etc. It might take us a week to paint a roof but $4.00 was $4.00.

We did such good work on those houses that Louie Cecconello hired us one summer at $3.00 per day to paint a big rooming house and a 12-room apartment house for him. We felt that we were really in the chips that summer.

In all the years that I lived in Melones, I got involved in only one project where I lost money. At a dance one Saturday evening I noticed that some of the men's shoes were badly scuffed. That gave me the idea of opening a shoe shine stand in the poolroom. I had never shined a shoe in my life but I had seen it done and it didn't look very complicated. At the general store I bought a can of brown wax, one of black, a brush, some blacking and a yard of muslin.

My first customer came in wearing badly scuffed patent leather pumps. I grabbed my blacking and applied a big dab to one scuff mark. The blacking ran through that patent leather as it would have through a sheet of paper. The guy let out a

yell when he felt that cold blacking reach his toes. If I correctly interpreted what he said he was questioning my ancestry. Since I wouldn't stand for anyone using that type of language on me I closed up shop and went home.

(Bird n.d.:118-122)

The low mine wages required certain sacrifices within the home which were taken as a matter of course. The Birds remembered an elaborate system of hand-me-down clothing within the family. Mr. Bird repaired all the family's shoes on his iron shoe tree. A garden was planted which helped keep the family more self-sufficient during the growing season. Beans, vegetables and cod seem to have been the staple items, and Milo remarks that meat was not common on the dinner table. The goal of the Bird family (and perhaps many others in Melones) was self-sufficiency.

Information about social life in the home is revealed only in the accounts of Milo and Ted Bird. The Bird home was often a gathering place for card games and neighborhood musical groups. In a passage from one of his stories, Milo Bird tells of these card games and the "hoedowns" that often occurred in their living room:

> Two or three evenings a week after supper he went to town and bought twenty-five cents worth of roasted peanuts which he brought home. While in town he would invite every kid he met to come to the house and play cards with us. On his way home he would drop in on the school teacher, Mr. Wallace Wilson, and invite him also.
>
> In Dad's mind, those card games served two purposes: they kept us boys out of the poolroom and the gambling halls and they kept us out of any potential mischief engendered by boredom with life in a mining camp. In addition, the presence of the school teacher showed all of us that he was human in spite of the rigid control he exerted over us in school. At nine o'clock, Dad stopped all games and we ate peanuts until they were all gone. Then Mr. Wilson would walk down the hill with his arm around one of the neighbor kids, usually the one who most needed to know him best.
>
> In Melones, the blacksmith was a good fiddler. His helper could play the harmonica, and another man had a good singing voice and so did several of the older Libby boys. Mother played the piano. So nothing was more natural than an old fashioned hoe-down a couple of times a week.
>
> Since our living room was quite small, it was usually jam-packed by the time all the musicians and singers crowded

into it. And by the time a dozen or more visitors showed up we had to open the front door and both windows. With the house thus as open as the great outdoors, bats flew in and out snatching bugs hovering around the kerosene lamps.

After much experimenting we learned how to outwit both the bugs and the bats. As soon as it became dark enough to light the lamps, we set one out on the porch and waited for the bugs to show up before lighting the other lamp inside the house. The bugs flew around the outside lamp and didn't pay any attention to the one inside the house. Quite naturally, the bats stayed out where the bugs were.

(Bird n.d.:168-9)

Of the more mundane events in the homes of Melones, little is known. Again, Milo Bird gives a brief picture of what it was like in his own family when he was a boy:

Supper time was a conversation time. After Dad had washed and changed his clothes we took our places at a table big enough to seat all eight of us and to hold enough food to satisfy six growing boys. Each of us boys was required to take a serving from each dish passed around. That bothered me occasionally because I couldn't stand the odor of creamed codfish. After I had explained that to Mother, nothing was said if I quietly passed the dish on to somebody else. We were required to eat everything we took upon our plates and if we wanted more, we could have it until the dish was empty.

At the end of the meal, Dad would interleaf his knife into the tines of his fork and arrange them on the rim of his plate. We knew from experience that he was through eating and we could introduce any subject we wanted. Dad always opened the conversation period by telling us of some occurrence during the day which amused him. Then he would give a short report on the progress of his construction jobs and after heaving a sigh he would ask Mom how her day had gone.

By the time Mom got through telling him how many scraped knees she had bandaged; how many bumped heads she had kissed; how many tubs of laundry she had put out; how many beds she had made; how many floors she had mopped and how many school lunches she had put up, Dad was sorry he had asked the question.

In addition, Mom may have had an argument or two with us older boys, or with the butcher, the grocer or the milkman, or she may have delivered a baby or tended a sick one. But those things didn't count; they were all in a day's routine.

> After Dad and Mom had had their say, she cleared off the table and we kids aired our day for him and asked what we should do about the kids who were stealing fish from our trout lines set in the river. We might ask why we couldn't bat better; chin ourselves more times; pole vault higher; broad jump farther or get more ringers at horseshoes. We could even indulge in flights of fancy and ask for increases in our weekly allowance. (I was just about to spell that "weakly" allowance.) (As I recall, below age 5 we didn't get any allowance at all. From 6 to 13 we got 5 cents a week and from 14 until we went to work we got 10 cents a week. After we went to work, we were permitted to keep one day's pay per month. The rest we turned over to the folks who saved it so we would have money to pay our way through high school and college.
>
> (Bird n.d.:170-72)

Social Activities

In Melones several informal gathering places provided an everyday social life for the town, especially for the miners and mill workers. For special events, the town as a whole gathered for a celebration such as a dance or a Christmas party. Consultants remembered these community-wide events very well, and this forms the bulk of the information we were able to obtain concerning social life in the town.

Everyday entertainment in the town for the miners consisted of drinking and gambling. Both Ted Bird and Howard Canevaro remembered that there were two pool halls in the town, and both served as gathering places for the off-work miners. Ted Bird, who was a "professional" pool player in Angels Camp and who had learned the game in Abbotts pool hall in Melones, remembered that the betting was often heavy on games of eight ball or "pea pool." These same pool halls were the site of other forms of gambling as well. One consultant remembered that card games would often last as long as five days. During this time, food would be brought in from restaurants and passed through the windows. Another consultant remembered that both of the pool halls served liquor during the Prohibition years.

There was at least one saloon and a restaurant which was an important gathering place for the Italian miners. The Lillie Restaurant used a lot of olive oil and garlic, according to Ted Bird. The main dishes included raviolis, polenta and steaks which had been marinated in olive oil.

At times prostitutes would come to the area. One consultant recalled that on payday prostitutes would set up a tent camp on the Tuolumne side of the river, across the bridge from the town. The consultant explained that at that time prostitution was illegal in Calaveras County but tolerated in Tuolumne County, especially in Jamestown. Thus, the ladies were required to stay across the river. The consultant remarked that upon sighting the ladies, the shout "Puta Rio" would go up through the town and around the mine.

The most common type of formal entertainment in the town was dances, usually held at the community hall in the center of town. Dances were late or all-night affairs which included a midnight supper at the community hall or the nearest boardinghouse. Mervin Wood remembered that the dances were held every two or three weeks, and they were organized by the "Freitas girls" who worked as chambermaids in nearby bunkhouses. The dances were usually held on Saturday night, and, according to consultants who were knowledgable on the subject, those who attended were from all the surrounding towns (Angels Camp, Sonora and smaller towns in between).

Esther Golab remembered that on special occasions the town would get a dance band from the Stockton area, often the Patton and Springer Band. The band was well known and helped draw even larger than usual crowds. The band played until two a.m. and would then pass the hat around in the crowd. After they had seen the receipts, they might be induced to play until dawn. The Bernasconi boardinghouse often held a dinner at the boardinghouse at midnight during the dances. The charge for these dances often included the price of the dinner. Milo Bird also remembered that several times a year the dances were closed to outsiders and held for the residents of the town only.

The community hall was used for many other events as well. Mervin Wood remembers several occasions when there were prize fights in the hall with professional fighters from the Central Valley. Elaine Segale and other consultants remembered movies being shown in the town hall. At first, the movies were brought by a man from the Jamestown area who showed them by means of a hand-operated projector. Movies and other very unusual types of entertainment are remembered by Milo Bird in the following short story from his Melones manuscript:

ENTERTAINMENT

Under other headings in this group of short sketches I have given insights into some of the entertainment we Birds enjoyed in Melones, but there was another sort meant for everyone who was not working at the time.

Somewhere around 1903 a man with a magic lantern notified people that he was going to give a show in the old store building that evening. Since the source of light in his magic lantern was a kerosene vapor lamp with a mazda mantle his pictures were fairly clear. He projected his pictures upon a bed sheet hung from a wire stretched across the old building.

Although I was only seven years old at the time I can still remember his picture of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. However, no other picture nor any part of his running commentary remains with me.

A group of Negro minstrels who travelled up and down the Mother Lode stopped in Melones twice a year. They sang songs using the technique known as Barbershop Harmony. When the four of them lined up to sing one of them looked like a whale in a full dress suit and another resembled a dried-up prune. When they sang the solo parts the big whale sang in almost a feminine voice while the little dried-up prune nearly blasted us out of our seats with his deep bass voice.

Ventriloquists were a dime a dozen. A one-legged Irishman with a wide upper lip and a brogue too thick to slice mixed ventriloquism with sleight-of-hand tricks. His ventriloquism was pretty fair but his sleight-of-hand tricks hadn't been sharpened by the Three Star Henessy he had consumed before getting upon the stage.

One family consisting of a father, a mother, a son and two daughters were contortionists. What those kids could do to their bodies was beyond comprehension. But seeing was believing.

Another contortionist who entertained us one evening claimed to be the heaviest man ever to accomplish some of the tricks he performed. He was six feet tall and weighed 165 pounds.

A group who claimed to be wounded veterans of the Spanish-American war once entertained us with a program of martial airs. This was after the townspeople had built their

beautiful dance hall with a raised stage at one end for the orchestra. Everybody who wasn't at work that evening attended the musical.

In the middle of a violin solo the player discarded his bow and finished the piece by rubbing the violin strings up and down on the staff of the American flag standing at one side of the stage. Since I have tin ears, I can't say whether his flagstaff music was better or worse than that produced by his bow.

One evening a spiritualist put on a show for us in the hall. She had erected a tent on the stage and asked for someone from the audience to inspect it to assure the audience that there was no way for a person to enter the tent except through the front door which was visible to the audience.

The spiritualist then took a chair into the empty tent and sat down in full view of the audience. Then she asked for two volunteers to come up and seat themselves in chairs beside her. They were no sooner seated than an eerie voice asked, "Frank, can you play the guitar?" When he replied that he could not, a guitar materialized from nowhere, floated over to Frank's lap and played several tunes with invisible hands.

Then the eerie voice asked, "Joe, are you ticklish?" Almost immediately, we saw ghostly hands all over him tickling his ribs, his belly and chucking him under the chin. He was ticklish all right.

While Frank held the spiritualist's hands other unseen hands tied Joe to his chair and then lifted him off the floor. All very mysterious.

One time we found hand-printed signs all over town advertising a flea circus in the old store building. Everybody went but the venture wasn't very profitable for the manager. He didn't collect from people at the door but only from those who got up close to the table where the fleas were to perform. When the first group at the table weren't very impressed by a flea pulling a miniature wagon an inch or two they were very vociferous in their disappointment, and everybody else left the show. The owner-manager probably got enough money to buy a bit of fresh meat for his fleas and maybe a drink of beer at the saloon.

A monkey show wasn't much more of a success than the flea circus. However, that operator was a much smarter

cookie. He collected entrance fees at the door. His monkeys were well trained, even the one that broke up the show. The show hadn't been going for more than a minute when a big male monkey began to claw at the clothing of one of the women in the audience. When the woman screamed, everybody headed for the door and safety. The operator explained to a few stragglers that that male monkey sometimes acted that way if one of the women in the audience was in her period. For a while people accepted that explanation, but when the woman involved denied that she was in that condition some of the men went looking for the guy. But by that time, he and his monkeys were well out of town.

A rat circus really amazed us boys and men. Only a few girls and women attended. We had not realized that rats could be trained to pull wagons, fire toy guns, climb a pole and unfurl an American flag. Although only a few of us could get up to the small stage at a time we were so impressed that we passed our satisfaction to those behind us and they took their turns getting up to the stage.

We were equally impressed by a dog show where some were dressed in fancy blouses, skirts and wore fancy hats, while the rest were dressed in male attire. But I simply cannot recall any of their tricks except that one of them stood on his hind feet and jumped rope which was swung by the operator.

One time a man fastened a slack wire to two trees in front of the general store and gave a demonstration of his ability to perform on it. After showing us a number of good balancing acts he passed the hat and headed straight for Baldy's Bar.

A cowboy rope artist came to town one day and gave a demonstration of his ability on Main Street in front of the general store. He probably thought that people living in a mining community had never seen good roping but what he didn't know was that the hills around Melones were full of cattlemen and we had seen plenty of roping every bit as good as that he demonstrated and those boys didn't pass the hat afterward.

Our biggest thrill came when we found posters at the post office and on an old boardinghouse that there would be a motion picture show that evening. Mom and Dad took all five of us boys. (Ted had not yet put in his appearance.) As near as I can recall, that was around 1905. I'm sure it wasn't after 1906 because he didn't have any pictures of the San Francisco fire. We oohed and aahed at pictures of people

jumping around as though they had hornets in their pants. None of his pictures had any sequence or plot but we were satisfied because we had seen one of the world's most marvelous machines in operation.

Somewhere around 1910 or 1911, another man came to town with moving pictures that made sense. Besides several reels of comedies he had a five-reel play. Since we Birds were always interested in mechanical things we watched everything he did with his reels. And we noticed that he always re-rolled each film before putting it back into its case. We asked and he explained why.

Two months later, two young men from a neighboring town decided to go into the moving picture business. They bought a projector, had some gaudy posters printed, rented a six-reel thriller and set out to make their fortune.

In their home town, everything went well and the audience applauded heartily when the cowboy snatched the girl away from the Indians. But when they showed the pictures in Melones the next evening pandemonium broke loose. The first reel was backward. A cowboy was riding his horse backward into a cloud of dust which disappeared under the horse's hoofs. Those young men swore and fumed and tinkered with their projector. I fully expected them to go up and turn their screen around.

When the first reel proved to be too complicated for them they put on the second, the third and all the rest, but nothing made sense. However, they ran all six reels through their projector with everybody howling their heads off.

When the show was over, Mother thought she should tell the guys what had been wrong. "You know," she said, "That you have to rewind those reels after each showing. Apparently you didn't do that where you gave your last show."

The fellow looked dumbfounded for a moment before thanking Mom for her advice. And as we went out the door we looked back and he was rewinding the films he had just shown and which were then in proper order to be shown again. I have often wondered what he thought of Mother's suggestion when he showed those pictures at the next town.

Coocoo Willie first showed up at our home in the turn of the road in 1903. He was a gentleman of the road who had a strong aversion to work but who had a marvelous singing voice. Instead of giving performances in the old store building

and taking in six or eight dollars, he went from home to home and sang a song or two for a cup of coffee, a slice of bread or even a sandwich which he could take with him. I presume he would have accepted a coin or two if a person insisted.

Since our home was close to the ferry slip he always came to our place first and it seemed that he always arrived just after Dad left for work. Although Mother was afraid of most of the bums and hobos who roamed the Mother Lode in those days she had no fear of Coocoo Willie. Whenever he showed up Mom would fry a stack of pancakes and heat up the pot of coffee. She would take his breakfast out to a bench on our porch and invite him to help himself. She would sometimes have to urge him to eat his breakfast before it got cold. It seems to me that his favorite song was "Under the Bamboo Tree."

All of Mother's efforts to learn his name came to naught. All she ever learned was "Coocoo Willie."

(Bird n.d.:178-184)

The community hall was the scene of chivarees given for a bride and groom after they had returned to the town after their honeymoon. Esther Golab remembers that when she and her husband were married, the town held a chivaree in the town hall where everyone danced to a phonograph and "everyone got to kiss the bride." There was usually a dinner associated with the chivaree.

The fourth of July and Christmas were also big celebrations in the town since these two holidays were usually days off for the miners. Consultants remembered that on the Fourth speeches were the order of the day. There also seems to have been other types of celebrations, including a ball-game. A ten-gallon keg of beer was kept on third base for anyone who could get that far. Another consultant remembered that the Sierra Railway built seats on their flat cars, and open air excursions were taken on the railway on the Fourth. Howard Canevaro added that during the celebration there would be sack races as well as horse races down the town's main street.

Christmas, an important celebration, was held in the town hall. Adeline Libby remembers that there was a tree in the hall and that under the tree were presents for all the children in the town. Prior to each Christmas season the miners "donated" a dollar or two to the Christmas fund. (It is not certain whether this donation was voluntary or the result of pressure from the company.) From this, presents were bought for all the children. One consultant remembered that during the celebration a Santa came into the community hall

with all the childrens' gifts. One year the Santa had celebrated once too often with the "cup that cheers" before going into the hall. He came down the aisle throwing oranges at the children and weaving dangerously from side to side. The children were told that Santa had had a long journey and that he needed to sit down for a while. At this point Santa fell down near the Christmas tree. Another consultant remembered that after this celebration a dance was held (also in the hall), and the children were allowed to attend it. Adeline Libby believes that the last community celebration of Christmas was in 1926 just before the closing of the mine for the first time.

Sports was also a large part of the social life in the town. Baseball appears to have been Melones' passion, with a mine-sponsored baseball team bearing the Melones name. Esther Golab remembered that her husband pitched for the team in the 1920's. At that time the team practiced every night and played on Sunday afternoons. The team was considered "very serious business," serious enough for the mine company to hire professional ballplayers as miners, then give them almost unlimited time off for practice and for games. The games were a major event for the town as well. Attendance was high, and during special games the tempers of the players and spectators flared. Mervin Wood remembers that the games between Melones and Angels Camp usually ended in a brawl. The team practiced and played first at a diamond across the river from the Wood home. Later, since they felt that this was too far to walk, they built a diamond on Coyote Creek at the site of the Whitaker Ranch (directly across from the Pendola Ranch).

Informal recreation in the town seems to have been primarily fishing and swimming, especially for the children. There can be no doubt that the seven-day work week limited the opportunities of the miners and mill workers for out of doors for recreation, and it seems unlikely that they would want to do anything strenuous after the exhaustion and discomfort of their jobs in the mine or the stamp mill. Milo Bird did recall that fishing was good all along the Stanislaus River and Coyote Creek. He mentioned the best trout fishing was two or three miles upstream on the Stanislaus and serious trout fishermen took advantage of its availability.

Children's games, play and school were very prominent features of life in the town for most consultants. Consultants remembered the more formal aspects of their childhood, including the one-room school near the stamp mill and the community celebrations of the Four of July and Christmas. They also remembered the more informal times. Milo Bird has written of the friendships, recreation, games and the children's impressions of the adult world.

The small grade school at Melones was located near the site of the one hundred stamp mill, part of the way up the side of a very steep hill. The school began with one room and one teacher. Milo Bird writes that during his childhood, Mr. Whitacker was the teacher there. In later years the school had two rooms and two teachers (during the 1920's). The school accommodated the first eight grades, and one consultant remarked that many of the students were bigger and stronger than the teachers simply because they had flunked so many grades. Many of the male students were in the fourth or fifth grade when they were old enough to leave school and get jobs in the mine. The school was populated by a great many children of foreign-born parents. Several consultants remembered that a majority of the class did not speak English. Heavily represented were Italian and Slavic children as well as some Mexican children. Howard Canevaro recalls that when he was a grade school student prior to the expansion of the school, there were sixty students in the one classroom. Ted Bird recalls that at a later date that number had dropped to thirty-eight students for the one classroom.

Education in the school was based on the "3 R's" according to Ted Bird (who later became Superintendent of Schools for Tuolumne County), and discipline was based on the stick. (Ted also mentioned that sex education at that time consisted of a course in the appreciation of restroom art.) Teachers were not subject to the same strict regulations of conduct sometimes governing them. Ted Bird remembers running to the store on a hot day to fetch a cold beer for the teacher (a woman). One consultant remembers that the class put on a play each year during the community Christmas celebration.

Those students who wanted to go on to higher grades or prepare for college commuted to Bret Harte High School in Angels Camp. Some students elected to stay full-time during the week while others commuted daily in car pools. Howard Canevaro and his two sisters along with their mother moved to Angels Camp so the children could attend school. Howard Canevaro recalled returning on weekends on foot while his sisters took the Saturday morning train down to Melones.

Swimming seems to have been the consuming activity during the warmer months. Elaine Segale remembered that the boys would go skinny-dipping on Coyote Creek, and the girls would whistle if they came to the area to warn the boys to get some clothes on. Another good swimming hole was somewhat further upstream at a spot on Coyote Creek where Percy Wood had built a diversion dam, known as Percy's Hole. Ted Bird mentioned that when he was young there was a sandy beach near the site of Robinson's Ferry where the kids would swim. Ted Bird recalled that among the children in Melones

there was an informal rule that a child should learn to swim one year after he/she had learned to walk, and the older children in the town were the ones who taught the younger. The children also fished, and Ted remarked that Coyote Creek was teeming with whitefish, trout and suckers. He also remembered that on occasion they would catch a salmon which had somehow made it upstream.

One event which was engrained in the minds of all the children of Melones who served as consultants was the making of an epic movie in the town. A Hollywood movie company built a false town about one quarter mile downstream then hired local people to populate it. The town was supposed to be the end point for a wagon train from the East. Wagon Train, made in the 1920's, was a silent film. The company spared no expense in making the town realistic, even removing and later replacing a cable which the mining company had stretched across the river. The cable interfered with a wide shot of their "town," and they expended a great deal of time and money to remove it from the scene. Ted recalls being filmed on a rock silhoueted against the sunset. Another consultant remembered that another film, Girl of the Golden West, was also filmed in Melones, however, other consultants had forgotten this film (Plate 20).

Perhaps the best statement that can be made about Melones as it was and is today was written by Milo Bird after a visit to the townsite in recent years. In the following story he recalls his childhood:

CHILDHOOD IS BUT A MEMORY AWAY

> One summer, my wife and I visited the mining camp where I lived 65 years ago. Although it is already a ghost town it will soon be completely obliterated because a dam to be built a few miles down stream will put it under 300 feet of water.
>
> As I stood amidst the crumbling foundations of my old home I looked up to where the new shore line will be and there sitting beneath a huge pine tree was the ghost of a nine-year old boy watching his world pass before his eyes. It was not a big world, but every mining camp resembles an ant hill alive with activity every minute of the day and night. As the boy sat there he watched over the entire town by simply turning his head from side to side.
>
> He often wondered if that was the way God kept track of people for He had only to stay in one place and the whole world would pass before Him once every day. The whole world

didn't pass before that boy's eyes but little took place in Melones that he did not know about for he had wonderful eyes and ears and an insatiable curiosity.

As I looked at that old tree, I recalled many of the sights and sounds which I had experienced so many years before.

Across the river on a small flat, the Little Red Man, so named because he always wore a red shirt, worked in his garden. His beets and carrots and garlic grew in long straight rows while beans twined up willow poles gathered along the river bank. Squash, pumpkins and cucumber vines climbed over piles of mining debris, and back against the hill stood row after row of grape vines and fig, plum, pear and pomegranate trees. He lived all alone in a cabin which he had built of scrap lumber and rocks.

I remembered the day the Little Red Man was taken to the hospital and I recalled the day he died. Because the Little Red Man had lived such a lonely life the boy had felt sorry for him and had developed a deep imaginary liaison with him. Upon hearing the sad news of his death, the boy felt as though he had lost his very best friend. The boy had run to the tree and had looked across the river to the garden so lonely and unkempt because nobody in town had taken time to go over and tend it while the old man was ill.

I recalled that certain people in town, usually decent ones, waded the river or crossed in boats and went to the cabin to hunt for the pot of gold which the old man was rumored to have hidden in it. When the cabin was flat upon the ground they tore up his garden and scattered it over the mining debris but no pot of gold was ever found.

Wind whistling through the trees sounded like the old stamp mill on a stormy day as its roar swelled and ebbed. It reminded me that Melones, once the liveliest camp along the Mother Lode had always experienced a constant stream of transient miners and tinhorn gamblers. The miners usually stayed long enough to seek work before moving on, while the tinhorns were given their choice of leaving voluntarily or of spending ten days in Sheriff Jones's "county boarding house." There wasn't a Sheriff Jones in those days but those tinhorns didn't know it.

I remembered that the boy once looked down upon the company's freight wagon pulled by Buck and Tom with Steve driving and Fred tending brake. On board that day were two

large boxes and he wondered if his father was finally getting the new motors for the saw mill.

I remembered the day McDonald's black cow broke out of her corral and headed straight for Mrs. Robley's garden. He watched in horror as the old cow broke through Mrs. Robley's willow twig fence and made short of her lettuce patch.

On another day, a shouted call and the squeal of brakes caused him to look across the river to where the Wells-Fargo stage drawn by six sweating horses had just started down the Double-S curve at the top of Mushroom Hill. Wondering if Percy Wood, the ferry man, had heard the call he looked in the direction of the Ferry House just in time to see him emerge. Percy looked up toward the stage for a moment and then walked quickly to the ferry slip.

Without giving the subject more than a passing thought, the boy knew that Percy was whistling "Turkey in the Straw." He had ridden with Percy on the ferry often enough to know that he always whistled that tune as he untied the mooring lines, slacked off on the stern ropes and pulled up on the bow lines thus causing the current to shove the ferry across the stream.

On that day, as usual, the ferry slid smoothly into its moorings on the other side of the river, and the current held it snugly against the ramp while Percy tied the mooring line. He then pulled up on the slack lines and waited for the stage to come aboard. After the stage had come to a halt, Percy shoved a log through the rear wheels to act as chocks in case the horses became frightened and tried to jump overboard with the stage. He untied the mooring line, slacked off on what was then the stern lines and the ferry backed noiselessly into the stream and glided smoothly to its home shore.

While Percy was tying the mooring lines, the driver yanked out the chocks, jumped to his seat, released the brakes and screamed an oath at his horses as he had done innumerable times before. As the driver's long whip cracked above the horses' ears, they shot forward and streaked for the livery stable a hundred yards away. The boy often wondered why it was necessary to race the horses at a feverish gait just to go that hundred yards.

As many times as the boy had watched that scene, he never tired of watching it again for no matter how high or how low the river was, Percy always knew exactly how long or how short the bow and stern lines had to be to make a perfect berthing.

A short distance above the ferry slip, the boy had often watched old man Smith sitting peacefully on a rock fishing and looking off into space, a thin column of smoke rising from a pipe which hung limply from his mouth. His line always lay slack in the stream, but this didn't seem to bother him in the least, and the boy wondered if he was reliving the exploits which caused Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, to expel him from the English army and give him thirty minutes to get out of England. The boy also wondered it it was true, as the old man claimed, that he still had thirteen minutes coming to him.

From his seat beneath that old pine, the boy once looked into town and saw Andy Green, a powerfully built black man, with a bucket of swill from the restaurant on his head and one in either hand walking toward his home where two grunting pigs waited for their evening meal. On another day as he watched he saw Andy behind the restaurant standing perfectly erect with a bale of hay on his head. The Chinese cook came out of the restaurant and put a bucket of swill upon the bale and then went back for the two other buckets which he handed to Andy. In that way, he took home a bale of hay for his cow and three buckets of swill for the pigs in a single trip. The boy was sure then that his Dad was right when he said that Andy was the strongest man in the world.

As that remembrance crossed my mind, I looked down the river toward the place where Andy's home had stood in a clump of willows, but no wisp of smoke rose as it had so many years before. Nor were any willows growing there now for they had long since been grubbed out in preparation for the new dam.

I recalled that a long, low whistle from Number Nine over by the McArdle crossing once told the boy that the work train was coming to pick up the crew making a repair on the railway bridge across the Stanislaus River. And he remembered that shortly thereafter, the sun went behind the hill at Gee Whiz Point and he watched the lengthening shadows race eastward up the valley.

In my mind, I saw the boy then turn toward the mine buildings for he knew that his father would soon shut down the sawmill and come home to supper.

I left the ghost of that boy under that gnarly old pine, and as long as he remains there neither my age nor the depth of water over my old home can alter the fact that my childhood is but a memory away. (Bird n.d.:237-242)

Suggestions

The brief field survey of the town of Melones, and the archival and consultant data which the Ethnographic Survey was able to collect, indicates that the town is an important historical resource. Certain features of this resource are important for historical and anthropological research. The following suggestions are identified and data retrieval techniques which would bear most directly on the important research questions concerning the town are given.

1. Melones (Robinson's Ferry) dates from the earliest days of the California Gold Rush and should be granted the same status as other historic Gold Rush towns. Robinson's Ferry served as a link between Sonora and the mines of Calaveras County. Further, there is firm evidence of early (1860), permanent structures in the area. Although some of these have been mapped, a thorough archaeological survey of the area is necessary. Further, exploration of these early sites would contribute to knowledge of the demographic features of the early gold camp. Archival and field data indicate that the early ethnic composition of the town included Mexican miners, Italian emigrants from northern Italy and emigrants from the eastern United States. Archaeological exploration of the sites would help determine the extent of this early population and perhaps the nature of its origin.

2. Early mining structures in the town of Melones are important resources for the understanding of the development of hard-rock mining techniques in the Mother Lode. Several consultants remember these techniques very well, and a combination of this field data and a systematic exploration of the early mines in the area, such as the Adelaide Mine, would produce a useful body of data concerning early mining.

3. Little is known of the development of company towns in the gold mining area of California. The growth and demise of Melones is similar to that of other towns in the Mother Lode which were dependent on one or a very few large mining corporations for subsistence. Melones represents an opportunity for the study of the pattern of this company-related growth. Students of California history are becoming increasingly interested in the relationships among the numerous groups which formed the population of early California. In particular, the nature of inter-ethnic relations has begun to draw the attention of these scholars. The data

available at Melones concerning the sequence of ethnic group immigration, residential integration or segregation, the position of ethnic groups as a labor resource for the mines and the ultimate fate of these groups would aid this research. The first step toward the retrieval of such data is an elaboration of the map presented in this chapter. Ground features must be precisely mapped. In addition, extensive consultant time should be spent identifying the nature of the remains or the locations of these former structures. A number of consultants remain who are knowledgeable about the town so that a precise map, extended chronologically from the time of the Gold Rush to the present, is entirely possible. Changes in population, ethnic composition and residential patterns should become apparent from such an effort. (Recommendations concerning the study of ethnic groups in the entire Project Area are made in Chapter 17 and should be consulted for applications of the extended survey proposed above.)

Melones Town Survey

A brief ground survey of the town was undertaken in December, 1975 (Map 1). Two members of the Ethnographic Survey, Doris Johannes and Clinton Blount accompanied Ted Bird on a "tour" of the town. During this walk, Mr. Bird identified many of the sites where structures were located. Mr. Bird was born and raised in the town and was familiar with it in the period from 1915-1924. Ted Bird's older brother Milo had recently visited the town and helped his brother prepare a rough sketch map of the town as he remembered it. Milo came to Melones in 1903 and remembered the town from an earlier date than his brother. The tour of the town then, covered a period roughly from 1905 to 1925 when the Bird family moved to Angels Camp.

Each site location was mapped on a field map prepared from a United States Geological Survey 7-1/2' topographic map. Sites were placed on the map with the aid of a compass only; accuracy of the map is therefore limited. In many cases the remains of a site were covered with vegetation or had been washed away. In these cases the location of the site was only approximated, and the sites recorded are of a generalized nature only. For example, the house belonging to Percy Wood was recorded as Site 3, however, the features which were probably associated with his home such as outbuildings were not located on the map. The map represents the town of Melones in the broadest possible sense, and a more detailed map of the subtle

features of the town should be the first task of any future research concerning the town.

The sites located by Mr. Bird, with the aid of his brother's map, are numbered 1 through 89. Each of these sites was recorded while actually in the field with Mr. Bird, although many of the sites were not successfully located on the ground. In addition to the sites supplied by Mr. Bird, two other consultants were contacted for information about the town structures. Lyle Scott, an independent archaeologist and historian from Sonora, had undertaken research on the town of Melones in much the same manner as the Ethnographic Survey. Mr. Scott had walked the area and discussed the town with several former residents. He drew a map from the results of his investigation. Notes were compared, and the additional sites retrieved from Mr. Scott's map are those numbered 90-99. Since these were added at a later date, and the original numbering order has been retained, the 90-99 sites are interspersed among all other sites. Another consultant, Howard Canevaro, who had also grown up in the town, added several sites to the map. Although he was unable to go to the town site, he did have a vivid memory of its layout. Sites described by Mr. Canevaro are numbered 100-109. The remaining four sites, 110-113 are ones which for some reason were not previously numbered.

Table 4

Melones Town Survey Sites

#1. Business. A cement foundation indicates the remains of Wood's general store and service station, built about 1920 by Percy Wood and/or his father, Harvey Wood. According to one consultant the store sold "small items" such as milk and beer. She noted that it was operating in 1924 and remained open until the closing of the mine (possibly the 1942 closing). According to another consultant much of the produce sold in the store was supplied by local ranchers and gardeners. At one time the post office was on one end of the store. The gas pump was located in front of the store. (Note: Harvey Wood had a service station previous to this one which was located near the Stanislaus River close to the old Melones Bridge. This station, possibly the first in the area, was razed during the construction of the old Melones dam [mid 1920's]. The area has now been disturbed by subsequent construction and has not been mapped.)

1920 - 1942

#2. Residence. This site is the home of Mrs. Harvey Wood, known as "Grandma Wood." The structure was probably built by Harvey Wood in the early years after the Rush (ca. 1860?). Consultants remembered "Grandma Wood" as the only occupant of the house. The home burned in 1950 during a large brush fire. According to one consultant, there were several types of fruit trees around the house as well as a great deal of shrubbery consisting mostly of oleander bushes. Consultants also remembered that there were several willow trees near the house and that these trees had been brought from England (these can be seen in the plates of Robinson's Ferry/Melones in the text of this report). The house was reported to be a large, two story home with at least twelve rooms.

#3. Residence. This is the location of the home of Percy Wood. This house was next to and shared a common lawn with "Grandma Wood's" home (site #2). Consultants remembered it as a large home which was kept in immaculate condition. They also recalled that there was a garage associated with the house. Percy Wood was one of the first persons in town to own an automobile. Rose-bushes lined a fence along the road in front of the house, and there were also [still there] olive trees in the front yard. Some cement foundation is still visible at the site. Howard Canevaro remarked that the flood waters of 1908 nearly inundated Percy Wood's home. Mr. Wood died in 1944 and the home was ultimately destroyed in 1950 by the same fire which destroyed the home of Grandma Wood.

#4. Residence. This was one of the Percy Wood rental homes (see site #'s 5, 6, 97, 98, 102, 103) located on the southeast side of the road. Ted Bird remembered that the McLaughlin family lived here at one time, although this and the other rental homes probably had numerous residents over the years.

#5. Residence. Another of the Percy Wood rental homes was located here. (See site #4 for additional information and #'s 6, 97, 98, 102, 103.) Ted Bird remembered that the Moiles, a Cornish family, lived here.

#6. Residence. Another of the Percy Wood rental homes which was, at one time occupied by the Botto family. (See also #4 for additional information; also #'s 5, 97, 98, 102, 103.)

#7. Residence. One of the six Percy Wood rentals located on the northwest side of the main street of town (see also site #'s 8, 9, 10, 105, 106). This residence was occupied by the Libby family from 1930-1955. Harry Libby was foreman of the cyanide plant during the second opening of the mine. Mrs. Libby continued to reside in Melones after the death of her husband and the closing (1942) of the mine.

#8. Residence. This rental home, also owned by Percy Wood, was occupied for a period by the Bescaluppi family (see also site #'s 7, 9, 10, 105, 106).

#9. Residence. One of the Percy Wood rentals which at one time was occupied by the Carthy family (see also #'s 7, 8, 10, 105, 106).

#10. Residence. The Wood rental occupied by the Bird family when they first moved to Melones in 1901 (see also #'s 7, 8, 9, 105, 106).

#11. Business. Site of the Calaveras Gold Mining Company Boardinghouse. The boardinghouse consisted of a kitchen and dining room located downstairs and a number of rooms which were located upstairs. The boardinghouse was for the use of company employees only. The remains of the building include a cement wall which was part of a storage vault for vegetables. Several consultants said Mable Buckley ran the Company boardinghouse (also referred to as the Clark Hotel or the hotel boardinghouse) until the early 1930's when Mrs. Bernasconi took it over. Others said Mrs. Buckley rented it from the Mining Company. Another consultant said her sister, who had worked for Mrs. Buckley at one time, took over the boardinghouse from her in 1924. This person had two Chinese cooks for the ninety boarders she served at the hotel. It is said that Mrs. Buckley's boardinghouse was "really an old fashioned boarding-house with long tables serving family style meals." The patrons were charged for room and board, about $30 a month--"there were no rooms for anyone but boarders there." It is said that the hotel "served delicious food." This building was torn down after the mine closed. Prior to the construction of the boardinghouse this was the site of the first of three stores operated by Cecconello (see also #15/17, 32). The store, a two-story building owned by Percy Wood, burned, and the foundation was subsequently torn down. The Calaveras Mining Company then built the rooming house here. According to one consultant Cecconello had the largest rooming house before the hotel was built.

#12. Business. The earliest known use (before 1910) of the structure on this site was as a livery stable with horses in the basement, hay in the loft and wagons on the first floor. The stables, which one consultant refers to as in a semi-basement, faced the rear of the building. About 1911 Tramontrini and Canepa moved in and started a grocery store here. The store changed hands: it "was owned by different people at different times." The Raggio brothers, Vince and Ernie, and their brother-in-law Ben Carlo ran and owned the store from 1919 to 1924. Theirs was a general merchandise store and carried staples, clothing, fuel, stoves and mining supplies. They outfitted the miners at Melones and gave them credit for groceries "up to a point." According to Howard Canevaro, a consultant who was employed by the Raggios and Carlo, this store had also been owned by the Wood family at one time.

#13. Business. The building at this location was reported to have been the first location of a saloon owned by Percy Wood. It was a wooden building with a watering trough located in front of which "was a good place to dunk the drunks." Mr. Wood, who did not drink, hired someone else to run his saloon. The building was later reported to be the location of a pool hall operated by Bill Hinkelmann. Some drinking went on in the pool halls (see also site #14). According to one consultant, this was "near beer" during Prohibition. Other consultants claimed these businesses were also the scene of bootlegging and gambling during Prohibition. The card games were supposedly held in the back of the pool halls in separate rooms. According to some consultants, there was also a restaurant here (others denied this).

#14. Business. Directly across the street from site No. 13 was another pool hall owned by Lee Abbott. This pool hall, according to one consultant, was the scene of much gambling. Abbott's pool hall was unique in that a barber operated in the back room.

#15/17. Business. This building owned by Percy Wood was the site of Cecconello's second store (#15), store storage room (#17) and saloon (no separate number given) (see also stores #11, 32). The building had fig trees in front. The store was partitioned down the middle. One side was for the sale of dry goods and had clothing "hung in long rows from overhead beams." The other side had "a conglomeration of groceries and utensils commonly sold in country stores." The stone walls, still partially standing, formed the walls of the storage room where Cecconello kept his vegetables. A post office was located in front of the store, and there was a saloon in the rear. According to Milo Bird, Mr. Cecconnello wanted to have a U.S. post office in his store but could not have one in the same building as a saloon, so he put the saloon at the rear of the store with an alley way between the store and saloon. One could step out of the store into the saloon. (See plate 19 for remains of brick wall of storage room.)

#16. Community Structure. Site 16 was a hard-dirt basketball court located next door to Lee Abbott's pool hall. In addition to recreational use, the court was also utilized for occasional public meetings. One consultant remembered that a speaker's stand was set up on the court for one occasion.

#17. Business. See site #15.

#18. Residence. Location of a home which Ted Bird believed was owned by the mining company.

#19. Residence. Another home which Ted Bird believed was owned by the mining company.

#20. Bunkhouse. A complex of four bunkhouses stood here. One consultant recalled that the bunkhouses had twelve rooms each. Another said that there were only ten men per bunkhouse and that each person had his own room with a wash basin in it. The rooms lined a central hallway in each building. Pete Vonich said that during the 1918 flu epidemic one of the bunkhouses was used as a hospital.

#21. Residence. A residence owned by the mining company. The Pete Vonich family were once residents here.

#22. Residence. Site of the Bert Bean home. The residence was originally a tent and later a permanent structure.

#23. Community Structure. This location housed the community hall. Although it was used as a gathering place by the entire town, the building was owned by the mining company. The hall was a long, narrow building which was set back on the main street of town. Inside, the hall had a dance floor 80 feet by 60 feet (one consultant remembered the building as being 100 feet long). There was also a stage, with three curtains as well as benches for seating.

#24. Residence. A company-owned residence located adjacent to the site of the community hall. The house is still standing, however, the consultant did not know who had occupied this house in the past.

#25. Business. This was a small building which "looked like a residence." According to Ted Bird, "at different times there were different things that went on there." At one time, he said, there was a shoemaker doing business out of this building. Ted Bird also located this structure to the northeast of the Cecconello store (sites 15/17) and said these two structures were separated by a small alley where, as a youth, he witnessed a stabbing. Another consultant located an adobe structure (see site #92) immediately northeast of the Cecconello store. There is also the possibility that sites #25 and #92 are in fact one and the same structure, or possibly they are an example of serial construction at approximately the same location.

#26. Residence. Location of the home owned by Wallace Wilson, schoolmaster in Melones (ca. 1915). Mr. Wilson later became the Superintendent of Schools in Amador County. There are no visible remains of this building today.

#27. Mine Structure. The Adelaide Mine was owned and operated by Percy Wood. There is some indication that Harvey Wood was associated with the mine in earlier days. The remains include a shaft opening which has been filled with trash in recent years. There is also a small wooden building near the mine entrance, use unknown. The mine operation was powered by a water system constructed by Percy Wood. Wood built a small diversion dam approximately two miles upstream on Coyote Creek and piped water to the mine. Power at the mine was generated by a water wheel.

#28. Residence. Ted Bird remembered a residence in this area although he did not know if it was company or privately owned. He believed there was a shoemaker's shop in this structure.

#29. Residence. A small cabin which belonged to Charlie Trallinger. A consultant described C. Trallinger as "the worst looking derelict you ever saw in your life." Trallinger was reportedly the town drunk, but was liked by all the children in town. Trallinger would bring a five-pound bag of peanuts to the movies in the community hall of Melones and would throw these out to the children while the projectionist changed reels.

#30. Residence. A company-owned residence occupied at one time by the Dorroh family. One consultant remembered that another home located close to the Dorroh residence was occupied by the McFarland family.

#31. Business. Part of the Cecconello complex (with sites 32 and 33), this building was owned by Louie Cecconello. The building, set back off the road next to Cecconello's store (#32), served as a bunkhouse for miners. The bunkhouse had twenty rooms around 1913-1914 when they were painted by a consultant. Several "Indian skeletons" were unearthed when Cecconello had the area excavated for the foundation of this building. The consultant described the soil here as "very rocky," so the building was constructed of wood built on the rock itself. The San Joaquin Light and Power Company has hauled in rock and gravel for a retaining wall, thus, this area has been covered over, said the consultant (for additional Cecconello locations see site #'s 11, 15/17, 57).

#32. Business, Residence. Part of the Cecconello complex (with sites 31 and 33) owned by Louie Cecconello, this building served as the store. There were three apartments above the store. The building was set back off the road next to the bunkhouse (site 31). Another consultant referred to this building as "rooms above a store." This store remained in operation after 1926 when the mine closed. According to one consultant, the store sold liquor. This store (the third of the Cecconello stores - see sites 11, 15/17) remained in operation after 1926 when the mine closed. Louie Cecconello died in Melones, and his wife took over the store. After Mrs. Cecconello's death, her sons (from a previous marriage) sold the business and "left the country." According to one consultant, the Cecconellos sold bootleg liquor from their store; they also sold beer and wine.

#33. Business, Residence. Part of Cecconello's complex (with sites #'s 31, 32), this building was owned by Louie Cecconello. The Cecconello home was situated at ground level here, and the Lillie Restaurant was in the basement. The restaurant was run by an Italian named Ernest Lillie, and it served Italian food. According to Ted Bird, it was a "famous place" for the Italian miners to eat. "Lillie cooked the Italian way, pure olive oil and grated up garlic. When he cooked a steak, it floated in olive oil, with garlic and parsley. He knew how to make raviolis, polenta--real fine Italian cooking." This building was still standing in 1924.

#34. Mine Structure. Location of the 100-stamp mill of the Melones Mine. This stamp mill was used during the first period of mine operation, however, it was replaced in the 1930's by a smaller stamp mill located to the southwest of Highway 49. The stamp mill remains include an elaborate cement foundation which lies against the hill in Melones. Above the stamp mill was an ore bin and crusher which broke up the large rocks. When these quartz rocks were approximately one inch in diameter, they passed down the hill from the crusher to the stamp mill by way of a chute. The stamp mill was composed of 100 stamps which were steel bars, ten feet long and four inches in diameter. These stamps pounded against an iron "foot" 110 times per minute. The small quartz rocks were crushed to a sand-like consistency. This sand was then passed over tables which had been treated with mercury. The remaining sand was then passed through a flume to a tank where it was treated with cyanide to remove the finer particles of gold. The large cylindrical foundation of the cyanide tank is still visible next to the road.

#35. Residence. A company-owned home which was at one time the residence of Lou Gooding, an assayer for the Melones Mining Company.

#36. Mine Structure. Sulphide plant. Sulphides or "fool's gold" contain a sufficient amount of gold to be worthy of treatment. The sulphide cubes which occurred in quartz veins were ground to a fine powder in roller mills. The gold was then extracted from this powder.

#37. Mine Structure. This powerhouse was used to generate electricity for the mining operation as well as for the town itself. Power was produced by a generator driven by river water. A small dam was constructed on the Stanislaus River upstream from the town of Melones, and from this, water was diverted into a flume which led downstream. The water was carried across Coyote Creek in a redwood pipe six feet in diameter. The pipe was used instead of an open flume to maintain the pressure needed to operate the generator. The large silo-like structure is a release valve for this pipe. Should the power plant be unable to accept the water from the pipe, the increase in pressure would burst the pipe. The silo-like structure was used to drain off the excess water. The power from the plant was used primarily in the mine although residents of Melones were able to purchase power from the Mining Company for their personal use at a price per light bulb per month.

surge tank

#38. Mine Structure. Remains of the retort plant. At this plant the mercury-gold amalgam was heated, resulting in mercury vapor and pure gold. The mercury was reclaimed in a still, and the gold was melted into bricks. Some foundations remain at this site today.

#39. Mine Structure. Location of the transformer building which was associated with the company powerhouse.

#40. Residence. This company-owned house was at one time the residence of Mark Latham, Superintendent of the Cyanide plant.

#41. Residence. Ted Bird remembered that the home located here was occupied by a woman. The house burned down in a fire which Mr. Bird thought was caused by the wood stove.

#42. Business, Residence. This is the probable location of the Ah Lee laundry as well as the residence of Ah Lee, Ah Yet and Ah Tong. One consultant claimed Ah Yet and Ah Tong to be "about 100 years old" at the time of their deaths, ca. 1925. Ah Yet subsequently built a new structure, site #43, in the immediate vicinity. The structure was described by one consultant as being a privately-owned, board-and-batten cabin with a dirt floor. Floor dimensions were described as approximately 12 feet square. One consultant said the Chinese houses were "open" and "they could see into them." This description refers to the period when the three men resided together in the structure. One consultant attributed the destruction of the building to a fire, date unknown, but obviously before 1925. Ah Tong was the sole occupant at the time and managed to salvage only two buckskin bags of gold. This would lead one to assume that Ah Tong's personal belongings (possibly Chinese artifacts) might be salvaged through excavation.

#43. Residence. It is reported by Milo Bird that this house was constructed by Ah Yet, ca. 1906-1907. Descriptions of the structural material include boxes, cans, bottles, "junk" and five-gallon oil drums. The house had a dirt floor. Destruction of this building is attributed to its caving in on the owner and killing him, a condition that went unnoticed by residents of Melones "for several days."

#44. Business. Lee Abbott's store, located at this site, was operated by Mrs. Abbott and was said by Ted Bird to sell "all sorts of knicknacks. . . ." He also referred to it as a "five and dime" store. Dates of operation are lacking although one consultant, Howard Canevaro, did not include it as one of the stores in operation in the 1920's.

#45. Residence. One of the company-owned homes of Melones. A consultant remembered this home being occupied by the Gomez family and Thrower family at different times. The house is still standing today.

#46. Community Structure. The Melones elementary school was located on a hillside near the 100-stamp mill. The school originally had one room, however, Howard Canevaro remembered that around 1950 the school was expanded to two rooms. Ted Bird remarked that since the hillside was so steep there was no room for a playground.

#47. Residence. A company-owned residence once occupied by the Allison family.

#48. Residence. The Canevaro family lived for many years in this company-owned house. Mr. Canevaro's father was foreman of the mill from 1897 until World War I. From World War I until 1924, the elder Mr. Canevaro was in charge of the powerhouse. Mr. Canevaro remembers that as residents in a company house, they never were required to pay rent, electricity or water.

#49. Post Office. This is one of the many locations of the Melones post office. The post office had been originally located in the Ferry Building and later in the Cecconello store (site 15/17). The post office was then moved by Frank Martell to this site which was his home. One consultant remembers that Bea Carthy ran the post office at one time. In later years the post office was located in a small shack which was transported around town on a sled.

#50. Residence. The Carthy home which is still standing was located next door to the Post Office. It was a company-owned building.

#51. Residence. This company-owned residence was once occupied by the Ortiz family.

#52. Residence. This company-owned residence was once occupied by the Kathan family.

#53. Residence. A company-owned home once occupied by the Caesar Peirano family. Peirano was the mine electrician. Consultants remember that the Peirano home was a gathering place for social events in the town.

#54. Business. The train depot is one of a few structures located on the east side of Coyote Creek. According to Ted Bird, the location is presently marked by a clump of live oaks. According to one consultant, at one time everything came into town by railroad because trucks could not negotiate the curves. He said they also carried all the materials for the old Melones Dam. Another consultant claimed that railroads in the area were operating full blast around 1915.

#55. Residence. A company-owned residence which was once occupied by the Gomez family.

#56. Residence. The private residence of the Lillie family. Mr. Lillie ran a restaurant in the town of Melones (site #33). The stone walls of his home are still standing beside the road and lining the road bank.

#57. Residence, Business. The site of the Winkler home, this location was owned by the Pendola family. The building had at one time, "before it became a house," been rented by Louie Cecconello who had a restaurant here known as Cecconello's "Riverside Inn." Mr. Cecconello, an immigrant from Italy, spoke no English when he came to Melones and started this restaurant. He may have sold liquor at this site but this is not known for certain. The stone walls to this house are still standing lining the bank beside the road. (For other Cecconello sites, see sites #11, 15/17, 31, 33.)

#58. Residence. A company-owned house once occupied by the Chris Elich family.

#59. Residence. This private residence belonged to the Haywood family.

#60. Residence. A residence which probably belonged to an Indian woman named Lilly. Consultants remembered vaguely that an Indian woman had lived in this area although only one consultant remembered the name.

#61. Residence. This company-owned residence was once occupied by the Archie Stevenot family. The house was standing until recently when vandals began to dismantle it. Consultants remember the Stevenot house as one of the "nicer homes in town." The remains of this home include cement with inset cobble columns, cement walkways and a large portion of the cement foundation. The house remains stand very close to highway 49.

#62. Mine Structure. Location of the office of the Melones Mining Company. The only remaining part of the structure is the cement vault.

#63. Residence. A company-owned house occupied by the Lorings. William J. Loring was the head of the Calaveras Gold Mining Company. This house was remembered by consultants as being extremely beautiful. One consultant remembered that it cost $25,000 to build in the early 1930's. The house had several black fig trees in front and a large (70 feet by 100 feet) garden at the rear of the house.

#64. Residence. A residence owned by the Melones Mining Company. Ted Bird remembers that several different families occupied it over the years.

#65. Residence. A company-owned residence constructed for the Bird family after a house in which they had been living in the Central section of Melones burned down (see site #10). The Bird family did considerable landscaping. The eucalyptus trees are still visible at the site.

#66. Mine structure. Location of the assay office for the Melones Mining Company.

#67. Residence. A company-owned residence once occupied by the McDonald family.

#68. Residence. A company-owned residence occupied by several different families through the years, however, consultants did not remember any of their names.

#69. Residence. A company-owned home at one time occupied by the Chris Jaich family.

#70. Residence. A company-owned residence once occupied by the Maroon family.

#71. Residence. A company-owned residence once occupied by the Foppiano family.

#72. Residence. Site of the "Devereaux Mansion," constructed by the first owner of the Melones Mining Company and his son who acted as Mine Manager. The home was built on a promontory from which the entire mining operation could be viewed. The structure has been vandalized, however, parts of the house frame and foundation are still intact. (Note: The Devereaux family was not in control of the mine during the 1930's and the mansion was used at that time by the Calaveras Mining Company to entertain Company stock holders and mine officials.)

#73. Residence. A company residence built close to the entrance to the mine. It was occupied by the Gerard family. Mr. Gerard was mine foreman in charge of all underground operations.

#74. Residence. A privately-owned residence, originally a tent and later a permanent structure. Ted Bird did not remember the owner's name.

#75. Private Recreation. Ted Bird remembered that Devereaux constructed a single tennis court in this area. Mr. Bird believes it to have been the only tennis court in the county at the time.

#76. Mine Structure. The transformer building associated with the many mine structures in the area. Part of the structure is still standing.

#77. Mine Structure. Site of the Mine Compressor. The compressor was used for ventilating the air in the mine shafts. The foundation of the compressor building is still easily located.

#78. Mine Structure. The main entrance tunnel to the Melones Mine. This entrance was closely associated with several other mine structures discussed below. Tracks led out of the mine entrance and through the structures to the ore bin which fed the 100-stamp mill.

#79. Mine Structure. Blacksmith's shop where tools and materials were fabricated and repaired. Part of the foundation is still visible today.

#80. Residence. The Mine Superintendent is thought to have lived in this company-owned residence at one time. The residence was located near the entrance of the mine.

#81. Mine Structure, Residence. Location of a large two-story barn where the mine kept its horse teams. Living quarters were also provided in the barn for a teamster.

#82. Mine Structure. A small room was located near the entrance of the mine which was used as a treatment room for the miners' medical emergencies. Ted Bird recalled that some medical equipment was stored in this room, however, there was no permanent attendant on duty there.

#83. Mine Structure. A planing mill used to finish rough lumber cut at the sawmill (site #86). Ted Bird remembers that this lumber was used in the mine for mine construction as well as for residential structures in the town. Ted Bird also recalled that the planing mill was responsible for finished carpentry.

#84. Mine Structure. This sharpening plant re-shaped and re-sharpened a wide variety of bits used for drilling in the mine. Part of the foundation is visible today.

#85. Mine Structure. The miners' change room. Ted Bird remembers that miners changed their clothes and showered immediately after leaving work because of the strong odors of sweat and gas from working in the mine. Only after they had showered and changed would the miners go into town.

#86. Mine Structure. This sawmill was used to cut rough lumber for use in the mine. Ted Bird remembered that the mill was only in operation when wood was needed. The mill was operated by whichever crew was working in the mine and needed lumber for that shift.

#87. Mine Structure. A storage room for mine equipment.

#88. Residence. A ranch, located on the west side of Coyote Creek, occupied by the Pendola family. The Pendolas first came to the Melones area in the mid 1850's. The ranch buildings are still standing today, and the ranch is being operated by a descendent of the Pendola family.

#89. Residence. The Whitacker Ranch was located along Coyote Creek and southeast of the Pendola Ranch. The ranch was the location of the practice baseball field used by the "Melones Maulers."

#90. Baseball Field. Site of the baseball field located on the Whitacker property. The field was used for practice and probably for league games against other Mother Lode teams.

#91. Flagpole. Location of the Flagpole which stood in the central area of the town of Melones.

#92. Residence. An adobe structure. Many consultants referred to or remembered adobe dwellings in Melones. One consultant believed that these adobes dated from the early Spanish occupation of the area during the Gold Rush. Another consultant mentioned that in later years (ca. 1900) Mexican families would choose to live in these structures. Ted Bird remembered that the Jaich family occupied one of these adobes, probably site #93. According to Lyle Scott, there is a great possibility that adobe structures persisted in the town until recent years. The structures may have been covered with more conventional building materials, thus disguising them (see also site #93).

#93. Residence. This residence is also an adobe and was inhabited at one time by the Jaich family (See Plate 10 for a photograph of the adobe. See also site #92 for further details).

#94. Mine Structure. Possible location of a second assay office associated with the Melones Mining Company.

#95. Residence. A company-owned residence. Consultants could not name the occupants of this home.

#96. Residence. A company-owned house. Consultants were unable to remember the names of its residents.

#97. Residence. According to information gathered by Lyle Scott, this is a Percy Wood rental home (see also site #'s 4, 5, 6, 98, 102, 103).

#98. Residence. According to information gathered by Lyle Scott, this was the Percy Wood rental home occupied by the Ohead family (see also site #'s 4, 5, 6, 97, 102, 103).

#99. Mine Structure. Location of a lumber yard which was probably associated with the saw and planing mills. It is not known how extensive this lumber yard was.

#100. Business. The ferry building constructed by Harvey Wood. It was used in association with the operation of "Robinson's Ferry" which was run by Harvey Wood. The function of this building is unknown.

#101. Residence. A residence which belonged to the Wood family. It is not known if this structure was used prior to or concurrently with sites #2 and 3 which belonged to Harvey Wood and his son, Percy Wood, respectively.

#102. Residence. According to Haward Canevaro this was probably a rental home owned by Percy Wood (see also site #'s 4, 5, 6, 97, 98, 103).

#103. Residence. According to Howard Canevaro this was probably a rental home owned by Percy Wood (see also site #'s 4, 5, 6, 97, 98, 102).

#104. Business, Residence. A shoemaker's shop which operated at approximately 1900. It is not known whether this was associated with the cobbler shop at site #28.

#105. Residence. One of the Percy Wood rental homes (see also site #'s 7, 8, 9, 10, 106).

#106. Residence. A Percy Wood's rental home (see also site #'s 7, 8, 9. 10, 105).

#107. Residence. "Nigger" Green's cabin. "Nigger" Green worked in the mill and was supposedly the only Black to have worked for the Melones Mining Company. Consultants remembered his living in this area in the period ca. 1903-05. He kept some livestock including at least one cow, two pigs and fifty or more chickens.

#108. Business. A boardinghouse utilized by Mexicans.

#109. Railroad trestle. Leaning cement pilings from a trestle which was part of the Sierra Railway lines. The trestle went across the Stanislaus, then continued up Coyote Creek towards the Pendola Ranch where it crossed the creek and came back towards the school house in Melones. The remains of the trestle can be seen in several of the aerial photographs of Melones.

#110. Flume Pilings. These pilings supported a flume which carried water to the generating plant operated by the mine. For details see site #37.

#111. Mine Structure. Tanks used during the cyanide process. Fine quartz sand was pumped into the tanks where it was mixed with cyanide. This process extracted extremely fine particles of gold which otherwise would have been lost. Originally the debris from this process was dumped into the Stanislaus River. In later years it was shipped across Coyote Creek and piled on top of "Cemetery Hill." These large quartz-sand tailing piles can be seen in many of the aerial photographs of the Melones area included in this report. For further details on the gold extraction machinery and process see site #34.

#112. Mine Structure. Stamp mill used during the second opening of the mine (ca. 1930's) and replaced the one hundred stamp mill (site #34) which had been used during the earlier operation. Ore was brought from the mine and conveyed over highway 49 to the top of the mill. This mill had thirty stamps although it is not known if there was an associated cyanide plant. For further information on the Cyanide process see site #34. This mill was destroyed by fire in the late 1940's.

#113. Mine Structure. Site of a large storage tank which presumably held water. This was located on an historic photograph and appears to have been associated with the thirty-stamp mill (site #112).

NOTE:

Last minute information indicates that the 100-Stamp mill may actually have been located as much as fifty to seventy-five yards south of the site indicated on the map. It was probably located at the site referred to on the town survey as Site 27. Because the structures were large and visible from many points in the area, this error has resulted in the misplacement of several structures. The locations of these sites were fixed in relation to the larger structures, and are therefore proportionately misplaced. This error has affected the placement of site locations in the "central" portion of town. Among these sites are numbers 111 (southwest along the main street) to approximately 11 or 14. A corresponding portion of the map on the opposite side of the road is also affected. The error was discovered by Roberta Greenwood, Archaeologist, when she attempted to utilize the above map during a field survey. Other areas of the map do not appear to suffer from the mapping error. It should be remembered, however, that the map was intended only to fix the approximate location of town structures as recalled by field consultants. The suggestion that an extensive precise map of the town be constructed must be reiterated here.

PLATE 10

Adobe at Melones. This adobe structure located in the central area of Melones was probably constructed in the early 1850's, and was still standing in the 1920's. The literature indicates that adobe structures were present around Robinson's Ferry in the early days of that settlement. Consultants were unable to identify early occupants of the adobe, however, they believe that the Jaich family may have occupied it after the turn of the century. The structure is no longer standing.

From the collection of Lyle Scott, Sonora, Date unknown

PLATE 11

Robinson's Ferry. Pictured are the ferry operation, the Wood's family home, and several unidentified structures. The large home in the center of the photograph is the home of "Grandma Wood." The structure to the right of this is the Percy Wood home. The photograph appears to have been taken around the turn of the century.

From the collection of Lyle Scott, Sonora

PLATE 12

Robinson's Ferry. A view of the ferry operation and the Wood family homes.

From the collection of Lyle Scott, Sonora, Date unknown

PLATE 13

The "Old" Melones Bridge. This bridge was completed after several false starts in 1914. The bridge effectively replaced historic Robinson's Ferry. The ferry was located to the northeast (left) of the old bridge. A cable was strung across the river and attached to a bolt which had been sunk in the rock outcropping visible in the extreme left of the photograph. The bridge collapsed in 1958 after which the bridge seen in the background was constructed.

New Melones Ethnographic Research Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 14

Most of the settlement of Melones is visible in this aerial shot taken from the southwest. Highway 49 can be seen crossing the Stanislaus River in the lower right portion of the photograph, while the main street of the town angles off from the highway and then winds through the central portion of the photograph. The large, cleared area below the highway in the right central portion of the photograph is the location of the 30-stamp mill used during the 1930's, at the time of the second opening of the mine. The peninsula of land above the bridge is the location of the old bridge and Robinson's Ferry (the first important feature in the area). In later years, as the town became increasingly dependent on the mining company, it spread along the Calaveras side of the Stanislaus River. As can be seen in the photograph, some structures remain. For the most part, however, the town has been neglected, burned and vandalized out of existence. The only remains are rock walls and, on rare occasions, a foundation or partial structure. The roadbed in the lower left portion of the photograph is the location of the Sierra Railroad right of way between Angels Camp and Melones.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 15

This is a west aerial view of the northern portion of the town of Melones. Visible are the remains of the 100-stamp mill (the step-like foundations in the upper left portion of the photograph). Also visible are the remains of the power plant which served the mine and the town. The white chimney structure was a section of this plant. From left to right are the Abbott house, Carthy house and the Peirano home. The trestle remains in the lower left served the Sierra Railway. The smaller pilings visible in the central portion of the photograph were used as a support for the flume which fed the power plant. The white sand area in the lower right is a portion of the cyanide/quartz tailings from the Carson Hill mine. This was deposited in the 1930's when the company was restricted from depositing tailings in the river. The Stanislaus and the mouth of Coyote Creek are visible in the left central portion of the photograph.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 16

This is a southeast aerial view of the mineyard area of Melones. The Stanislaus River is visible in the upper right-hand portion of the photograph. The entrance to the mine is in the lower left portion of the photograph, although it is not visible. Several mine structures were located on the flat area which extends diagonally from the lower left portion of the photograph. Particularly visible are the maze-like foundations in the center. These supported the air compressor which served the mine. Also located in the immediate vicinity were the blacksmith shop, sharpening plant, planing mill, change room, hospital room and a sawmill. The locations of these can be found on the Melones Town Survey Map. Ore from the mine was brought out of the mine through the mine entrance. It was then taken on tracks (some of which are still visible) around the curved flat area and deposited in an ore bin which fed the 100-stamp mill. Highway 49 is visible in the lower right portion of the photograph and the main street of town winds through the top portion of the photograph.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 17

The Peirano home, Melones (Site 53). The Peirano home was constructed by the Melones Mining Company. Consultants maintain that it was a typical company home. The structure is a frame house with board and batten exterior walls and no interior wall. The homes were constructed for mine workers and their families with the status of shift boss, foreman or higher. The Peirano home was occupied until recently, but has been heavily damaged by vandals.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 18

Rock retaining walls marked the front boundary of two homesites in Melones. The walls are located at the northern end of the main street near the present entrance to the Ghiglieri property.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, November 1975

PLATE 19

Cecconello's storeroom. This is the rear entrance and wall of the storeroom of Cecconello's store (Site 15, Melones Town Survey). The room served as a storeroom for the store, and one consultant remarked that Cecconello kept vegetables here. The walls surround a deep cellar (5 - 6 feet deep). This wall, according to one consultant, is an example of the type of rock work done by some of the Italians who had settled in Melones. There is some indication that the storeroom was a separate structure prior to the construction of the remainder of the store. This storeroom is all that now remains on the site.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 20

Melones movie set for the film, Covered Wagon, was located one-half mile downstream from the town of Melones.

From the collection of Lyle Scott,
Sonora

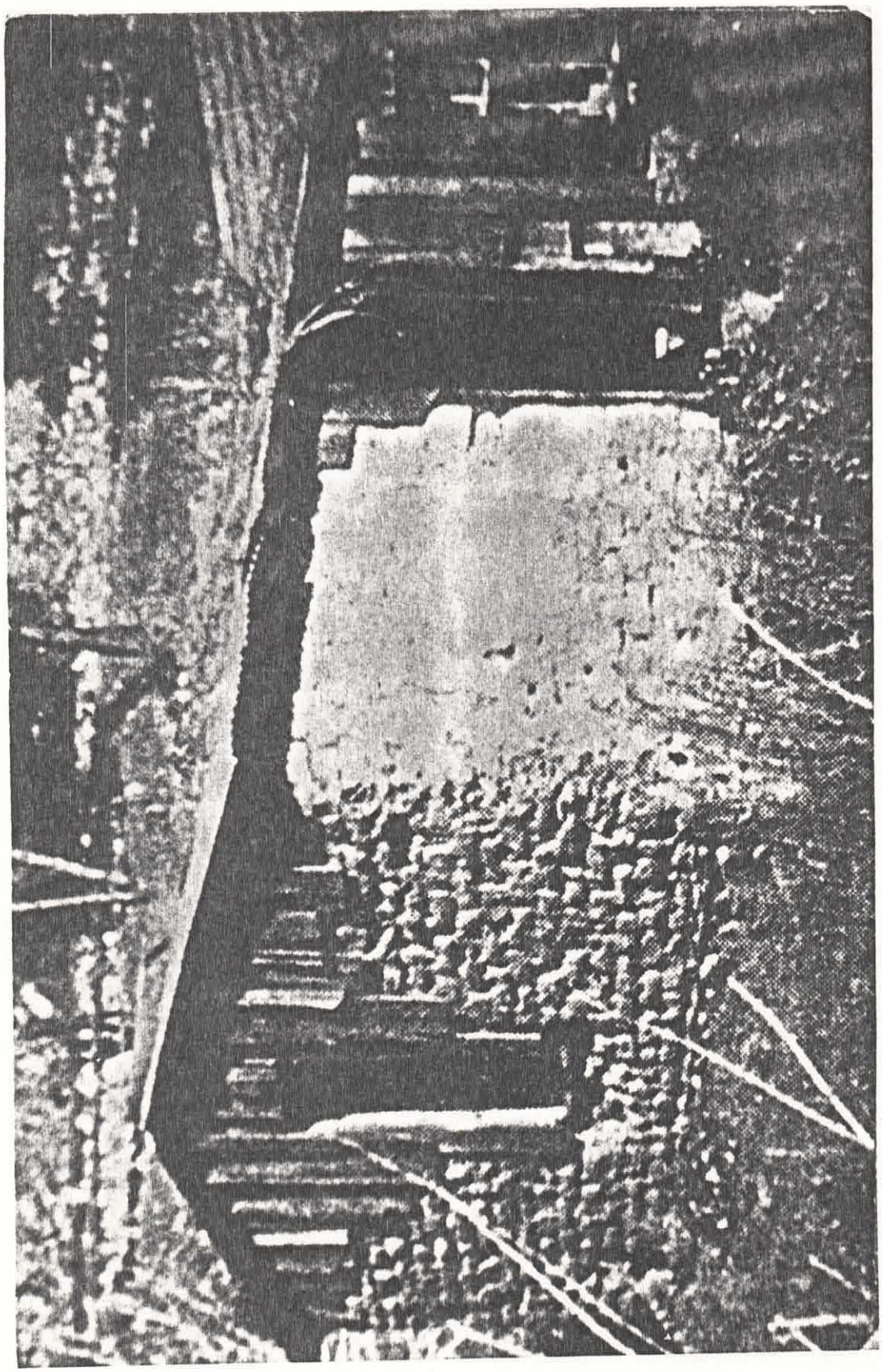


PLATE 10

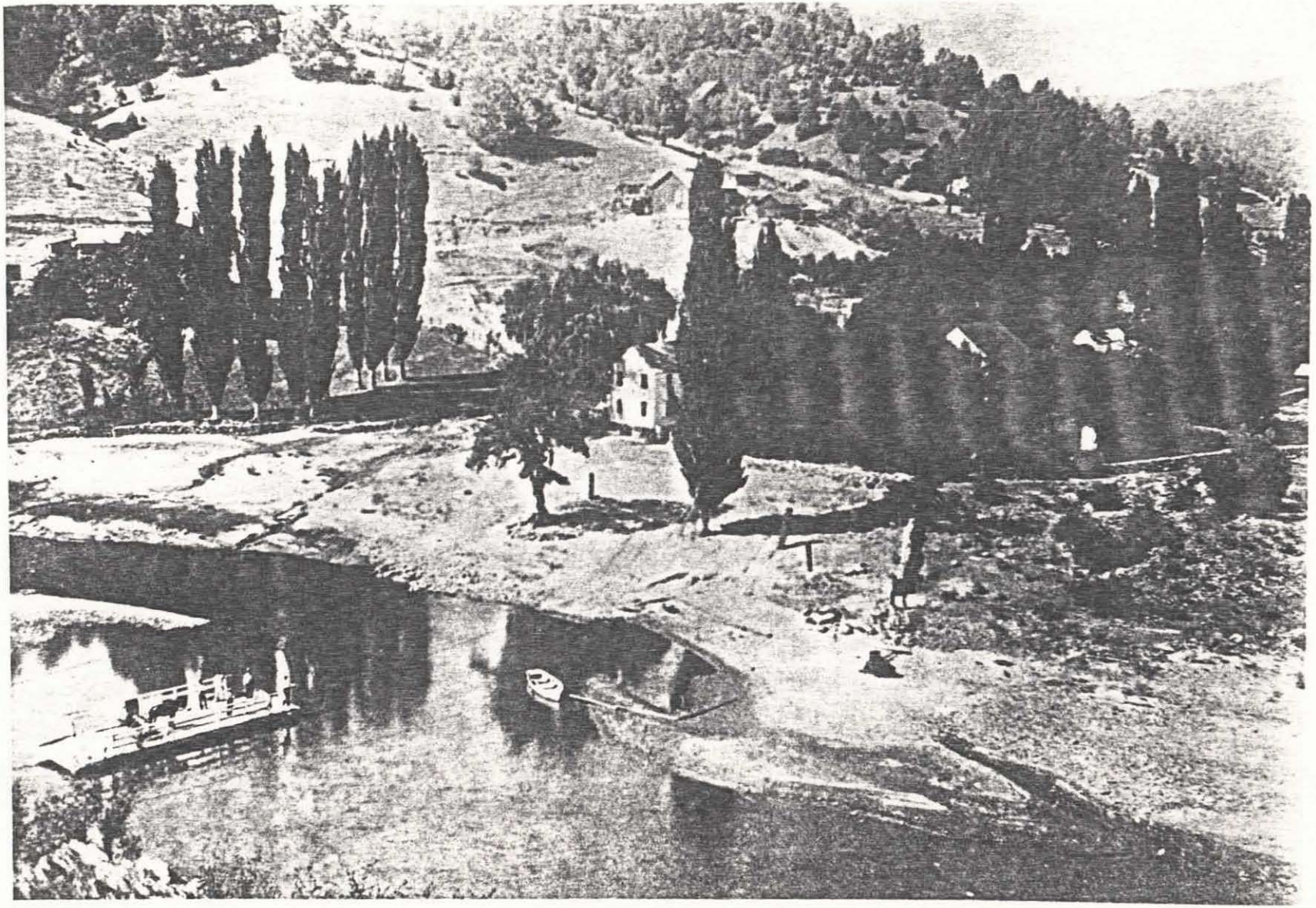


PLATE 11

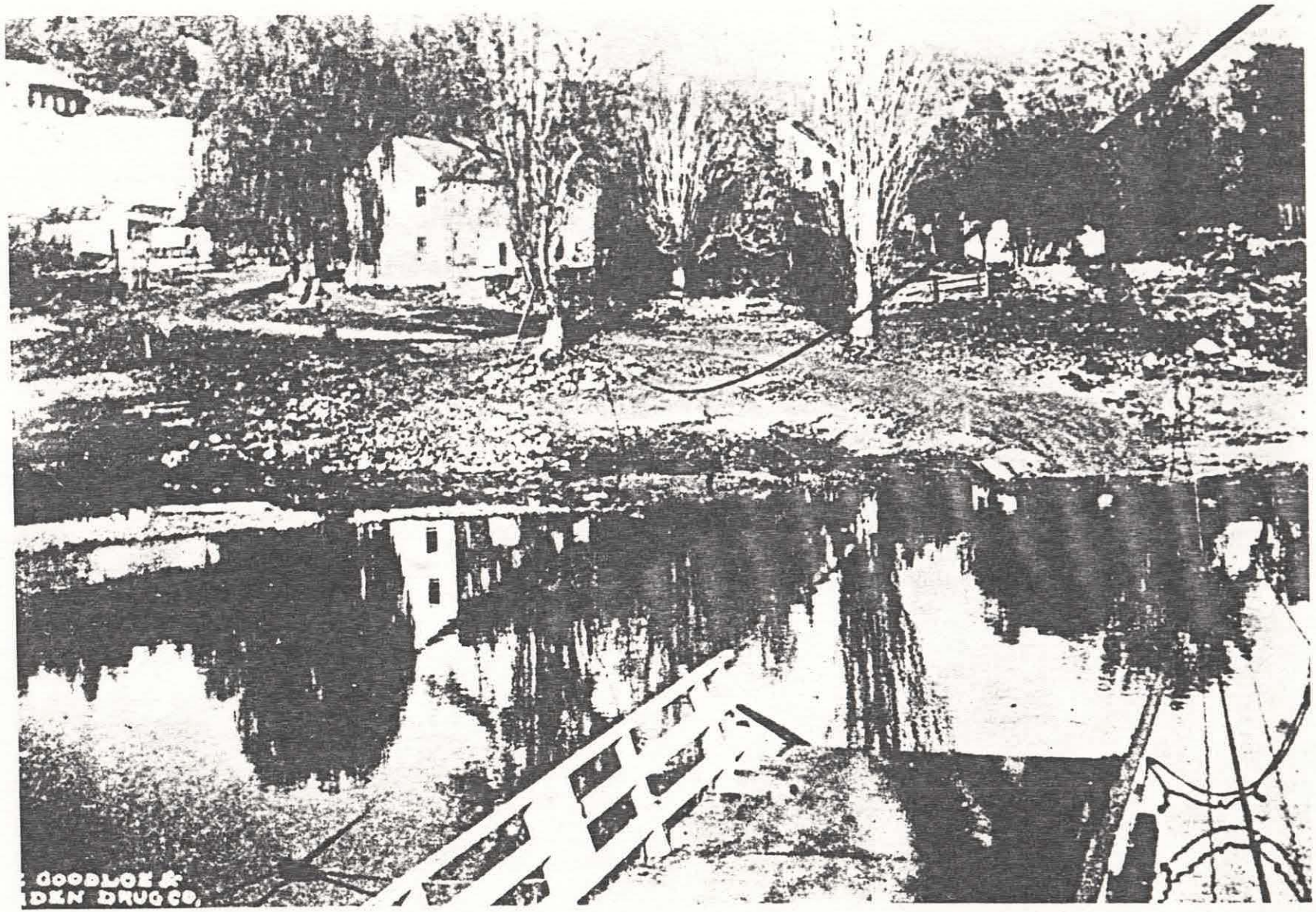


PLATE 12

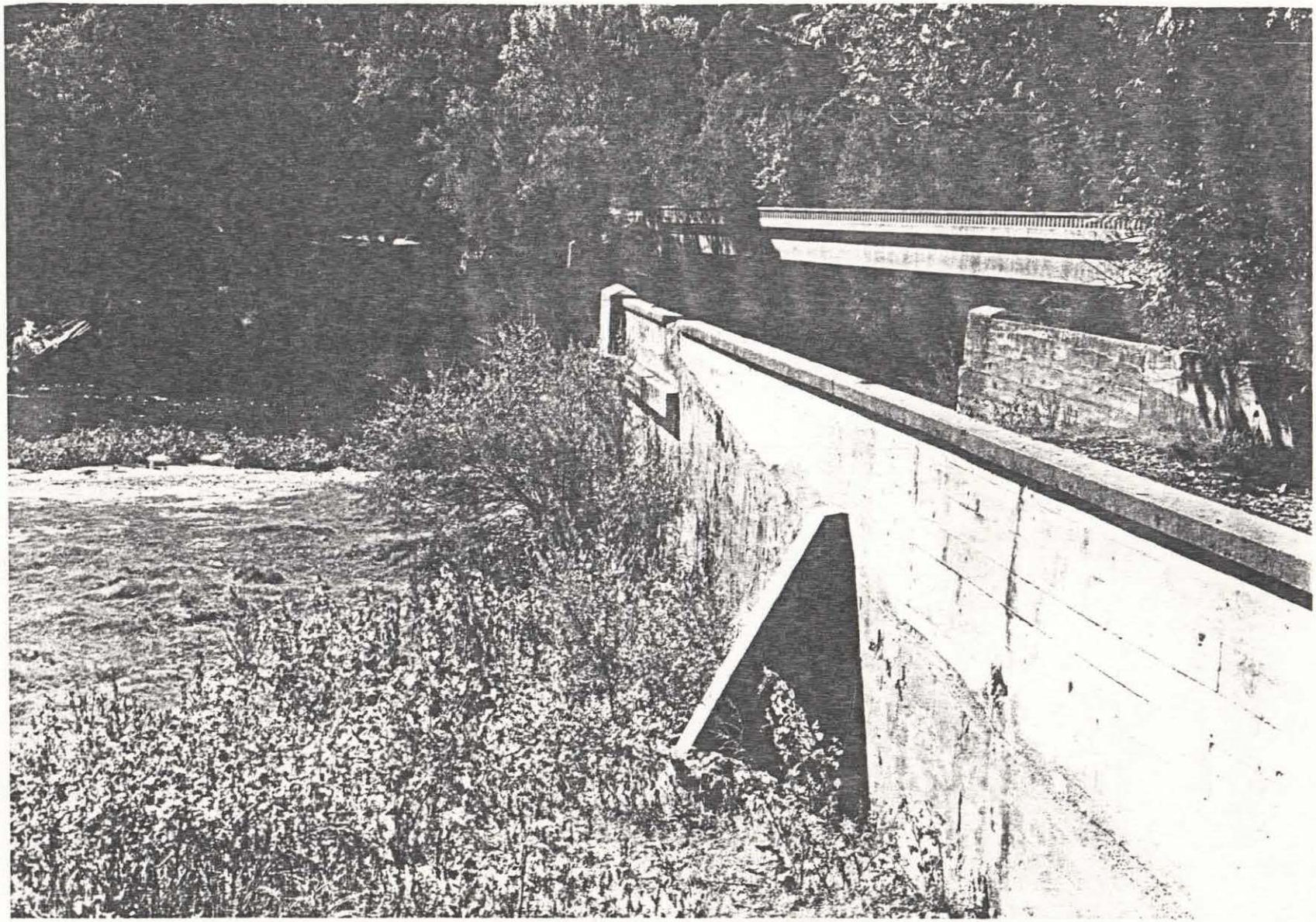


PLATE 13

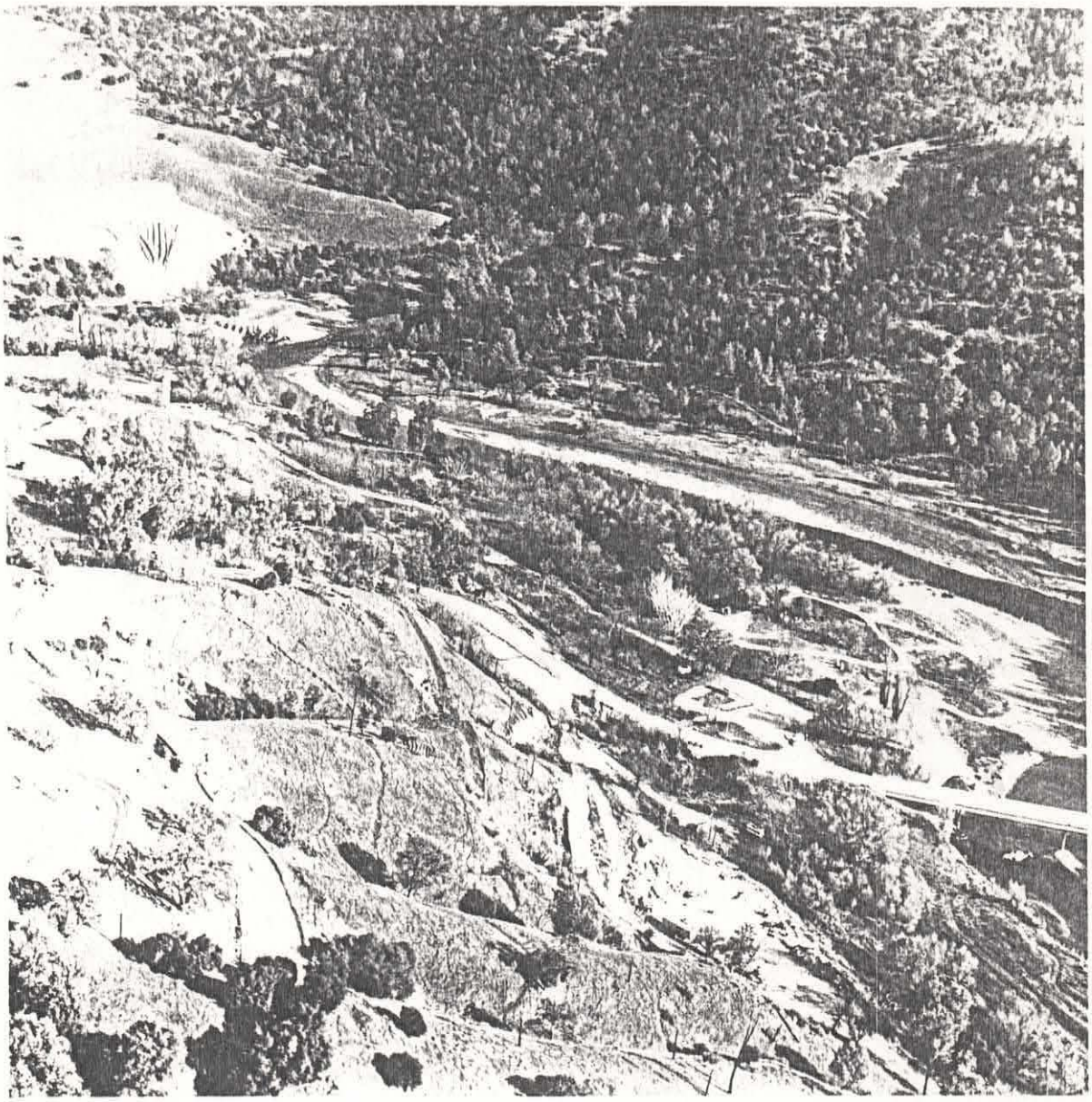


PLATE 14

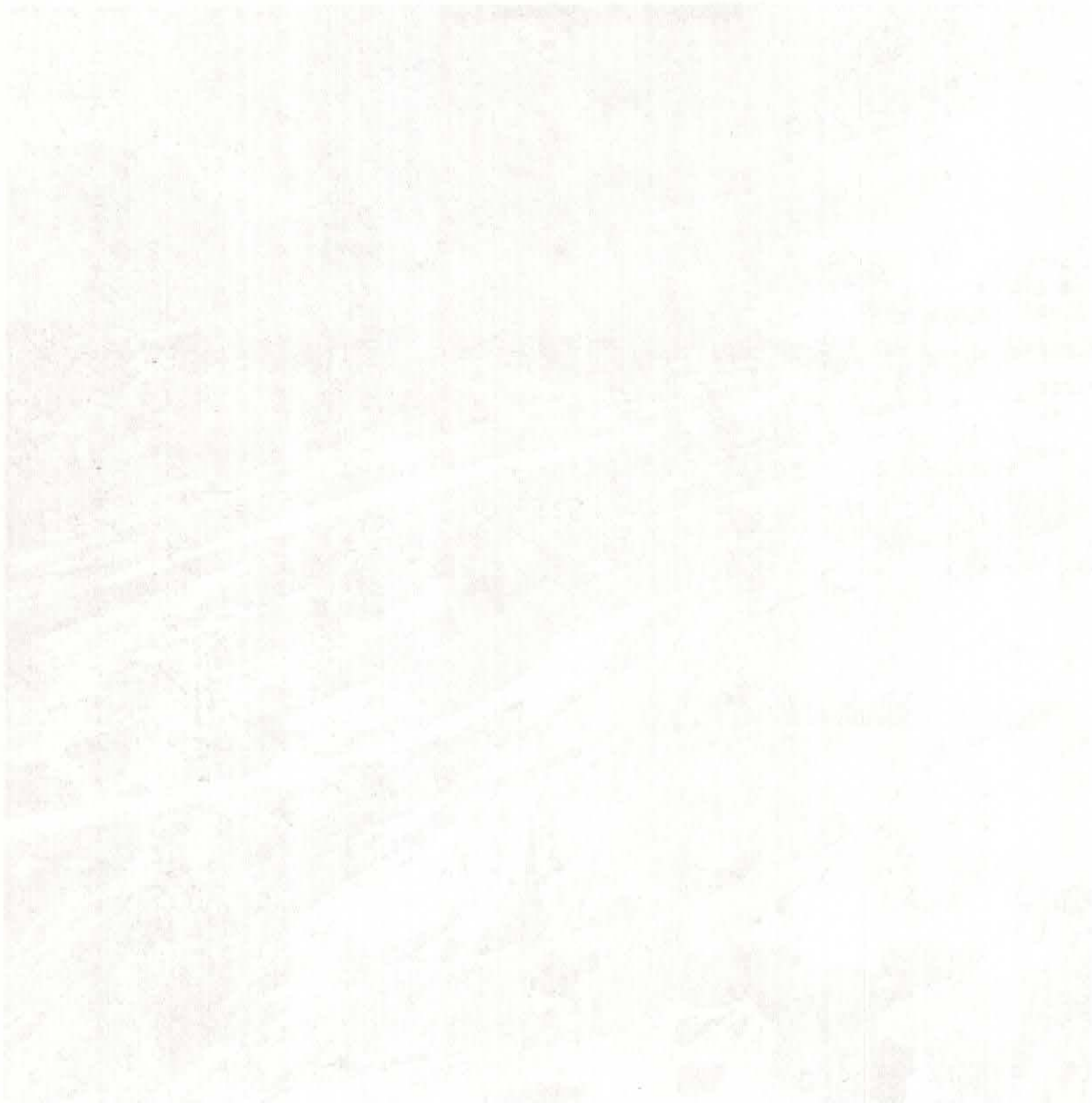




PLATE 15

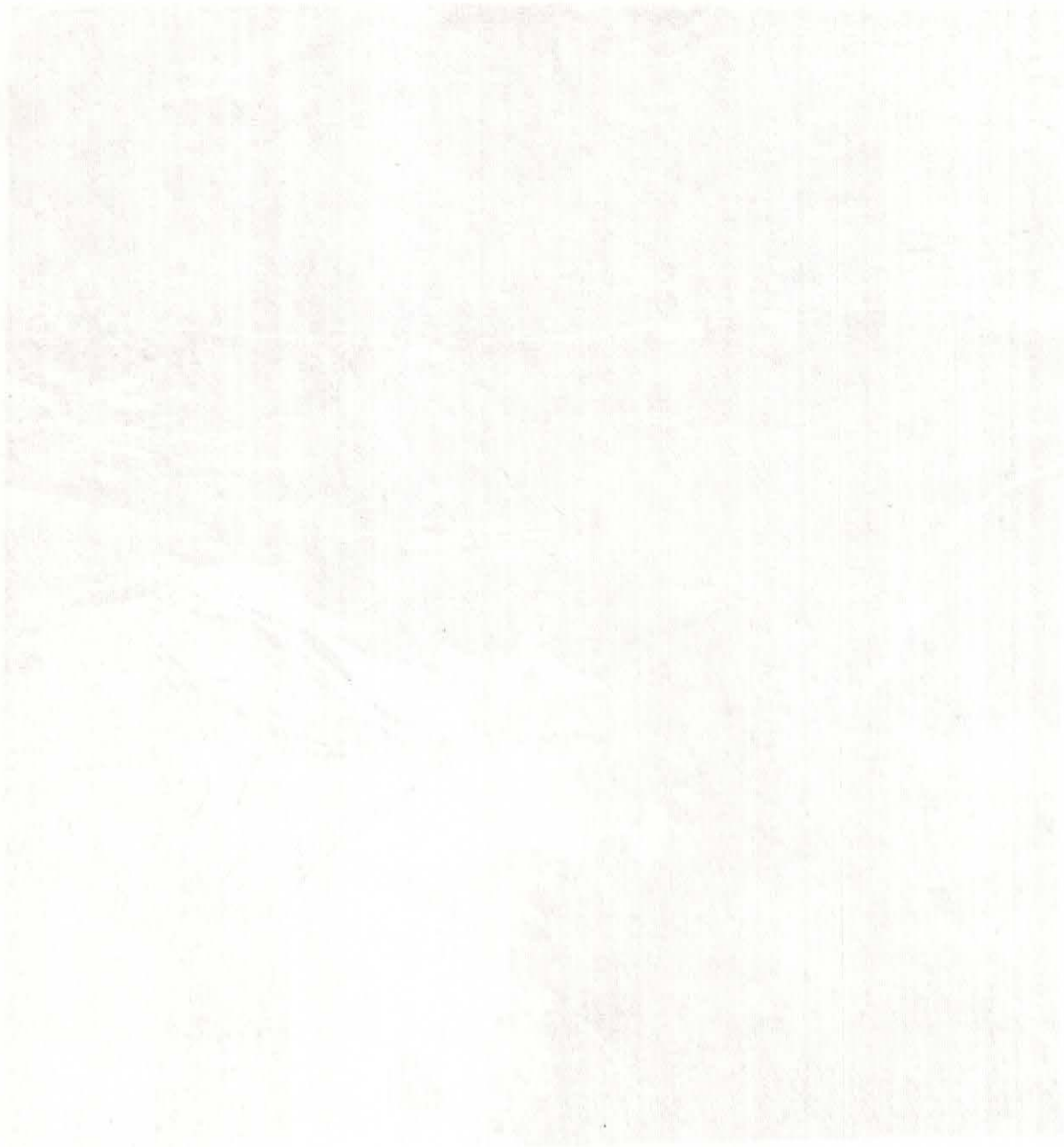




PLATE 16

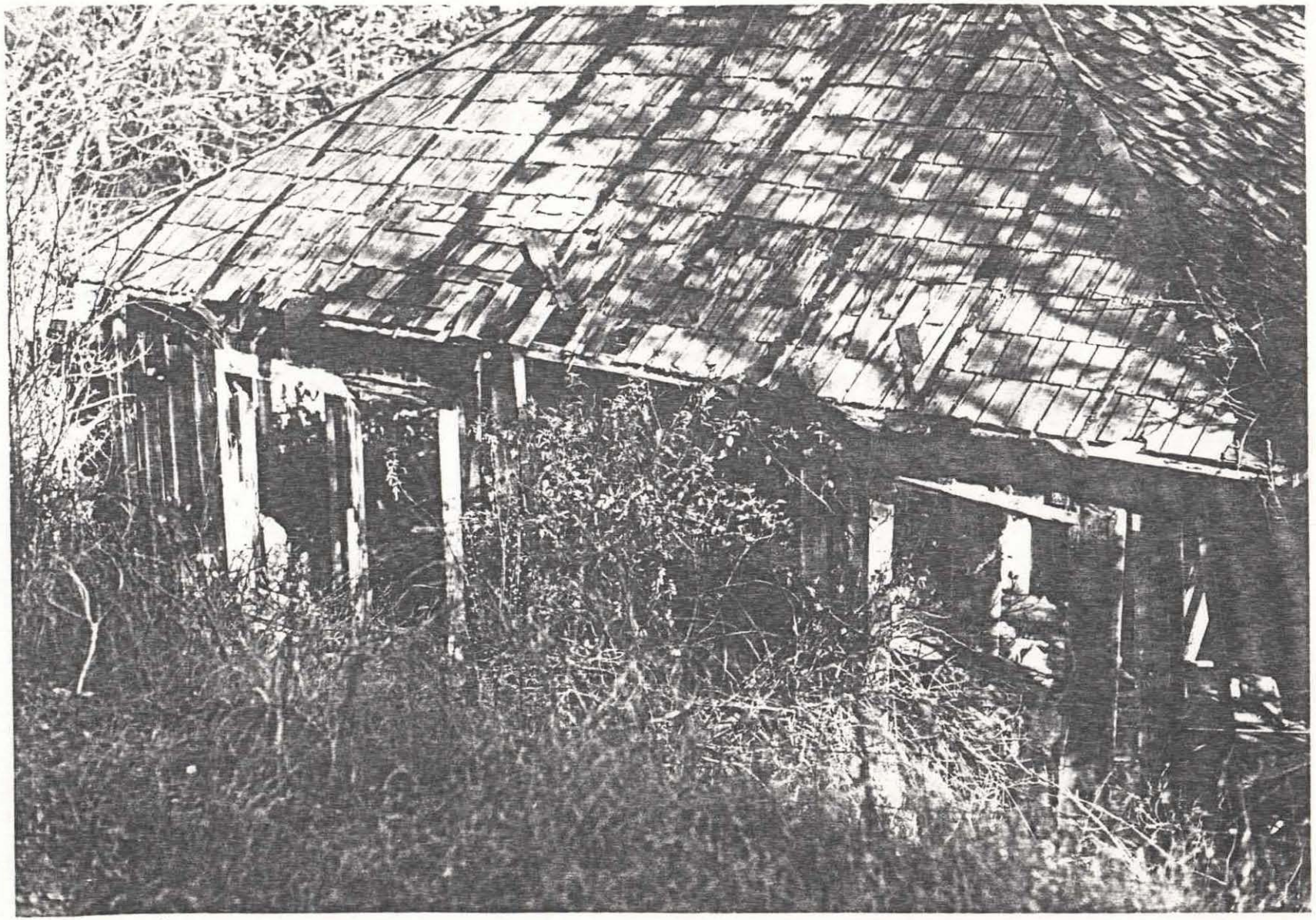


PLATE 17



PLATE 18

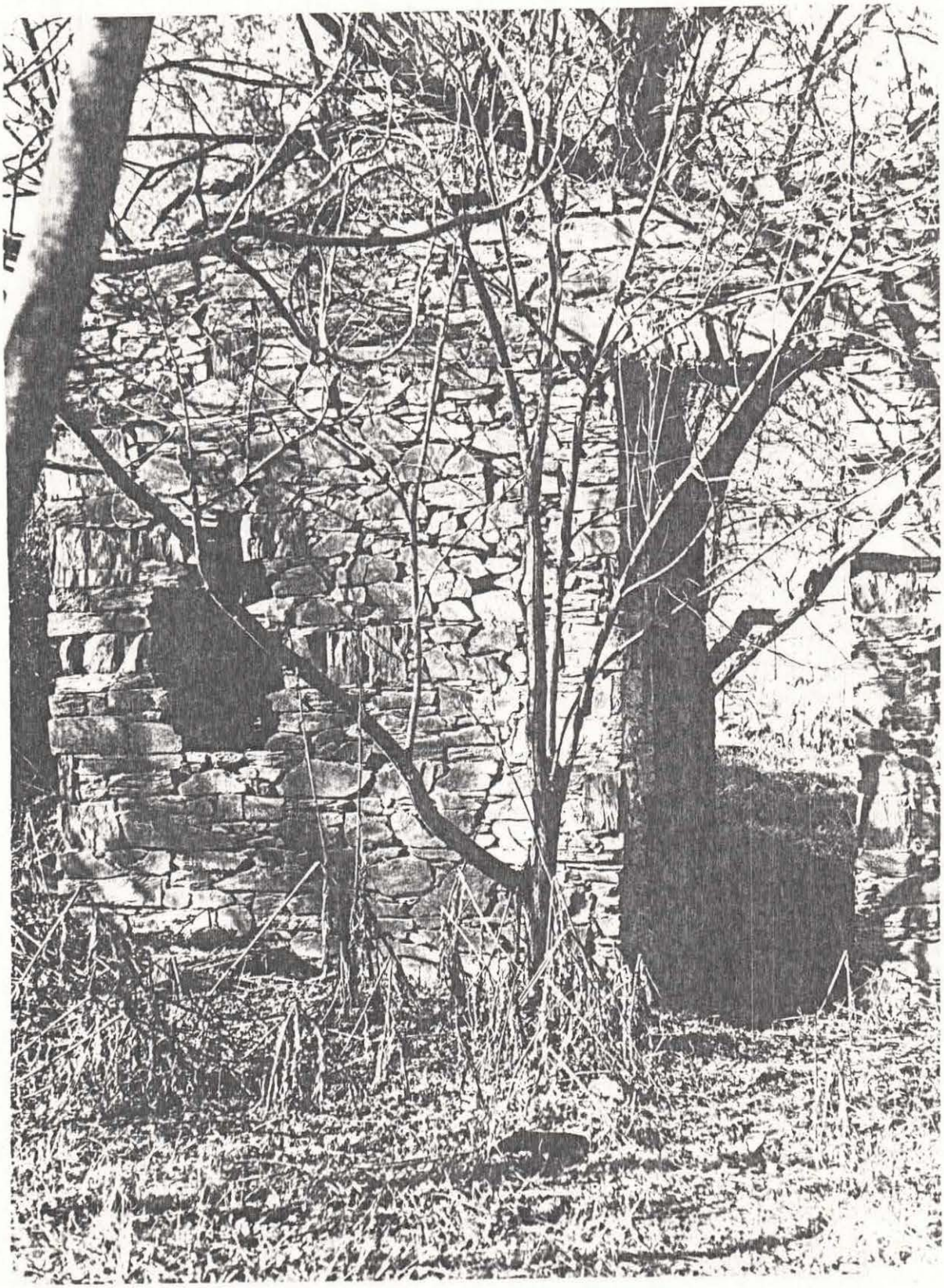


PLATE 19



PLATE 20

CHAPTER 7

WORK AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE CARSON HILL MINES

The group of mines which make up what is commonly referred to as Carson Hill (Plate 21) has been the subject of extensive literature (Wood 1949; Borthwick 1929; Bancroft 1880; Wagner 1970, and others). The mines at Carson Hill have provided employment to men for well over a hundred years. This employment covered four major phases of operations: the Gold Rush, the "early" operations (about 1900-1926), the 1933-1942 operation and present use.

No available data concerning Native American use of the area prior to the White man's appearance exists other than a brief reference to J. H. Carson following Indians "back to their diggings" (Caughey 1948:30) in the late summer of 1848. Since then, however, Carson Hill has been heavily exploited for gold.

Within three years after the first White men were in the area, Carson Hill had become the scene of disputes over ownership, organization of companies, illegal disposals of property and highgrading (Wood 1949; Bancroft 1880). Nevertheless, by 1858 it had produced more than two million dollars' worth of gold (Stellman 1934:94). As early as 1851, the Hill was the scene of armed confrontations between miners over questions of rightful ownership (Bancroft 1880; Wood 1949; Stellman 1934). The mines were owned by groups who relied on force to insure possession until 1853 when the matter was apparently settled.

J. H. Carson, the first to mine the area, actually paid little attention to the Hill, primarily staying in nearby Carson Creek (Stellman 1934; Wood 1949). His departure for Sonora and richer diggings, was to begin almost cyclic migrations to and from the Hill. Stellman mentions that "there were continual fresh finds and camps being emptied overnight, everybody rushing somewhere else--perhaps not half so good as the location deserted" (Stellman 1934:90). Holmes refers to ". . . that group of men who wandered from one place to another, always in search of the El Dorado, but never remaining long enough in one place to find it" (Holmes 1930:4).

Wood provides information concerning the number of miners vacating the Hill: "During April and May, 1853, over five hundred miners left Carson's Hill for the Australian gold fields for fear of being robbed or murdered by [Joaquin] Murietta's desperados" (Wood 1949:85). Little is known about miners who came to or left the area

during the next decade. Concerning the Mother Lode as a whole, Stellman credits the Comstock rush of the 1860's as taking miners to Nevada, and: ". . . engineers and chemists worked out new methods of reduction /of the ore/," men began working in shifts, ". . . for weekly stipends," therefore ". . . mining became a business . . . with little adventure " and "miners went to the cities and left the Mother Lode" (Stellman 1934:284).

There is a general lack of information concerning the Mother Lode from the 1860's through the turn of the century, but a possible source may be Eberhardt who lists thirty-three quartz mills in Calaveras County in 1863, twelve of which were in Angels Camp (Eberhardt n.d.). It is commonly accepted that the Southern Mines (according to Hittell 1858 as quoted by Stevenot 1963; Bancroft 1880; and Coy 1948) are noted for the abundance of quartz they contained. Carson Hill was ". . . undoubtedly the largest mass of vein gold ever found in the world, allowing all reasonable latitude for exaggeration" (Wood 1949:25).

Consultants generally place opening of large-scale company mining operations in the "90's," yet one consultant refers to Carson Hill (the town) as having a population of more than 1,000 residents in the 1880's which suggests considerable employment in the immediate area. Another consultant placed completion of a twenty-stamp mill at Melones in 1889. One source mentions that the period of consolidation of the mines and operations dates to 1898 (Eberhardt n.d.), yet a consultant, Howard Canevaro (born in Melones in 1897), claims that his father was working at the mill at the time of his birth. The majority of consultants and contemporary literature refer to a pre-1900 opening as the beginning of employment ("wage slavery" as one consultant said) at Carson Hill, the mines and the town of Melones.

The Carson Hill group of mines shut down for the first time in December, 1926. (According to a consultant, the Melones Mining Company actually stopped operations in 1918, yet the Carson Hill Mine continued employing men until its shutdown in December, 1926.) Consultants date this event from 1924 to 1927, yet the 1926 date which is cited in the program provided at the second opening of the mine seems to be the most plausible. One consultant incorrectly blamed World War I for "finishing" the mill while another claimed that the mine's mill "simply couldn't pay for itself" since the stamp mill was capable of handling only about 300 to 400 tons of ore per day. Yet, Stellman lists the total production of these mines between 1919 and 1926 as $6,936,798 (Stellman 1934:292), while the mine program refers to "authentic records" showing production figures, "exclusive of their early day yield," at "$20,000,000" (Angels Booster Club, pamphlet, September 4, 1933).

If the circumstances leading up to the first shutdown of the mine are unclear, events following the shutdown are not. The company gave no advance warning of the shutdown, and men just "accepted the fact." Consultants agree that the miners, living in company bunkhouses or renting accommodations in local boardinghouses, vacated almost immediately. The only ones who remained were those who owned property in the area, but "90% left right away." Many men went to work in other mines. There were several working mines at that time in nearby Jackson, and also the Vallecito Western Mine between Angels Camp and Vallecito. One consultant said some went to New York to work on the subways. Some miners with families stayed on at the town of Melones and commuted to the Angels Camp area. One consultant remembered that many miners went into military service after the shutdown, but does not remember what became of their families.

On September 4, 1933, the Carson Hill Gold Mines, owned and operated by the Carson Hill Gold Mining Corporation, reopened. Jackie Cooper, a child at the time, pressed the button that started the stamp mill, signifying the reopening of the mines. The event, followed by a barbecue, was attended by people from the entire state.

Preparation for the reopening and employment of men was begun from one to two years before the actual event, according to several consultants. One consultant considered the rise in the price of gold coupled with "perfection" of the cyanide process of gold retrieval paramount in the reopening.

Production of the new operation was boosted to 1,200 tons per day, and the mine operated twenty-four hours a day. It provided uninterrupted employment for the next nine years until its demise in 1942. The primary difference between working during the first and second periods of operation, said a consultant, was that a man had to work harder to keep his job because there were so many men looking for work.

Immediately prior to the mine's reopening, according to one consultant, the only means of making money in the area was some small-scale river mining operations. Since this was during the Depression, many of these operations were worked merely in the hopes of finding ". . . enough gold to buy beans."

Although the actual reasons surrounding the second shutdown of the mines are unknown, consultants had a variety of suggestions. Several tied the shutdown to the burning down of the mill, which

they felt may have been deliberate. Another referred to government disinterest in keeping the paying mines open during World War II as they had during World War I because the country had gone off the gold standard. Another suggested that the cost of living forced the miners to demand higher wages which the mine could not afford. But, Stellman listed "present output" in 1934 at "$80,000 a month" (Stellman 1934:292). And, there is no supportive information about the miners ever having made demands. Milo Bird claims that the mines were ". . . making plenty of money when World War II started, "but that Limitation Order L-208 cut off all supplies which could be utilized in the war. That effectively stopped mining in Melones" (Bird n.d.:27). Bird stated that the fire which swept through the town of Melones destroyed both the old Melones mill and the more recent Carson Hill mill. Since that time, no other attempts have been made at rebuilding.

Following this closing of the mines employees again left "almost overnight." Many went to the Bay Area to seek work in the shipyards, which were hiring men to assist in the war effort. Recent attempts to obtain gold have been relatively successful, but they are of a speculative nature. According to a consultant the Cypress Company from Washington, who operated the mines from January through June 1975, withdrew approximately $200,000, and a Canadian Company is presently interested in pursuing mining interests in the area.

Hiring Practices

Perkins states that "One great advantage that the Southern mines possess over the Northern, is that the gold is found everywhere" (Perkins 1963:396). One consultant claimed that during the Rush miners were separated by only a few feet, and each dug his own shaft with little or no cooperation from his neighbors. Intense competition soon gave rise to the establishment of companies. When asked about the nature of these companies, Mark Hanna said that "Most of the mines in the 'good old days' . . . weren't even a legitimate business proposition." When questioned further as to whether the operation at Carson Hill was within this category, he replied, "I think it was when you come down to brass tacks."

William Perkins in his journal of 1849-1852 (referring to his quartz claim on Carson Hill) wrote, "The work does not pay, and will not for some years until labor be cheap, and machinery . . . be introduced" (Perkins 1964:268). Work in the mines required strength, and by law an employee had to be 18. If a man lied about

his age and looked old enough, he was usually hired. Bird refers to one man he knew who was too weak to work in the mines and eventually was employed to drive the grocery delivery wagon in Melones (Bird n.d.:63). One consultant said that it made no difference if a man was single or married when looking for work in the mines. It appears, however, that this applied only to the earlier operations in the mines, for another source says that during the 1930's, married men were the first to be hired and the last to be fired (Burke 1975).

Many men were apparently hired by "hanging around the mine . . . until hired, or by having someone bring you around and vouch for you" (Burke 1975). This is supported by Bird:

> That old cliche which states that what you don't know won't hurt you certainly applies to the manager of the mine. He may have thought that he ran the mine; that he always had the best man in the right job. But what he didn't know about the schemes of those foreign men would fill many a tome. Since Dad was one of the victimized foremen I got a first hand look at the way those fellows shifted men from one place to another.
>
> Whenever a new man arrived from the old country his friends held a conference to decide where he would best fit into Dad's sphere. Then one of Dad's best men would suddenly decide that he wanted to work somewhere else thus leaving an opening which had to be filled in a hurry. At about the time Dad heard of the vacancy, several men would approach him and introduce a new man who couldn't speak English but who was a good worker. Naturally, Dad hired him on the spot and put up with the language barrier to keep his jobs going full blast. The man who had just quit Dad's crew would show up in some other part of the mine just as a "vacancy" occurred there. And so the musical chairs would go round and round until some poor devil got pushed out of a job. (Bird n.d.:13)

Many local boys were hired during the summer months to do repairs that were saved solely to provide employment for them. Bird said that only enough were hired to get a job done before they had to return to school in the fall. Local high school boys were the first hired, out of town high school boys hired next. College men who needed money to return to school, or "who needed practical experience to bolster their theoretical knowledge" were hired last (Bird n.d.:110-111).

Bird relates another incident surrounding the hiring and firing of men who were to work on the company's slime and sand tanks:

> . . . a man known to the employees as 'Pickle Face' came out from Boston to supervise the operation. He tried to force men to work at a dead run in that fierce valley heat. Some of them would have done it to support their families but the pace was beyond their physical capabilities. He fired them. Other men refused to work at that pace. He fired them too. When horses pulling Fresno scrapers dropped in their traces from lack of water and from a pace beyond their endurance, he fired them also.
>
> That man was on the job only three days but in that time he hired and fired well over a hundred men and kicked out a dozen teams of horses. (Bird n.d.:203)

Another consultant said the mines also used mules at the 1,350' level until the SPCA heard about it and forced them to stop the practice. At least one of the mules was blind when brought out of the mine.

One consultant was emphatic that the mine was strict in its hiring policies and would not hire "just anyone" during the first large-scale operation. He went on to say that the mine would ask why a man had left another mine and was looking for work. However, another consultant, who ran a store which outfitted new employees, claimed that many recently hired miners were so inexperienced they were not aware of the need for a carbide light in the mines during the day shift. A consultant maintained that before the shutdown in the twenties, men were hired who knew nothing about mining. They would last three or four days and leave. These miners from outside the area were not trusted and "would steal from each other" while locals did not do this.

According to Bird:

> . . . we were afflicted by an itinerant population of alcoholics. Some of them stayed for a week, a month or perhaps a couple of months before they moved on to some other camp. They would come to town, get a job at the mine and stay until they got their first pay check. Sometimes they would quit as soon as their thirst got out of hand. With their time checks gripped in their shaky mitts they would rush to the saloon and exchange them for Baldy's best liquid life saver.

> Since the mine would no longer hire those men they would hoof it over to the next town and get work until their thirst again got out of hand. (Bird n.d.:61-62)

Information concerning qualities sought in prospective employees is lacking, other than Bird's mention of the fact that his father would not hire three boys known to frequent the prostitutes in Jamestown (Bird n.d.:111). Following the reopening of the mine in 1933, there were approximately 200 employees, and consultants agree that there was usually a line of men seeking work at the office through 1936.

According to one consultant, the work force during the 1850's and 1860's was composed almost entirely of Chileans and Chinese. Shortly after this, there is reference to a claim on Carson Hill which was ". . . being worked by four Americans and one Swiss miner" (Wood 1949:25). During the period of operation at the turn of the century, consultants claimed there were several hundred employees, all Caucasians, either commuting from Angels or living in bunk-or boarding houses in Melones. Other consultants disagreed and suggested a list of ethnic groups which included: "Cousin Jacks" from Cornwall, a number of "Chinamen", "Mexicans, Italians, and Slavonians." However, one consultant suggested that Chinese probably did not work in the mines, since they tended to keep themselves to placer forms of mining and avoided deep or hard rock mines. One consultant simply stated that the mines employed "the map of Europe." Another consultant suggested that there were more Italians than any other group. Bird included one Black, "Nigger Green," in the list, and another placed Germans in the group, while yet another included Irish. One consultant mentioned that the Mexicans usually worked for the railroad, rather than in the mines, while another included them in the mine work force, claiming they, and possibly one or more Yaqui Indians, had come from the hard rock mines in Sonora, Mexico. One consultant, speaking of the Mexicans, said they spoke a combination of Spanish and Italian.

Bird, in one of the only available references to interaction of ethnic groups in the mines during this period, states that:

> . . . the mine management, perhaps unwittingly, perhaps intentionally, exerted a tremendous influence in preventing the chasm between those various peoples from closing sufficiently for them to become unified Americans. Inside the mine, they would pit one nationality against another to get the maximum amount of work out of them. They would tell the Serbs that the Italians were outmucking them and they would tell the Italians that the

> Serbs were putting down much more hole per shift than they were. And since the Serbs and the Italians were proud of their ability as workmen they would work their heads off to produce more rock than the others. (Bird n.d.:6)

Several times Bird refers to ethnic interrelationships with phrases such as ". . . each national group thought the others were crackpots" (Bird n.d.:6), and ". . . there was no love lost between the Serbs, the Italians and the Spanish speaking workers, each hoped they could oust one of the others" (Bird n.d.:14). The interaction of these divergent groups while in the mines is perhaps best described by Bird:

> On the job where men of all national and religious backgrounds were required to work together, the rubbing of elbows and the clashing of ideas created incipient fireworks which never did flare into open hostility because the men knew that any acts of violence upon the person of another workman meant instant dismissal. (Bird n.d.:7)

The second attempt at large-scale mining of the Carson Hill mines was a period which one consultant said was marked by the arrival of "a whole new bunch of people." The list of ethnic groups employed included: Greeks, Slavonians, Italians, English, three Finish, Welsh, Mexicans, Swedes, Indians (the reference here is to two brothers named Crosby who were raised around the Angels Camp area), and several of "American-German" descent. There is also a reference to some half-Mexican/half-Spanish track layers employed by the mine. Other consultants expand the list to include Irish, Scotch and Portuguese.

Demographic information surrounding early employment at the mines is lacking, other than a few brief mentions of several men living in Vallecito and other nearby communities. Many chose to stay at company bunkhouses in Melones. One consultant said that shift bosses were allowed to stay in the company houses. Ted Bird recalls that Mark Latham, superintendent of the cyanide process, lived near the Melones stamp mill in a company-owned house.

Those who did not live in company housing were faced with the necessity of commuting. Hanna suggested that the men who commuted spent half their wages getting to and from work. In 1914 and 1915 a bus ran from Angels Camp to Melones twice a day for mine workers. Ted Bird speaks of commuting daily from Angels in 1924.

One consultant said the Carson Hill mine bought its trucks from a General Motors dealer in Sonora. For a time, if a miner wanted to work in the mines, he had to buy a Chevy from the dealer. "If you owned a Ford you wouldn't last long unless you bought a Chevy."

During the second period of operation (1933-1942) trucks were outfitted with seats and canopies to take miners to work from Angels. They charged a fee, said Ed Haynes, and doubled as freight haulers, picking up the miners when the shift was over. Another consultant, Guy Castle, had an old Chevy he drove from Angels. He said four or five men would ride with him all the time. When the shifts changed, they all changed at once so the men would continue to ride together. Many of the younger men had cars, he said.

Physical Conditions

According to Mark Hanna, "As a rule the mines were a pretty democratic place; everybody had a terrible job." To the early miners operating around the Carson Hill mines, the primary concerns were food and protection from the elements. "The food of miners in those days was simple, but only the fact that they labored prodigiously enabled them to digest it. That was before the days of canned goods." . . . , and "Eating meant merely the stoking of a machine which enabled them to carry on . . ." only ". . . if they managed to escape scurvy" (Stellman 1934:101). Food to combat scurvy was rare, therefore ". . . potatoes were highly prized as a substitute. They brought fabulous prices and were as highly cherished as nuggets during the first years of the Gold Rush" (Stellman 1934:102). Gunn includes scurvy as a common cause of death during the Rush (Gunn 1928). In later years the problem of adequate food was not as serious, and the boardinghouses in Melones provided lunches.

Death was commonplace in the mines, and several journals of the period refer to its frequency (Perksins 1964, Gunn 1928). Wells and Peterson speak of the nearby camps: "Sometimes a man died. That put a damper on the fun for an hour or two. Somebody had to organize a burial squad to dig a rough patch in the gravel or up on the hillside, and try remembering solemn words" (Wells and Peterson 1949:171).

For those who survived, serious problems remained. One that every miner had to face was hazardous working conditions. Almost every consultant questioned about what it was like to work in the mines answered with statements about the number of men who died

and about the conditions which had brought this about. According to one consultant, between 1900 and 1926,there were two deaths per month. A single cave-in killed seven men.

One aspect of the problem was the extremes of temperature in which the men had to work. J. H. Carson ". . . contracted inflammatory rheumatism from working in the water. . ." and died (Stellman 1934:90). Bird, describing conditions in later years, states:

> Outside the mine I worked nightshift quite a bit of the time on freezing nights while suffering from excruciating chilblains and frost bitten fingers shoving rock into rock crushers in the top of the mill where I breathed dust laden air and constantly faced the dangers of silicosis and years of declining health.
>
> Inside the mine, dripping water and bone chilling wind made pneumonia an ever-present threat while instant death, the specter that haunts all miners, lurked behind every loose rock and rotten timber. (Bird n.d.:4)

Consultants agree that the winds blew so strongly through the Morgan tunnel that many miners caught pneumonia when coming out of it. All miners riding in the mines' motor cars had to be well covered to prevent catching colds. One consultant claimed that the temperatures in the mine were relatively constant while another mentioned that in summers without rain the mine got extremely hot inside. Temperatures in Melones in the summer often reached 115°F. or 118°F. The conditions in the mill were also poor. "None of the walkways were covered. In winter, they became coated with ice which made walking a serious proposition" (Bird n.d.:201). Howard Canevaro said that icicles formed on the flumes in the winter, but that there would be no fires started for warmth because of the smoke.

> To keep working conditions in the lower part of the mill half way decent the operators kept all the windows and doors open. . . We could have withstood the wind, but everything below the mortar blocks was awash with water . . . Within a few minutes after an operator went on duty he would be soaked to the skin and that wind made him a prime subject for pneumonia every day. (Bird n.d.:200)

Bird also reflects that "The timber framing yard near the mine adit was out in the open where carpenters were subject to hellish cold

weather in winter and equally hellish hot, dusty weather in summer" (Bird n.d.:202). He describes other examples of these conditions:

> The sand plant was partly inside the mill where it was well protected from rain, but all the pumps with their belts and motors were out in the open air subject to freezing in winter and blistering heat in summer.
>
> I once asked the manager of the sulphide plant who had designed such a monstrosity. His reply was worthy of a sage. 'It wasn't designed," he replied. 'It was an accident.'
>
> (Bird n.d.:201)

In a later reference to mixing concrete for installation of "the big hoist," Bird relates that:

> . . . all the gravel had to come from the creek where men working in 110°F heat had to shovel the sandy muck from screen to screen to obtain the proper grades. Each of those grades then had to be shoveled into overhead bins which were high enough above the roadway that a big freight wagon could be run beneath a chute to take on a load. (Bird n.d.:202)

Bird also described conditions surrounding construction on the company's flume which often caused heavy drinking among the men:

> He drank heavily so he could perform his work without catching pneumonia. At least, that was the excuse he used, and the company overlooked his inebriation on the job which was to keep the power flume repaired. Only someone completely benumbed by alcohol could have made a repair in that flume while standing on a narrow scaffold twenty feet above the ground with a stream of ice water pouring down his neck.
>
> (Bird n.d.:221)

Nevertheless, remarked a consultant, weather did not affect the mine operation.

Cyanide and Mercury were both used in final processes of extracting gold from ore. When questioned as to whether it was dangerous to work with cyanide, Mark Hanna replied, "Not if you're sober enough not to drink the solution." Bird spoke of children in Melones who played catch with pieces of cyanide crystal the size of an egg.

> The entire cyanide plant was so open to the public that anyone could have walked in at any time. Fortunately, every adult in

> town respected the ability of only a small speck of cyanide to kill a person instantly. But youngsters who passed the plant several times a day on their way to and from school didn't realize how poisonous the stuff was. One of the operators had to chase his own son for half a mile one day to retrieve a piece of sodium cyanide which the child thought was a piece of rock candy. (Bird n.d.:201)

Another consultant mentioned that people downstream complained to the company about cyanide spillage constantly until the final shutdown in 1942.

In all the early stamp mills mercury was used, but complete recovery of mercury used in this process is impossible. One consultant noticed that mercury came out of the pipes near the mill and said he often saw it "flowing down the hill." One consultant claimed the Melones Mining Company lost 1,000 ounces of mercury per month for seventeen years and assumed the majority of it has settled out in the first two miles downstream. This same consultant was also concerned about possible effects of this mercury if disturbed by inundation.

Many miners preferred working in the Carson Hill mines because they were considered "clean," free from natural gases in the tunnels. One consultant, however, mentioned that there was still a danger from the gas that was present following blasts. He claimed the gas made workers "sleepy," and they would simply sit down and not get up. He had to be carried from the mine three times because of this condition.

> Twice a week, the cyanide plant treated bullion from its precipitation cells with sulpheric acid to cut out all the zinc. Since some soluble sulfides also collect on the zinc with the gold, large volumes of hydrogen sulfide evolve during the reaction with acid. That rotten-egg smelling gas floated up and down the valley for miles. (Bird n.d.:260)

> The noise level in the mill was incredible:

> The mill had 100 one thousand pound stamps each of which fell eight inches 110 times per minute. The noise level was so high that men could not converse at all. We had to resort to hand signals. (Bird n.d.:200)

All consultants agreed that the noise was constant. Some compared it to "traffic noise" which one was not aware of until it stopped. Others

said that when the mill would shut down for repairs, everyone in town wondered what had happened. If this happened during the night, people would awaken because of the silence. One consultant said that noise from the stamp mill was audible for four miles on a clear day, and another said it could be heard from one mile away even with the wind blowing toward it. It is not difficult to understand, therefore, why the men working in the mill would stuff cotton in their ears as tightly as possible. Still, they would be partially deaf when they left work, and it was usually several hours before they could hear at all.

Shifts

"I didn't take to assaying through love or devotion; I took it through hatred of the night shift" related Mark Hanna.

Milo Bird, in discussing conditions during the first operation of the mines said:

> Dad was subject to call 24 hours a day 365 days a year and was never paid overtime even though he often worked all day, all night and all the next day. I recall one time when he was on the job 102 hours without any time off except to bolt down snacks sent to him from the company kitchen. He came home and slept for four hours and went back for another 96. For nearly 200 hours on the job, he was paid for only 64. Yet a few months later he was injured on a job at 1:00 PM and was docked 2-1/2 hours on his next paycheck. (Bird n.d.:207)

When Bird worked in the mill:

> . . . I worked straight through from 7:00 AM one morning all through the night and until 2:30 the next afternoon without any extra pay. (Bird n.d.:207)

Mine superintendents and supervisors who were provided with company houses were expected to be on call every hour of every day throughout the year. During the early period at the time, men were expected to work twelve hours per day, seven days a week, and always the same shift. One consultant claimed that when his father finally got off the night shift, his youngest daughter said he should go back to the mines where he belonged; she was completely disoriented by his presence at home when she was awake.

Regular routine at the mill was two weeks on the day shift, and

two weeks on the night shift. Another consultant employed during the later period agrees with this. During the early operations, men were off for Christmas Day (often only a half day off, since the mine never actually shut down), and later they were also off on the 4th of July. The Serbians, who recognized January 7 as Christmas, were denied time off for their celebration, and they were off December 25 along with the others. Several companies, however, also gave an extra day off per year to Serbian and Italian groups who celebrated an annual picnic. There is no evidence however that any of the companies working in Carson Hill recognized this practice. Supposedly, the other companies gave the day off to prevent highgrading. The seven-day work week was "just accepted" by workers during that time.

Shortly before the first shutdown of the mine, the shifts were modified to eight hours, although still in operation seven days per week. Soon after the second operation began, shifts were modified again to only six days per week, a condition much more in keeping with other industries in the 1930's. Consultants disagree slightly as to the exact hours of these shifts; one suggested 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m., and 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., and the other consultants placed all shifts one hour later.

Throughout both periods of operation, men could trade shifts, or work another man's shift in order to gain extra time off. The only break of the day was a half-hour lunch period while one's crew members continued working.

During both periods of operation, there were what were known as "Ten-Day Miners," a group consultants claim was composed usually of Irish and Scotch. These were individuals who would work ten days straight and then be off. They would often be transient miners and move on after their ten days. They were almost always accused of being highgraders, possibly because they had even less allegiance to the mine or they were never available to counter such accusations.

There was another unique classification of miners known as the contract miner. These individuals would be paid exclusively by the foot of tunnel blasted. During the second operation, they were paid $3.50 per foot of drift. All materials were provided by the company, and the pay was the same regardless of the speed of work. These miners would often take chances in their work, less likely to wait the two hours for the noxious gases to clear after a blast than the miners who were paid the same rate regardless of production.

Mine Safety

With the introduction of electricity in the mines, the miners were faced with yet another condition to consider. Bird, in the beginning of his memoirs, remembers ". . . many bouts with uninsulated electric wires including one leg of a 3300 volt line which paralyzed my right hand for a week" (Bird n.d.:5). There are also accounts of actual electricution in the mines although several of these proved not to be fatal.

One consultant, Della Soleri, had an uncle named Ben Lewis, who was carrying some pipe inside the mine (where there was standing water) when he touched the electric trolley wires and died. Ted Bird claimed that many men were electricuted in the mines, including his father, who survived the incident.

> Another case in point is that of a man who walked along the trolley track with several steel drills on his shoulders. When he turned to speak to a companion, one of the drills hit the 550-volt trolley line and he hit the ground. He jumped to his feet, grabbed one of the drills and swung at the trolley wire. He hit it all right. Two hours later, Dad had pumped life back into him and his boss fired him. (Bird n.d.:208)

Bird also includes the following account, which, oddly enough, did not result in death:

> Nick opened the car bottoms and the new man grabbed a steel bar and climbed into the first car to pry out stuck boulders. Before Dad could yell, the pry bar struck the 550-volt trolley wire and the new man slid feet first into the ore bin. Dad pulled him out and had begun to pump life into him when the guy flailed out with his arms, shoved Dad aside and jumped back upon the car. That time his bar hit the trolley wire before he got into the car and he stiffened out like a dead mackerel and fell into Dad's arms. (Bird n.d.:15)

Of all conditions that affected miners working in Carson Hill, none had such a mortal impact or is as well remembered as miners' consumption:

> For many years inside the mine all drilling was done with dry drills. To clear chips and dust from the holes, air was blown into them through hollow drills. All those chips and the dust were blown back into the faces of the drill operators. Silicosis, or miners' consumption, knocked out the healthiest

of men in just a few years. Some of the Serbian miners died before they learned to speak understandable English.

> Later on when wet drills were used to wash out those chips and the dust, the incidence of silicosis decreased, but there was still enough silica dust in the atmosphere to disable a miner rapidly. (Bird n.d.:199)

Although many men managed to avoid contracting miners' consumption for several years, others would get it within the first few months of work. One consultant whose father eventually died from the disorder, stated that it took him three years to die after leaving the mines; another said that a man might live as long as four to five years on the outside after showing signs of consumption.

When asked about conditions in the mine, the majority of consultants answered that conditions were unhealthy. Asked about exactly what these unhealthy conditions were, the majority began describing consumption. The advent of the wet (or Ingersoll) drills was a lifesaver for many men in the mines.

Considering the number of men 35-40 years old who were "coughing their lungs out," men continued working at the mine where the possibility of contracting silicosis was so great. A consultant said that in those days, eating was an even greater consideration. He went on to say that conditions were so bad in general in those days that many men were probably glad to die rather than keep working. When asked how he had managed to avoid consumption, he answered that perhaps he had not.

Other consultants referred to the condition as: "miners' TB," "being dusted" or "rock in the box." Another explained it by saying that miners got small quartz slivers in their lungs and subsequently died from them. One consultant suggested that it was not the silica dust that actually caused the condition, but the acid released by the lungs to combat the dust.

It was also said that when the Mexicans worked in the mines, they would cover their face with masks, although there is no mention that this method was used by other miners. Supposedly they told the other miners that the dust was very harmful. But since so many miners continued to die from the disorder, the miners either did not listen to them, or the masks were less effective than the Mexicans assumed. It is interesting to note, however, that there were no reports of Mexicans with silicosis. Concerning the amount of dust present throughout the mine operation:

> Working in the mill was not as hazardous as working in the mine. But even there silica dust was forever present. . .
>
> In winter when everything was water soaked little dust filled the air, but in dry seasons the entire top floor of the mill looked smoky. In fact, nearly a quarter inch of dust would settle on the floor in 24 hours. I breathed so much dust that my nostrils would become clogged forcing me to breathe through my mouth. My throat would then become so dry that I had to take a drink of water every half hour to wash out the mud. (Bird n.d.:200)

Bird also described another dust hazard at the mine:

> During construction and installation of the big hoist back inside the mine all concrete was mixed dry by hand outside, hauled 6000 feet back to the jobsite and mixed with water at that point. While this was a commendable procedure considering that the only available power mixer was gasoline motor operated, it also meant that the dry batch had to be mixed by hand in a haze of dust. (Bird n.d.:202)

There were also numerous other accidents which occurred at the mine. The mine inspector rarely went to the mine, and when he did, never actually went inside but would stick his head inside the shaft, look and then leave. This is confirmed by several consultants.

Several consultants gave accounts of "suicide stope" which was a 1600' shaft which was used to drop large rocks down to a lower level. These rocks would often become lodged and had to be blasted free. This was done by a man who would climb up the shaft, set a charge with a long stick and then get out of the shaft before the charge went off. Often the rocks would drop before the miner had even set the charge, and other times the charge would explode before he could get out. This shaft was the site of several deaths according to several consultants.

There was also what was referred to as a "missed hole," which was a charge set to blast rock that, for one reason or another, never went off. When miners left their shifts, they were expected to mark all the missed holes for their shift on a blackboard near the entrance to the mine. This was either not always carried out, or was often ignored because several men were reported killed by later hitting these charges with jackhammers or shovels.

There were also several references to men who were decapitated

in the mines. Three men died in the Morgan Mine tunnel, while riding on a tram. They stuck their head over the side and were struck by the timbers. There is another story told about a "mining inspector" who came from the University of California, Berkeley to inspect the mines. It was not clear whether he was on a formal visit, or possibly an educational one, but he also stuck his head out of a skip going down one tunnel and was decapitated.

Several injuries were caused by hoists and elevators. One consultant claimed that the elevator dropped so fast that when it reached the bottom the cable bounced three times. Another consultant mentioned that one hoist operator "went crazy" after several men were killed on his hoist; another report is that in the 1920's another almost "went crazy" after three deaths.

Several consultants indicated that the "Glory Hole" was the site of several deaths, while others claimed it was the site of most deaths during the early operations. Men would be lowered by ropes to drill powder holes by hand and place dynamite charges in the wall of the shaft. Often, they were not pulled back up in time. Howard Canevaro remembers the time an Austrian fell through the Glory Hole. His body rolled out when the chute door was opened.

Bird examines two other accidents that fortunately did not result in death:

> Though I can blame management for many of the accidents that occurred in the mine, the other side of the coin must also be aired. At one time a winze was being dug from a lower level to a higher one to create an additional escape route from an area of bad ground. The man who put in the last round of holes went to the upper level to watch his blasts break through. He wasn't sure of the exact spot until the blasts went off and dropped him to the lower level. Miraculously, he wasn't killed although he suffered at least a dozen broken bones.
>
> (Bird n.d.:207)

> . . . through a freak accident one day the donkey engine at the top of the hill was pulled several degrees out of alignment with the tracks. That made the cable tend to climb the chime at the end of the drum and slip off onto the axle. To prevent that, the operator had to stand between the drum and the approaching car and hold the cable away from the chime. Although the company supplied a pick handle so the operator didn't have to guide the cable with his bare hands the operation was extremely hazardous. If any portion of his clothing was

> to snag on a broken wire on the cable he would have been pulled onto the drum and be wound up like a mummy in a steele jacket. Death would have been too horrible to imagine. (Bird n.d.:206)

There is little reference to violence among the miners themselves, other than one reference to a stabbing (details are lacking for this). There is an allusion to the fact that shift bosses would often take a miner on their walks with them as a protection against violence. It was said that the Slavic miners were more prone than other groups to injure their bosses when they were angry and would let things fall down the shafts on the bosses. This was not supported by other consultants, however.

Lighting in the mines was minimal, and ". . . operators had to rely upon carbide lamps at night because the few 40-watt lamps around the place cast such a sickly glow that nothing more than ten feet from one was visible" (Bird n.d.:201). Other consultants agreed that the carbide lamp was the sole source of light in the mines. They added that the gas produced by them gave off a sickly smell which was so bad that, besides the regular odor of sweat, the workers had to shower before going home to rid themselves of the carbide odor.

During neither operation of the mine was a doctor available at the site. For $1.00 per month, a miner could be inspected whenever he was ill, but this included no coverage for his family. One consultant said a doctor came from Angels Camp once or twice a week while another indicated three times per week. Still another claimed the doctor from Angels Camp came only when called, and made no regular visits. The nearest available doctors for emergencies were in Sonora or Angels Camp. There is reference to emergency first-aid that was administered by at least one resident of Melones. Bird, whose family lived close to the mine, states that the mine management felt his ". . . Mother's experience delivering babies would qualify her for splinting broken bones or binding the stump of an arm blown off by a premature blast" (Bird n.d.:17).

The highest percentage of complaints among miners stemmed from lung disorders, yet medical attention was also sought for other ailments. Doctors were never compensated for these services by the company. Bird explains:

> Back in those days the company got away with practices which, if attempted today, would result in a strike to end all strikes. For instance, if a man was injured on a job even as a result of company negligence and had to lose a day or two he was docked for lost time. (Bird n.d.:206)

Bird later relates:

> Once when I was bullion man for the cyanide plant I developed a cyanide boil on my right hand that had to be lanced. I not only had to pay the doctor for taking care of an industry caused boil but I was docked for the two days I had to stay home to let the incision heal a bit before I went back to work in those cyanide solutions. Yet the boss knew that I often worked as much as 8 to 10 hours overtime to melt the clean-up into a saleable bar. (Bird n.d.:207)

There is no indication that dental disorders were directly related to working conditions in the mines, as was true in silver mining, yet one consultant did mention that he would set blasting caps with his teeth rather than pliers because of the sensitivity involved and the sulphur present eventually ruined his teeth. Eventually, he had to have them all pulled.

There were several consultants who referred to "Shithouse Grizzley" which was an old ore pass no longer used for its original purpose. An outhouse had been built over it utilizing its rather long shaft. The problem with this was that the toilet was home for a population of crab lice that attached themselves to anyone using the facilities. There is also a mention of the fact that bedbugs often settled in the bunkhouses.

In discussing management's efforts at providing safer conditions, Bird suggests that: "There may have been a semblance of safety measures in the mine, but judging by the accident rate they must have been too rudimentary to have been effective" (Bird n.d.:199). The mines had five rescue teams, each composed of five or six men, yet no consultants were aware of their ever being used except for a futile attempt at rescue at the Argonaut Mine fire in Jackson. The mine purchased Model-A pickups for rescue work, but these were put to other uses. Mark Hanna maintained that the mine safety record was average. Every year a few would be seriously hurt, and during a bad year, a few might be killed. But, he said, "Sometimes they had a good year and never lost a man."

The mine did have fire drills which were timed to check on the speed of evacuation. These were relatively frequent during the last operation of the mine. One consultant claimed that a terrible smelling substance, "Banana Oil" as the miners called it, would somehow permeate the mines, and all the men would leave immediately. A bell would have been useless because of the noise factor.

The majority of accidents were those involving cave-ins, falling rocks and dynamite accidents, which one consultant claimed made working in the mines no more dangerous than doing general construction work during the same time. Milo Bird's manuscript (n.d.:106) also refers to the belief, prevalent among miners, that rats are sensitive to cave-ins. When the miners saw rats leaving a section of the tunnel, they followed.

Even though conditions were considered intolerable, the mine's administrators usually managed to "hush" things up. Several consultants agreed that the mine would give families of injured workers money, not out of concern for them, but rather to keep them away from the insurance companies. The management tried to quiet both accident reports and talk about accidents among miners because, as one consultant said, they were afraid of mine safety experts. If they were investigated, the improvements that would surely be required would cost money. Insurance companies were probably feared as much as was a decrease in production. According to another consultant, there was no type of workman's compensation at the mines until around 1912 or 1914.

Jobs were scarce during this period, and the opportunity to work would probably make a man willing to turn a blind eye even to dangerous conditions. One consultant, when asked what the feeling among miners was when a fellow worker died, replied, "Well nobody would say nothing. Nobody could say nothing." Efforts were made in 1938 or 1939 to organize a union, but "no one went for it." Apparently people were too desperate for work to take chances, and the failure may also be attributable in part to ethnic antagonism.

In his manuscript, Bird shows the other side of the coin: ". . . in all fairness to the management, a high percentage of the serious accidents resulted from the use of alcoholic beverages which the men carried in the coffee compartment of their lunch buckets" (Bird n.d.:199).

Baseball

Baseball at the mines began during the earlier operations there, 1922-1925. It began very simply with several men, usually bachelors, who played after work at the practice field on the Whitaker Ranch near the town of Melones. Soon, however, a league of sorts was begun and teams from surrounding areas would compete. Another story credits Archie Stevenot, the superintendent of the mine, with the organization of the team because he felt the miners needed some-

thing else to do. (His attempts to start a band apparently failed.) The mines eventually supplied the team with uniforms, bats, time off for practice and all day Sunday for games. The players had only to supply their gloves. The Model-A pickups actually intended for rescue work were used to transport the mine's team to and from games. The competition became greater between teams, and soon the Angels Camp team, sponsored by the foundry in that town, took all of the good players from Melones by giving them "soft" jobs at better pay. These "baseball miners" never stayed employed long, however, according to consultants, and "were always looking for a better deal."

The Melones team--the "Melones Maulers"--then began hiring some baseball players of their own. These men, usually employed during the summer months at higher rates than most contract laborers, were given the same "soft" jobs other companies gave their players. Melones at one time boasted an ex-Giants catcher named Murray, and an excellent spitball pitcher named Al Walters. While employed, these men were given time off with pay to practice, and time off with pay to play games on Sundays. One consultant said they made more money than superintendents.

Games were every Sunday and away games were played at Sonora (at the high school), Angels Camp (a game which usually ended up in a drunken brawl, according to most consultants), Jackson, Jamestown, Tuolumne City, San Andreas, Groveland and with the Pickering Lumber Company. Money was usually collected during those games, and it was divided between the teams. The only requirement was that a man had to play for the team where he lived. The Sonora team was considered very good, since it was composed of men working at the lumber mill where there was a larger number of men to choose from. The Melones team won the cup only one year.

One consultant claimed that Sunday was a day off during the baseball season, although it seems unlikely that this was the case for employees other than baseball players. Practice took place during a man's shift, some men arranging their shifts so they were always scheduled to work during Sunday, and therefore always getting paid as well as getting the day off to play baseball. Another consultant claimed that practice was also on Saturdays, although this was not supported by any other consultants. Home games were played at the Melones practice field where bleachers were set up. The team was responsible for paying rent on the property although this was probably absorbed by the company as well.

There was also one consultant from Sonora who claimed to have been on the Sonora High School basket ball team and once played against a team "made up of men from the mines." The high school team won the game. There is no supporting information concerning this, although consultants indicated the presence of a hard-dirt basketball court in the town of Melones.

Highgrading

"My God, let them take it; if it weren't for that, we'd have to pay them wages," said a mine superintendent, according to Mark Hanna.

When one considers the hazardous working conditions and demanding shifts that miners were expected to accept, it is no wonder that they had little allegiance to the mine. They watched mine owners travel to San Francisco for meetings while fellow workers died around them. When the wages are considered, it is not difficult to see why miners would stuff their own pockets as well as the ore cars with gold. The contract miners probably had even less allegiance to the company than the other miners and were accused of cleaning out extremely rich pockets of gold and filling their own pockets.

One consultant claimed that miners took as much as $500.00 per day during the early operation of the mine, yet another said that only about five per cent of the working crews were actually involved in highgrading, which the Cornish called "Family Rock." Another consultant who worked in the mill said the mine was not rich enough to highgrade, adding that if those in the mill could not highgrade, then no one else could since they had access to the finished product. When his boss was later interviewed, he replied that if that man had not done any highgrading, then a lot of gold disappeared mysteriously. Consultants agreed almost unanimously that highgrading was not only possible in the mines but that it was probably responsible for putting several mines in the area out of business.

Even during the early days, highgrading was prevalent. "Highgrading by the miners was on a scale seldom equaled, even at the rich mines. . . in later years:" and,"One Mexican admitted stealing fifteen hundred dollars in one day" (Wood 1949:25). Another consultant said that during the second large-scale operation of the mine, no Mexicans were hired because they were suspected of being notorious highgraders. One consultant said that one man took out $1,000 in a single night, and another man took approximately $11,000 over the period of a year from the nearby gravel

mines. Although several consultants mentioned the local gravel mines as the scene of considerable highgrading, they also claimed that all of the mines in the area were victims of the practice.

When questioned about highgrading in the Project Area, a consultant replied that all the miners "carried their lunch boxes," which referred to the most common method of transporting the highgrade ore out of the mines. Several other consultants mentioned that several men were known to have carried lunch boxes with "false bottoms," yet the weight of these soon gave them away.

Bird told a story about one mine that established separate change rooms for the miners. The mine management was certain the miners were stealing since the mine was producing so poorly. It later became apparent that the miners were actually plastering over any rich pockets they found. When the operation finally went broke and closed down, a man representing the miners purchased the mine. He then hired the same miners who went back in and cleaned all the plastered pockets, making it a very rich mine. Although this is the most extreme case of organized highgrading known in the Southern Mines, it probably does not differ significantly from practices in all mines in the area. The Vallecito Western gravel mine, where many miners went after the first shutdown of the Carson Hill mines, was mentioned as the site of much highgrading. One consultant claimed the mine went out of business solely because of it. The miners at that mine carried the ore out of the mine in their carbide lamps, and, after it was dumped in the receptical for spent carbide, they would return to claim their gold and divide it. According to a consultant, highgrading was not considered a problem until 1900. After this, most mines installed change rooms. Although no consultants referred to organized highgrading efforts within the Carson Hill mines, it was still commonly known and accepted among the miners that such practices were prevalent.

Within the mines, the only information available concerning methods employed by highgraders was that miners would signal the arrival of the shift bosses by tapping on the walls of the tunnel. Other than this reference, it is unclear exactly how the gold made its way out of the mines.

Once out, however, the gold could be sold to any of several middlemen in the area. There were several stores and saloons in the town of Melones where it could be exchanged. There was also a man in Columbia who would mix a variety of ores together and then sell the product to the mint in San Francisco. He paid the miners fifty per cent of the final value. This amount paid to the miners was

known as a "token." Other dealers gave better prices, however, and were most often frequented. There were also dealers in Angels Camp and on Jackass Hill who traded for gold. One consultant maintained that there were some dealers who threatened to turn the miners over to the authorities if they complained about the prices being paid.

The mint in San Francisco had at this time developed a method of determining the exact location of the mine from which the gold was obtained. This, according to consultants, was responsible for the end of speculation in highgrade ore. There are those who maintain that there were shopkeepers in Melones after this method was perfected who continued selling ore to both Greek and Chinese dealers in San Francisco. They, in turn, continued selling to the mint there.

One consultant stated that the dealers, or middlemen, were the only ones who actually made any money from highgrading; and another placed the superintendents of other mines in the category of these dealers, since they could dispose of gold more easily and with fewer problems from the mint. Since they were the only men for a time who had market facilities in the early stages of operation, they would dispose of the gold. It was also common knowledge among consultants that the mine executives were not being paid on a scale proportionate to their duties, and, as one consultant said, they figured they had it coming to them.

When a man was suspected of highgrading, he was given the unpleasant task of shoveling out the bottom of "Shithouse Grizzley," a task which usually made the man quit. Other consultants said that if a man was actually caught highgrading, he was either fined or fired, although information is lacking on the specifics of this. The mill operators were usually the ones caught, which is ironic since usually only low grade ore made it as far as the mill. Any actual highgrade was probably taken before it ever reached the conveyor belts.

An executive once dumped an entire dynamite box filled with highgrade nuggets ("as big as your fist") on the conveyor belt that fed into the mill. As would be expected, (although apparently he was surprised) none of it made it as far as the mill. The mill was considered a good place to highgrade. When the machinery broke down, the heavy ore which contained gold and which had collected around parts of the machinery was easily pocketed.

Whether the highgrading operations were actually formally organized at the Carson Hill mines or not will probably never be known, but it became apparent in discussing this with consultants that the practice was not only tolerated, but that no one would have

ever thought of turning in another who was highgrading. However, there must have been some who "squealed" to the mine management. It was said that they did not meet with violence as one might expect, but were merely ostracized socially.

Some of the highgraders were easily spotted in Melones because they were considered "big spenders" in a town where such behavior was rare. One consultant said the mines not only were aware of highgrading, but that they condoned it, the rationale being that the promise of highgrade was like "a carrot on a stick" to the miners and got extra work out of them.

Wages

> The obstacles that are alike presented by the extremes of the wet and dry seasons, will not admit, probably, of these miners working for more than two hundred days in the year, and the average daily sum amassed by each man, may be fairly quoted at three and a half dollars. . . ./during 1855/
>
> (Marryat 1952:275)

Specific figures concerning wages earned during the turn of the century stages of mining are not available. One consultant, whose father worked at the mill during the early operation around 1900, claimed his father earned $2.50 per day for a twelve-hour shift. Another referred to working a "ringer," a term employed shortly after World War I, which was thirty consecutive days. This earned the worker $90.00. Still another mentioned that early miners earned $3.75 per day and 'muckers' $3.25 per day, although this seems more in line with later figures. One consultant claimed that World War I increased wages for everyone.

During the later period of operation, a jackhammer operator earned between $4.00 and $4.50 per day (about 1931). Other consultants seem to be in agreement that "muckers" or "trammers" made about $4.00 per day, and that miners, either "drillers" or "blasters," made $4.50. Another consultant agreed with the above figures and said that it was "big money during the Depression." He also mentioned "low pay" of $3.25 per day, although the reference is unclear. Another mentioned that $3.00 per day was the average, but added that it was for an eight-hour day.

Wages or salaries for the mines' executives are not known. While one consultant suggested that they probably took a percentage of the mines' "take," most admitted they simply did not know. One

consultant suggested the Master Mechanic, Mine Superintendent and the Mill Superintendent made about $500.00 permonth and also suggested that "shift bosses" made about $400.00 per month. Another specified considerably less for shift bosses, about $6.00 per day. Fortunately, the riddle was solved by the discovery of a paycheck made out to a shift boss for two weeks' work. It is dated May 28, 1935, and is in the amount of $92.67.

Each of the consultants questioned about payday gave conflicting information. One who ran a store in Melones that cashed the miners' paychecks during the period of 1919-1924, said the paychecks were issued on the eighth and the twenty-fifth--the eighth was the "regular" check, and the twenty-fifth the "time" check. He also said he would have money shipped from Stockton to Angels Camp for each payday. The money was picked up the day before payday and taken to Melones in a wagon, usually hidden in something like a keg of nails. Checks on the eighth totaled approximately $20,000 and on the twenty-fifth, about $6,000 or $7,000. Another consultant, who cut firewood as a youth, mentioned that he was never paid when the wood was delivered, but rather on payday, which he claimed to be the fifth and the twentieth.

When one consultant was asked what the difference was between payday and any other day, he replied that there was not much difference except that there were more drunks out than usual. He went on to say that the mine would not pay men if payday fell on a Sunday because then the men would not show up for work on Monday.

The Occupational Hierarchy

According to consultants, the occupational hierarchy was:

General manager
- no specific data

Resident manager
- also known as 'resident superintendent'
- actually ran the mine
- responsible for day to day operation of the mine

Mine superintendent
- responsible for below the ground operations

Mill superintendent
- responsible for operations of mill only

According to Mark Hanna, all supervisors were overtaxed with responsibility because the mines did not want to spend the extra salary for supervision. It was incredible, he said, how they stayed on the job under pressure.

Master mechanic
- a man of considerable power and responsibility
- responsible for machinery at mine and its maintenance
- answered to both Mill and Mine supervisors
- responsible for operation of sawmill, and the compressors
- super.. not maintenance man.

Shift boss
- kept track of tonnage
- "over" about 10 miners, 7-8 muckers/trammers
- also known as "shifters"
- each shift boss was responsible for production of his 40 men (maximum)
- constantly walking to insure performance, hence the title "walking boss"
- lots of buck passing between them, each blaming the other or his crew if problems
- three during day shift, two night

Foremen
- answered to shifters
- "jigger boss"
- responsible for work crew, but no more pay
- temporary position

Machinery operators
- miners...drillers...blasters

One consultant who had worked for three years as a jackhammer operator was promoted to shift boss. He said that there were always a lot of men always trying for that position. Drillers were yelled at by blasters for not leaving area clean...and not finishing a hole ...Drillers yelled at blasters for leaving a mess and therefore not allowing time to drill because they had to clean up before they could drill. Consultants indicated there was continuing antagonism between "drillers" and "blasters." Each accused the other of incompetence.

Muckers
- cleaned up "muck" after blasts and shoveled into ore cars

Bull Gang
repair crew
"Master mechanic" was in charge of them
Consultants indicated that there was little specialization among miners other than experience.

Leisure Time

The previous sections have illustrated how the miners would clean out pockets of gold in the mines and line their own pockets in the process. On payday there were others available to relieve them of the burden of all that gold. Gamblers and prostitutes were the professionals who made conditions of life and work more tolerable in the mines and the surrounding area.

It is perhaps best to examine first the means by which miners during the Rush found release from the day-to-day drudgery of mining their claims. After payday (1855):

> Each gambling house is full; some are crowded; and the streets are full also, for it is Saturday, a night on which the miners flock into Sonora, with the avowed intention of purchasing necessaries for the ensuing week, and returning the same night; but, seduced by the city's blandishments, they seldom extricate themselves from its temples of pleasure until very early on the ensuing Monday morning, when they return to their camps and long-toms, and soothe their racking headaches by the discovery of chunks of gold. (Marryat 1952:236)

There were few women available during the early phases of occupation of the area--one writer suggests "that one woman came for every 500 men" (Gray 1934:288). This did little to discourage the miners from enjoying their "favorite" pastimes, such as dancing.

> In the evening, a ball took place at the hotel I was staying at, where, though none of the fair sex were present, dancing was kept up with great spirit for several hours. . .
>
> It was a strange sight to see a party of longbearded men, in heavy boots and flannel shirts, going through all the steps and figures of the dance with so much spirit, and often with a great deal of grace, hearty enjoyment depicted on their dried-up sunburned faces, and revolvers and bowie-knives glancing in their belts; while a crowd of the same rough-looking customers stood around, cheering them on to greater efforts, and occasionally dancing a step or two quietly on their own account.

> Dancing parties such as these were very common, especially in small camps where there was no such general resort as the gambling saloons of the larger towns. . .
>
> The absence of ladies was a difficulty which was very easily overcome, by a simple arrangement whereby it was understood that every gentleman who had a patch on a certain part of his inexpressibles s hould be considered a lady for the time being. These patches. . . were usually large squares of canvas, showing brightly on a dark ground, so that the "ladies" of the party were as conspicuous as if they had been surrounded by the usual quantity of white muslin.
>
> (Borthwick 1929:303-304)

Another reference speaks of those men who should be "considered a lady":

> In the quarters where Americans congregated there were dances as well, queer affairs which, in the late forties and earliest fifties, were mostly stag functions. The women of Anglo-Saxon races did not come to the mining camps, save for rare exceptions, until the middle fifties. It was a man's country. They had a strange hunger for beauty and a deep hidden tenderness, these rough fellows, lawless and uncouth, ready to shoot 'at the drop of a hat'. They loved flowers, bright raiment,and vivid colors. Many of them wore jewelry. Most of them had pets--bears, birds, cats, or dogs, sometimes tamed foxes or coyotes. (Stellman 1934:110-111)

The author continues:

> Those who posed as ladies in the dance were distinguished by white strings or cloths attached to one trouser leg. But there was nothing effeminate about any of them. They were all male. Their sex isolation produced no perversions . . .
>
> (Stellman 1934:111)

Since women were in such limited supply, the miners had to occupy their leisure time in other pursuits. Certainly church attendance was not a common practice, since the first church was not opened until 1850 in Sonora, and consultants claim that there were no others available in the early days of mining anywhere else in the area (Stellman 1934:45).

J. H. Carson, the first White man in the area, describes Sunday in the mines:

> The morals of the miners of '48 should here be noticed. No person worked on Sunday at digging for gold--but that day was spent in prospecting in the neighborhood, by the more sedate portion of the miners; while others spent it in playing at poker, with lumps of gold for checks; others, collected in groups, might be seen under the shades of neighboring trees, singing songs, playing at 'old sledge' & drinking whiskey--in all of which proceedings, harmony, fun & good will to each other were the prominent features. We ministers of the gospel amongst us, but they never preached. Religion had been forgotten, even by its ministers, and instead of their pointing out the narrow way which leads to eternal happiness, 'on each returning Sabbath morn,' they might have been seen with pick-axe and pan, travelling untrodden ways in search of 'filthy lucre' & treasure that 'fadeth away,' or drinking good health and prosperity with friends. (Carson 1950:9)

It is not known when the first woman (women) came to the Southern Mines. O'Brien mentions a marriage in Carson Hill in 1861 between "Jim Fair . . . /who/courted Theresa Rooney, the daughter of Tom and Alice Rooney, who ran a Carson Hill boarding house known for miles around as 'Rooney's Cow Ranch'." The marriage was referred to as ". . . the social event of the year . . ." (O'Brien 1951:39).

Although it is generally accepted that prostitutes were abundant in the Mother Lode during the 1850's, there is little reference in the literature to the effects of their population on towns along the Mother Lode other than:

> In the 90's Angels was a booming, bustling town and the "Girls of the Night Life" became numerous and were forced from their quarters in the middle of town on Rasberry Street and took up residence in Chinatown, gradually taking over the better buildings and displacing the Chinese. They remained until the law made it illegal for them to operate. (Leonard 1963:6)

Before the turn of the century, a time which coincides with the first opening of the mine, the prostitutes were in full operation, at least in Calaveras County.

Consultants claimed that prostitutes came from as far away as Angels Camp and Jamestown to service the miners on paydays. One consultant claimed that women from "the red light district" in Angels Camp would show up at the saloon in Melones on payday (which was listed as being the fifteenth of the month).

During the early stages of mining, one consultant claimed he and his father transported the women from Jamestown, a center for prostitutes. They were brought by boat to Melones and returned. With the advent of the automobile, miners could travel to Jamestown themselves. If no one had a car, someone would rent one. But if the miners could travel, so could the local sheriff, but he rarely interrupted the activities in Tuolumne county.

Consultants referred to the Jamestown operation as a series of seven shacks, occupied at various times by an assortment of "all white" girls. The fee was usually $2.00. On payday, these women would set up tents, just large enough to accommodate one bed, on the Tuolumne side of the river. A red lantern was hung on each of them. The miners, aware that 'shop' was open, would go across the bridge into the other county in a manner that one consultant said resembled "The Mexican Army crossing that bridge." Visits to prostitutes were not limited to payday, however, and several consultants referred to miners who were "married every night."

In later times, women from the Albany Flat area in Calaveras County also came down to Melones. There was an establishment there known as the "Banana Ranch" or "Bonanza Ranch." Data indicate that this was primarily a later operation. Rates at the Banana Ranch were also $2.00. This seems low for an illegal business subject to legal action at any time, while the same operation in Tuolumne County could operate relatively safely. Since the Banana Ranch also served drinks (during Prohibition), it may have made enough money on liquor to hold down prices for prostitutes' services. Consultants agreed that it was usually left alone by the constable because it was a "clean house." One consultant claimed that the rate at the Banana Ranch was $1.50 depending upon the type of sexual behaviour desired, but this is not supported by any other consultants.

The women themselves were treated very well by most of the miners. Several consultants claimed that the prostitutes were the only women known by many loggers and miners. Others said that all of a miner's paycheck would go to the prostitutes. The women took care of many of the men when they were sick. Many of the prostitutes who had families of their own were still accepted by the community although this is challenged by other consultants who claim the children of these women were often ostracized.

The literature, lacking in information of this type, does refer to Chinese prostitutes during the height of mining activity in the area.

"In the rural mining areas, the few Chinese women who had come abroad often became unwilling prostitutes servicing the sexual needs of homeless, lonely Chinese laborers. . ." (Lyman 1970:85).

One consultant mentioned a Black woman who was a "prostitute" of sorts at the Chicken Ranch area when he was a child. His recollection is limited to the fact that she took him with her on her rounds through the Black community there. He remembered her as a kindly woman and also the fact that she would always hold his hand on these walks.

Most of the miners, said a consultant, were bachelors and spent their check on saloons and prostitutes. Several consultants claimed that the miners were heavy drinkers, and Bird pointed out several times that men would take their drinks in the mines with them. One consultant said the miners preferred to live in Angels because there were more bars there than at Melones. Another, who worked at the Banana Ranch in Albany Flat, said it was not unusual for miners to drink as late as 3:30 a.m. and for others to wake her at 6:00 a.m. on their way to work from Angels to get a drink.

Dancing and drinking were activities that went hand in hand in the early days:

> . . . they danced and drank, drank and danced. At the end of that time, they sank, one by one, exhausted to the floor. But they were by no means inarticulate. Though unable. . . to dance . . . they were able to squirm and howl. And squirm and howl they did, each in a different key, thumping the floor with their feet when able and making grotesque efforts to rise. (Stellman 1934:111)

An 1855 description stated, "The long bar of a saloon is always actively engaged, and the barkeeper must be prepared for all demands in all languages" (Marryat 1952:237). It was the practice at the Melones bars to give the miner a bottle and a glass and to ask later how many drinks he had taken.

It was understood that the men were to pay their boardinghouse bill first. Room and board averaged $35, according to Mark Hanna. Many, he said, lost the rest gambling.

But drinking, gambling and visits to prostitutes did not constitute the entire picture of life in the area in any period, according to some. One writer complained that chroniclers ". . . took no trouble

to study and record the large majority of the people who were decent, sober, and lawabiding citizens" (Gray 1934:288). He summed up the situation by stating that:

> Too much attention has been given by writers to the lawless and shiftless element that came to the state. It is true that gambling and drinking were common among the miners and that the riffraff, the indolent, and the illiterate did occasionally dominate temporarily some of the smaller communities. On the other hand, stories of misconduct and disorder were often exaggerated. (Gray 1934:288)

Working conditions in the mines of Carson Hill were extremely hazardous. There were some improvements from the first to the second operation of the mine, but there were still numerous, and ever-present, dangers. Perhaps because of the economic rigors of the Depression, perhaps because of the diverse ethnic composition of the work force, the labor union movement never made any headway among the miners.

Although we live in a country and a time when such hazards are the exception rather than the rule, in the early years of this century the opposite was true. Perhaps, for the miners of Carson Hill, the situation may not have differed substantially from that of laborers in other high-risk fields of the time.

PLATE 21

This plate shows the Carson Hill mining area, viewed from the west. The shaded area in the center of the hill is the "Glory Hole." Ore was passed down to the bottom of this pit and was then shipped east under the mountain to the town of Melones. The ore was then passed through the mills and chemical treatment plants. The small settlement of Carson Hill can be seen at the base and to the left of the hill. Highway 49 passes through this town, circumvents the base of the hill and then descends into the Stanislaus River canyon. Melones and the Stanislaus River lie directly behind the hill.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

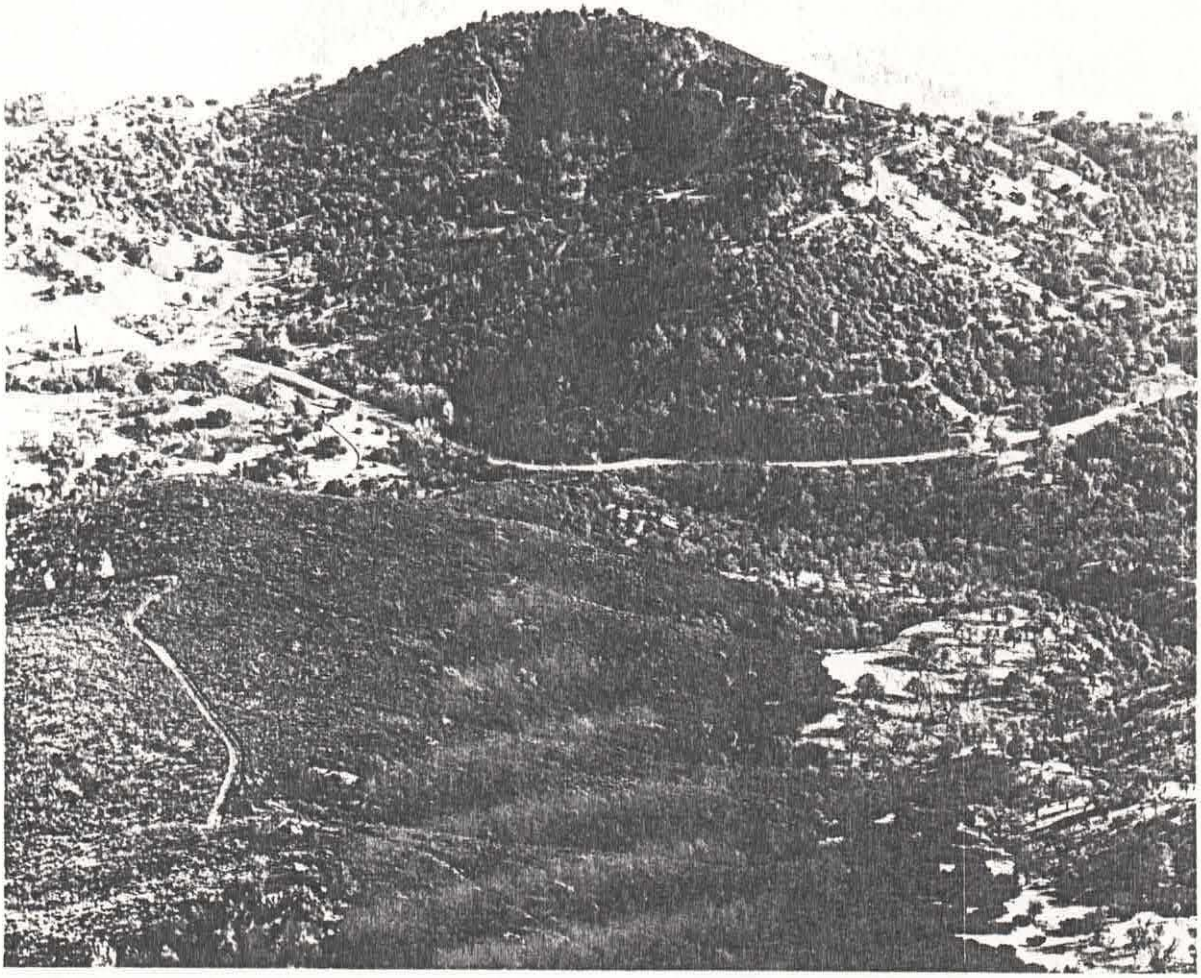


PLATE 21

CHAPTER 8

AGRICULTURE

Prior to the tremendous influx of people to the drainage of the Stanislaus River seeking gold in the early 1850's, ranchers and farmers were using the land under Spanish land grants, for agricultural purposes. Enjoying sparsely populated areas with no great demands upon their subsistence patterns, these early farmers and ranchers were able to live quite adequately upon the fruits of their labor.

With the discovery of gold in the southern mining districts, however, great hordes of people soon settled along nearly every creek and tributary of the Stanislaus River. This sudden increase in population put a strain on both the land and its resources.

There are conflicting accounts of early livestock raising in the area. In the journal of an early prospector, Stoddart, the story is told of a Daniel Murphy, who in November of 1850 passed through Tuolumne County by way of Mormon Creek with a cattle drive.

> From this drove a cow escaped, and as he had not time to hunt her up, he told one of the settlers named George R. Searle, a butcher by trade, that if he could find her might keep her. George and his companions accordingly started out, found and shot her on Shaw's Flat, where he dressed the beef. This was the first feef butchered in the county. (DeFerrari 1963:63)

One consultant showed a clipping from a November 26, 1946 newspaper, (a Los Angeles paper, name unknown) stating that Gabriel K. Stevenot was the man who took the first cattle into the Mother Lode country in 1883. The cattle were purchased near Mission San Jose, Santa Clara County, brought to this area, slaughtered and sold to the miners. The Stevenot family had come to the area to mine but turned to ranching on Carson Hill, raising sheep and cattle.

A rancher near Columbia, Charles Bassett, sold milk to miners and gamblers for a $1.50 per bottle during the early 1850's (DeFerrari 1963:162). Another account said that he had the first and only cow around Columbia. "He milked her morning and night and sold the milk for one dollar the whisky bottle full" (Wells and Peterson 1949:112).

The enormous population growth put a strain on locally produced commodities which increased prices. "Beef cattle prices jumped

from $6.00 to $500.00 a head in 1848-1849 at Angels Camp. Hogs, sheep and goats become so valuable for food that they were immediately branded and registered like cattle and horses" (Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce n.d.:1). Prices of all agricultural products were extremely high. Elizabeth Gunn of Sonora wrote to her family in Philadelphia on August 24, 1851, that eggs were four or five dollars a dozen (Gunn 1928:140). "Sometimes we have potatoes, and we have some tomatoes; enough for two meals, eating them prudently, for just our family, cost a dollar, Cheap!" (Gunn 1928:146). Feeding a family of five must have strained the Gunn budget as it did that of the entire population of the area. Elizabeth Gunn commented in her letter of November 10, 1851, that "I made a beef stew last tuesday and put a dollar's worth of meat and a dollar's worth of turnips and tomatoes into it, and some dumplings, and altogether I think our dinner cost three or four dollars" (Gunn 1928:158). In her letter home dated December 18, 1851, she again spoke of high prices in the Southern Mines:

> You say potatoes are high with you. They are fifty cents a pound here now and have been sold for a dollar and a half. You give thirty cents for a chicken; you couldn't buy one of ours for four dollars . . . As milk is now fifty cents a pint, I often give the children chocolate to drink. How I should like some of mother's sponge cake and custard pudding; it will be long before I can afford to make any. (Gunn 1928:165)

On November 11, 1855, Elizabeth Gunn stated that her son Chester "had a present of two apples. They cost twenty-five cents apiece" (Gunn 1928:237). Apples were so uncommon that her young daughter thought that they were to play with and had to be shown that one ate apples. The high prices remained in effect until supply and demand became more balanced. An increase in agricultural production in the area and/or a drop in population would achieve this.

> Green vegetables were almost unknown along the Mother Lode until the middle fifties. Then women came to the mining camps and planted kitchen gardens, which throve none too well in the hard, rocky soil, with little water to nourish the roots. (Stellman 1934:102)

Many miners who came to the gold fields had knowledge of using and working the ground, and cultivation of the land was evident throughout the Project Area within a few years of the 1849 Rush. Borthwick in 1852, after crossing the Stanislaus river at Robinsons' Ferry in an eastward direction, noted that . . . "in many places

/the rolling country was/ fenced in and under cultivation" (1929:310). A Scotch gardener from New York, and an old acquaintance of Borthwick's:

> . . . was now farming, having taken up a 'ranch' a few miles from Sonora, near a place called Table Mountain, where he had several acres well fenced and cleared, and bearing a good crop of barley and oats, and was busy clearing and preparing more land for cultivation. (Borthwick 1929:328)

Many who came to California in the early 1850's had hopes of becoming wealthy overnight, but the majority found barely enough gold to survive on.

In the area of Shaw's Flat:

> Mendeville Shaw, who had been a farm boy in Jersey, came to this beautiful little valley near Sonora to dig gold. He had no luck, so substituted a plow for a pan and started raising vegetables. The untouched soil was rich with centuries of humus, and Shaw raised vegetables that for size and sweetness were the pride of the region. (Wells & Peterson 1949:117)

Another instance of a successful change from mining to farming occurred to the Lucca Canepa family. Because of inexperience and meager success as prospectors and miners, Lucca Canepa and his father-in-law turned to farming in the French Gulch area. One of their products was wine, and every Saturday the French from French Gulch would come up Coyote Creek with bottles slung from poles over their shoulders to buy a week's supply. The Canepa family later had a small ranch in Murderers Gulch where they built small kilns for processing the limestone there to make cement and whitewash.

Shortly after 1850, gardens became newsworthy items. On August 17th, the local newspaper, the Sonora Herald, informed its readers of the garden of "Mr. Oliver Twist, of Mormon Camp, . . . in which melons were ripening" (Lang 1882:39). Another source mentions Mr. Twist's melon patch and an invitation to visit his garden . . . "and partake of his melons. This is the first notice of gardening, as such, although ranching was established as a business long before this date (DeFerrari 1963:162).

Elizabeth Gunn in her letter of December 17, 1853, says "A man who keeps a ranch sent Lewis a lot of vegetables of the largest size . . . There was a parsnip three-quarters of a yard long and as large

as your fist, and monstrous beets and carrots, and a drumhead cabbage hard as a rock and large enough to fill a big chair seat" (Gunn 1928: 222-23).

As was true of mining during this period, the availability of water was the primary restriction on produce farmers. Elizabeth Gunn told her family in a letter of August 24, 1851:

> If only the land could be watered, we could have elegant gardens. . . All our vegetables come from farms five miles from here, where they have water to use. You know we have no rain here from March to October, and there is not the slightest dampness in the air, day or night.
>
> (Gunn 1928:151-152)

The yearly winter rains were of utmost importance to replenish the water supply upon which the farmers depended. Elizabeth Gunn's letter of December 24, 1854, speaks of her concern about the lack of rain that year: "Christmas time again, but it does not seem like winter. We need rain very much--we have had almost none as yet, and the grass has hardly started. Both farmers and miners are discouraged" (Gunn 1928:232).

As more and more would-be miners turned to farming and ranching, land was bought and territorial boundaries established. Early property boundaries were not surveyed, and one consultant said that the "abstract of title" for some of the land he owned at one time dated from 1856 and referred to trees and boulders for property lines. When the mines closed and gold became harder to obtain, small ranches sprang up with a few cattle, pigs, goats and chickens. Although the majority of those who came to California during this period came to mine, those who for one reason or another turned to agriculture were often very successful. The soil was pristine and very rich, the only restricting factor, though a serious one, the availability of water for irrigation.

From the Gold Rush on, many people, if they had tillable soil and water, raised vegetables for their own use. One consultant, speaking of the days around the turn of the century, remarked that her family raised their own vegetables and that "Most of the ranchers were pretty self-sufficient."

Eventually the Gunn family also planted a garden; Elizabeth Gunn wrote home about it on August 24, 1851: "Our garden is quite large; it extends some distance beyond the house on either side.

It is in a rough state yet, but I shall plant the peach and plum stones Burk gave me next month" (Gunn 1928:151-152). A few years later she planted the seeds from the apples her children had received as gifts (Gunn 1928:237). Elizabeth Gunn finally had her "elegant garden . . ." and no longer had to rely upon the produce of others.

A consultant from the vicinity of Parrotts Ferry stated that if anyone had a little plot for a garden, they would plant one. In the town of Melones, a consultant informed us that most of the vegetables were grown right in Melones; almost everyone had a small garden. One man in the town kept honey bees among some apple trees north of the bridge. A consultant from the Tuttletown area reiterated that during the first quarter of this century nearly every family living in this area had a small garden.

Ingenious methods were used to construct gardens. In the late nineteenth century, one homestead family started a garden near their home by building a retaining wall in a stream bed and the area behind the wall filled in with soil formed the garden. The garden was spaded and shoveled by hand, half planted each season for both a summer and winter garden. The stream was blocked off above the garden and diverted, but the water could be released into its old bed to irrigate the garden whenever needed.

The topography and native flora of the Project Area have affected the use of the land for agricultural purposes. Much of the river canyon and the lands to the east of the river are covered with chemese and greasewood. These plants grow into a very dense brush, so thick that cattle cannot get through. These areas were undesirable for agricultural purposes and were not homesteaded. James Williamson, a consultant, stated that the Bureau of Land Management land was too poor or the brush too thick to justify the time and expense needed to establish a homestead. One consultant said that this kind of growth limited livestock use in the canyon areas more than did the steepness of the canyons. Thick brush was difficult to clear; most consultants who have cleared brush lands in recent times did so with tractors and bulldozers. One consultant said the lands cleared of brush would stay cleared fairly well except for greasewood, which would come right back up; the only way to control it is with a spray that was developed only twenty years ago. Large areas of land covered by this type of growth are still held by the Bureau of Land Management (4,700 acres).

The type of trees in an area also affect the type of pasture. James Williamson stated that good pasture grass would grow under

oaks that lost their leaves in the winter if the brush was cleared. Grass does not grow well under live oaks; for there are no leaves for mulch, and little sun gets through to the grass.

The type of vegetation limits the ratio of animals to land. One consultant explained that one animal unit is one cow with a calf, or two steers. In good grazing lands the ratio can be as high as one animal unit to six or eight acres. In areas densely covered with chaparral, 20 to 30 acres would be required to graze one animal unit. Such use patterns made it easy for ranchers to over-graze the area. One consultant said that during one winter between 1910 and 1920 cattle died by the thousands because there was not enough feed. It would appear that the ratio of animals to the available pasture was too high to permit the land to recover fast enough for the cattle to survive.

Another serious concern of ranchers and farmers was the availability of water. Many of the homesteads and ranches have springs on them, and there are numerous springs on the ridge above Carson Creek. The Williamson Ranch was fortunate to have springs on their land for their livestock. Cataract Gulch was another area which had a good water supply for livestock. Here the water ran out from the limestone for some distance, then flowed underground again. Many consultants mentioned that an underground river existed below Table Mountain and because of this, there were many springs around it. If natural water was unavailable or not available in sufficient quantity, people had to bring water to their lands. The ranchers in the areas of Tuttletown and Jackass Hill banded together to bring water that flowed from Springfield through Gayle Ditch. Others were forced to purchase water from nearby sources. One of these were the owners of the Peirano Ranch which bought water from the Utica Company to supplement their own springs. Because of this scarcity of water, ownership of water rights became an issue in the area of the Columbia marble quarry. The lawsuit which was in litigation for quite some time was finally settled in the quarry's favor; although the ranchers were awarded the land, the quarry was given title to the water.

Conflict over land between ranchers and/or ranchers and miners seems to have been minimal in the Project Area within the memory of consultants. James Williamson stated that most of the land was bought and sold without the mineral claims, however, there were no problems among the miners and the farmers or ranchers over any mining operation that he could remember. Within this same general area in 1848, the Jamestown District miners' meeting set up laws for the use of the land by the miners:

> An important clause is to the effect that miners may dig up any farm, or enter within any enclosure, by giving the owner security that they will pay all damages inflicted. In no case, however, shall they dig within twelve feet of a building, or obstruct the entrance. Payment of damages meant only compensation for growing crops and improvements.
>
> (Shinn 1948:229)

Milo Bird wrote in one of his stories that there were problems between Bense Morales and Tony Airola over pasture lands in the general area of Melones (Bird n.d.). Morales raised sheep and Airola raised cattle; conflict arose over pasture use and other matters.

Land Acquisition

With the advent of the Homestead Act (1862) people started filing homesteads within the Project Area. Not all these homesteaders had come to the area with the specific purpose of engaging in agriculture, however. Many miners raised orchards on their claims along gulches which enabled them, after one year, to file for a homestead. The land was very rich along these creeks and gulches. Not only did the miners homestead their claims, but many times they planted crops and gardens along their claimed property as well, and the south fork of the Stanislaus River was one place where orchards were planted. Elliots Cabin was owned by a pocket miner who planted peach trees watered by a nearby stream. One consultant recalled these peaches as being "very tasty."

The Ponce Ranch, near Columbia, was begun as a twenty-acre placer claim. Leon Ponce, a Chileno, never worked the placer claim, but his family lived on a small ranch there while their cattle grazed on open range from their ranch all the way to the river. The eldest daughter, Irene Ponce, took over this small ranch, and successfully homesteaded it and another fifty acres.

John Ore arrived during the early Gold Rush period in the Tuttletown and Jackass Hill area. He settled and established a homestead immediately east of Jackass Hill. Within the 160 acres, he had an orchard, garden, vineyard and a wheatfield. After the wheat was harvested, it was taken to Knight's Ferry where there was a flour mill, used by himself and other farmers as well. Not all of his land was devoted to crops; he also had horses, cows and chickens. This ranch in later years grew to 1800 acres, one of the largest in the immediate area.

Many of the farmers and ranchers in the Project Area who homesteaded also bought adjacent or additional lands. The Peirano Ranch in the area of Carson Hill was begun shortly after John "The Goat" Peirano's marriage in 1885. He and his wife homesteaded and built a small house; there was soon a growing family and more land was needed. Peirano bought some land from a goathearder who had established himself in the area prior to Peirano's arrival. At one time this ranch contained 1600 to 1800 acres in or near the Project Area.

The accumulation of large tracts of acreage by various families within the Project Area followed the same general lines. One family was known to send a family or man to a specific area and finance the building of the cabin and improvements to qualify for the homestead. This family would make such generous loans that the homesteader soon found himself in debt and not able to pay it off. He would then have to give up the land after the homestead had been patented. The family who loaned the money amassed a large amount of land in this fashion.

Another method that was used in various areas was to set up a specific man, i.e., an old miner, on a piece of adjoining land, and then, once the patent was filed, buy the miner out, giving the buyers more land and the miner a new grub stake. Another, and apparently very common procedure, was uniting land holdings of neighbors by marriage and/or various cousins, brothers, sisters and widows filing for adjoining homesteads. Many of the ranches in the area were increased in this way. This was done in the case of both men and women; therefore, the change of title on land might not follow the family name and appear on records as being sold, but the change might have been to a man who had married into the family that held the original title.

One consultant in the area who had several ranches stated that he had inherited most of them from his wife's father. Another example of families' joint accumulation of homesteads can be found in the Rawhide area. Henry A. Douglas homesteaded his 160 acres in 1873 (Plate 22). His sister, Emma F. Douglas, homesteaded in 1902. She later married a man by the name of McGalaster, and this homestead became known as McGalaster Flat. Douglas also had two daughters who filed homesteads adjoining or near the original homestead. Hatty Douglas Boothman homesteaded in 1894 and Emma Douglas White in 1902, bringing 640 acres within the Douglas family. The Douglas' were cousins to the Williamsons who also lived in this area.

The Kahl family who came to the Rawhide area from Union Hill at the prompting of James M. Williamson provide another example of family accumulation. Jacob Kahl homesteaded in 1882, his widow in 1912, and the Kahl children also homesteaded near the original homestead. Joseph Kahl, a son, filed in 1889, and a daughter Margaret Kahl Williamson filed for a homestead in 1911 after she became a widow. Two other sons, Jacob and Lewis Kahl, filed for homesteads in adjoining areas in 1891 and 1892.

There were four Lorenzen homesteads established from 1880 to 1897. Some of the resulting ranch was flooded by the southernmost arm of the present Melones Lake. Below the present high water mark are the remnants of an old rock wall, foundations of the pegged barn and house and the original road down to the house. A consultant remarked that some of the Lorenzen family were buried on the north shore just above the high water mark. This ranch was purchased by the Scott family and became known as the Scott Ranch. The house was used as a boarding house for workers during the construction of the Melones Dam in the mid-1920's. In 1945 Wade Coffill purchased the land not bought by the Government for use as seasonal pasture.

Many of the ranchers who purchased their lands had long tenures on their ranches. Fred Kinney came to the area in 1915 and bought his first ranch in 1920. His holdings grew to about 1,000 acres from Coyote Creek to Duck Bar and northward to Rose Creek. He had cattle on this land until about five years ago when he sold out.

Cattle Ranching

Members of the bovine family, including cattle, sheep and goats, have a long history within the boundaries of the Project Area. Prior to the Gold Rush of 1849, there were Spanish land grant ranches, and shortly thereafter pioneer families established homesteads with the primary purpose of raising livestock (Calaveras County Chamber of Commerce n.d.:n.p.). Some of these pioneer families have continued in the livestock business through several generations. In many cases, ranches (especially the larger ones) have found it necessary to move their herds seasonally for pasture. Without sufficient rain throughout the year or proper irrigation, the livestock tend to eat grass down and have to be fed supplementary food or be moved to other pastures.

Pasture movement was recorded as early as 1851 by Elizabeth Gunn when she wrote, "There is no grass now; the cows have to be fed, and they look poor and lean. Lewis has some goats; they are out at pasture now and will come home in the fall" (Gunn 1928:147). In the late 1800's Gabriel K. Stevenot, founder of the Stevenot Ranch of Carson Hill, drove sheep over Ebbetts Pass to summer pasture. His route went through Murphys and Avery's, up to Bear Valley and into the Blue Lake region to the Stevenot sheep camp. Six or eight bands of sheep a year would go through the Murphys area to higher pasture. Another consultant stated there used to be Basque sheepherders all over the northwestern part of the Project Area. The sheep ate the grass off and kept the brush down, keeping forest fires to a minimum. He added that "now everything is all overgrown and brushy because there are not as many sheep." Only one band "goes up now," he continued, "and they are moved by truck."

Cattle also were taken to summer pasture. Della Peirano Soleri, a consultant, remembers driving cattle across the river before the turn of the century. In the early part of the twentieth century, a consultant whose ranch borders the southwestern part of the Project Area used to take his cattle up to the Forest Service land around Cherry Valley in May. This drive would last three or four days. He did not stay with his cattle in summer pasture, but would ride up on horseback "every once in a while" to check on them. This ride took about ten hours. The cattle would be brought down in October; he would take the cattle across the Stanislaus River at its south fork. Some ranchers from Calaveras County would cross at Melones to their summer pasture in the area of Cherry Valley. The consultant added that not all the ranchers followed this practice.

Another consultant from this area said that he never crossed the river when going to summer pasture. He added that he thought the ranchers who moved their cattle to higher elevations for the summer months went up their respective sides of the river, or crossed it above the Project Area. This consultant's experience would have been in the 1920's and 30's.

The Rolleri and the Airola families had cattle ranches in Calaveras County from the earliest times. They both drove cattle from their ranches in the Project Area to the mountains by way of McCormick's Meadow. Another consultant had herds of cattle on his various ranches throughout the area. He used to run cattle up by Jamestown into the mountains. Fred Kinney, a consultant, had approximately 300 head of Durham cattle, and in late June would

take his entire herd up to Alpine County where he had leased land from the government. This was a five-day drive over the Ebbetts Pass Road. He would return to the Project Area in late September. Mr. Kinney was one of two ranchers in the area to raise Durham cattle; most of the other cattlemen raised Herefords.

One consultant told us about his experience as a cowboy working for Jim McCormick who had ranches in and around the Project Area at the turn of the century. When the consultant was about ten or twelve, he came to the area near Melones to work as a cowboy for his cousins the McCormicks. The cowboys stayed the night at the McCormick ranch and were on the range all day, keeping a watchful eye on the cattle so they would not wander off or be stolen. The cowboys worked around the clock; "there was no eight hour law then and we gathered cattle sometimes as early at 2:30 a.m.," because cattle travel better in the early morning when there are no flies. The cattle were taken from the various ranches into the mountains for summer pasture. Mr. McCormick secured government permits to graze cattle on various government lands in the mountains; this was his "summer pasture." One reason they drove cattle from so many different areas was that other ranchers would use McCormick's permits, however, McCormick had stock in many different places as well.

The consultant remembered using cattle dogs to herd the cattle. The dogs got extremely tired going up the long, steep grades and sometimes had to be whipped to continue. Despite this harsh treatment, /the cowboys/ "couldn't do nothing without a good dog. One dog took the place of two cowboys, and all they got for pay was a piece of steak at the end of the day."

The route taken was from Copperopolis up Highway 4 and up Parrotts Ferry Grade. At Parrotts Ferry they crossed the river just below the present bridge. From here they continued up Yankee Hill and onto the Big Spring Highway to Pinecrest, Sugar Pine and on to Long Barn and Kennedy Meadows. Sometimes they even went on the Patterson grade into Alpine County, and, as one consultant commented, "There were cattle everywhere."

The cowboys did not have regular overnight camp sites. The camp cook with the chuckwagon would pick the place, preferably a flat area where he would set up his chuck wagon and prepare the evening meal. The cooks were generally old men, too old to be cowboys anymore. They did not have a corral for the cattle at these camp sites, but watched the cows all night, not allowing

them to roam too far. It was called "night guard" when they camped out with the stock, quite a boring job. Even after they had herded the cattle up into the mountains, they still rode after them to see that they did not get into a deep canyon where they could become trapped and starve to death.

Extra horses were taken along on the trip; the Spanish name for these horses was remuda or cavilard, and a wrangler took care of them. The wrangler usually had to watch the cattle all night on the drive, and then had to work during the day too. He got all the "rotten jobs" because he was just learning to be a cowboy. The last cattle drive the consultant went on for McCormick occurred about 1912. McCormick subsequently moved out of the cattle business and went on to other ventures.

Another consultant said that ranchers from the Project Area ran cattle to the areas around Deer Lake, Woods Lake, Buck Lake, Granite Lake and Emmigrant Lake and then on up to the high or mountain ranches for the remaining summer months. The cattle moved through Sonora to Yankee Hill, then on to the mountains. One of the first stopping places along the way was at Longeway, then on to Cold Springs for a rest and finally to Paiute. Some of the ranchers would go up to Dodge Ridge and Woods Basin as well. After this area had been grazed, the cattle would be driven up a little further to the Deer Creek area.

The cattle and sheep were driven in small groups so there would not be a big jam-up on the roads, and advance orders had to be made for space at corral sites. The consultant intimated that often two or more drivers would arrive at a corral at the same time, and this would lead to conflicts among the ranchers. One such corral was located at Pinecrest. In the fall, usually in October, the cowboys would gather up the cattle and head back down to the lower ranches. About twenty-five miles could be covered in one day on this trip down the mountains.

A consultant who grew up on a small farm near the Columbia-Parrotts Ferry area said that the ranchers who drove the most cattle to summer pasture were from downriver and in Calaveras County. She said the ranchers in Calaveras County would go up towards Pine Log. Others would take their cattle up Highway 108 to Ebbetts Pass; it would take two or three days to get to summer pastures. These ranchers either owned or rented the summer pasture from the Forest Service. A retired rancher said that both the sheep men and the cattlemen burned all the downed timber in the old days, resulting in large areas of open pasture.

One of our consultants, whose family had come to the area during the Gold Rush, used the old Scott Ranch for winter pasture; however, instead of moving his cattle to the mountains for summer pasture as did other ranchers in the area, he took his cattle to a ranch around Oakdale, This has been the practice since about 1945 on the Scott Ranch. He did not take cattle to the "high country" in the summer because "it is too chancy, you always lose some of the cattle and they are hard to round up in the fall."

Not all landowners in the Project Area who owned livestock moved their herds to pastures outside the area. Those who did not fall into two groups: those with smaller herds, and those who had excellent pasture lands which afforded year-round feed and/or irrigated pastures. There is a paucity of information from those whose families have been in the Project Area for generations and owned lands that could carry large numbers of livestock year-round. Some of the ranchers were reluctant to speak with New Melones Ethnographic Crew Members as a result of unsatisfactory relationships with the Army Corps of Engineers. For example, one consultant said that at one time he had about 1,200 acres surrounding the old Melones Lake and river, and he ran "a lot of cattle" in that area. This person did not look favorably on loss of land to the U.S. Army Corps.

Around the turn of the century, there were areas within the Project boundaries that were used as open range. A few consultants told us that at that time there were no fences in their areas and the cattle ran anywhere they wanted, to be rounded up whenever it was convenient for the local ranchers. In one consultant's mind this made the feed for the cattle "free." Mable Ponce Draper and Irene Ponce, two sisters who grew up on a small farm near the Project Area, said that when they were young the cattle were turned out to roam freely; there were no fence laws. Their family's cattle would often wander down to the Parrotts Ferry area, and the kids would have to go looking for them. Mrs. Ponce said, "As kids we could not get home fast enough from school /in Columbia/; we would hike all along the river looking for cattle." Mrs. Draper said that when she was young she would ride around the Parrotts Ferry to the Columbia area looking for and rounding up her family's cattle. Everyone's cattle were both branded and ear-marked. "Round-up was a family affair, and if you got someone else's cow you would shoo it in the direction of its home."

Livestock that was raised in the Project Area was sold to various markets. There are records of cattle sales to miners shortly after 1849. The cattle brought into the area by Gabriel K. Stevenot were slaughtered and sold to the miners in 1853. Dan McCormick

came to the Sonora area about 1875 and successfully entered both the ranching and the butchering business.

Many consultants told us that butcher carts traveled from home to home throughout the Project Area in earlier days. There was one such butcher cart that came from Angels Camp to Melones, stopping at all the ranches along the way to sell meat.

The McCormicks who had ranches throughout the Project Area had butcher shops in Sonora, Angels Camp and possibly San Andreas. Cattle from these ranches were driven to Sonora and to an area near Shaw's Flat where slaughter houses were owned by the family. At this time beef sold for about $20.00 for a 2,000 pound steer. Meat was also sold to the miners and lumber camps. The Rolleris, another ranching family in the area, had a butcher shop in the area of Bostwick Bar near Reynolds Ferry in the early 1900's.

Cattle were sold to buyers who came into the area, as well as being driven to markets outside of the area. One consultant said he used to herd cattle through the streets of San Francisco from the wharves to the slaughter-houses in "butcher town." At other times cattle buyers would visit one ranch in the area and other ranchers would bring their cattle to him. Another consultant remembered cattle selling for $10 to $15 a head in the period of 1910-20. One consultant had a buyer come to his ranch to buy cattle because the cattle would have lost too much weight had he delivered them. The price in 1930 was eight or nine cents a pound, and this was considered a "big price."

Cattle rustling has been a recurring problem within the Project Area over the years; however, no consultant ever considered it a major problem. A consultant from the Duck Bar area who had a ranch from 1915 until recently said there used to be cattle rustling in that area. Some rustling was also reported in the Parrotts Ferry area. Another consultant told us that prior to the turn of the century, there was never any big problem with outlaws of any sort: "We stopped horse thieves by hanging."

One consultant related that around 1930 there was a severe hoof and mouth epidemic in the area. Ranchers had to destroy thousands of cattle, but the government only partially reimbursed these ranchers. The cattle were then destroyed, stacked in ditches and covered with lime. Deer had to be slaughtered as well.

Mixed Agriculture and Marketing

The sale of agricultural products was not restricted to those persons with large homesteads, farms and ranches; families with small home gardens or a few animals also sold their products. Many homesteaders practiced mixed agriculture; along with gardens, vineyards and orchards, they also kept some livestock. Each family's activities varied according to the type of land they owned, its resources and the background of the homesteaders themselves.

Not only were cultivated crops marketed but there were also instances in which the native flora was gathered for sale. A consultant revealed that toyon or 'red berry' were gathered commercially from both sides of the Stanislaus River. At one time there was a tremendous market for these berries during the Christmas season in San Francisco. One could gather all he wanted; no one cared if the berries were picked. The consultant thought that the cutting back may have encouraged the growth. He remembered one produce farmer from the Shaw's Flat area that did this every year but added, "many other families took the berries."

Mable Draper, a consultant from the Parrotts Ferry-Columbia area, remembered that a ranch near Gold Springs had plum and apple orchards around the turn of the century. The young boys of the area would be hired to cut and haul the plums which would be placed in a smoke house and treated with sulfur to bleach them. The rancher would take them down to Stockton by "the wagon loads" to sell or trade for staples such as bags of flour, sugar and whatever else was needed.

In the vicinity of Parrotts Ferry the Kennick family had a vegetable garden on the river. They sold their vegetables to people on both sides of the river.

According to various consultants, there were six large ranches near Melones: Pendola, William, Morales, Livingston, Marshall and Peirano. Many of these ranches supplied Melones and other areas with vegetables, milk and milk products and meat. When asked where food came from in Melones, Pete Vonich said that although there were two general stores in town, the ranchers supplied most of the produce to the locals. According to another consultant, the Williams Ranch near Jackass Hill delivered milk to Melones. Vonich added that some people had their own gardens.

The Wood family homesteaded 160 acres that later became part of the town of Melones. These large ranchers in the Melones area "were pretty well off" and did not mix much socially with the townspeople while the mine was open between the 1890's and the 1920's. The Italians who moved into this area about 1885 - 1900 to work in the mines settled on small ranches. After the Melones mine closed in December 1926, it was the ranchers who remained.

Milo Bird wrote about the Livingston's sheep and goats (1908-1909):

> The old Livingston place was directly below Ghee Whiz Point and the house was built around 1850. They had a swinging bridge across the river from the Livingston home. Much of the furniture was brought around the Horn.
>
> They raised goats and sheep which crossed the river on the swinging bridge to forage on the other side. All you had to do was get a goat to go and the sheep would follow.
>
> (M. Bird n.d.)

This ranch had sheep corrals and gardens around the house. Other consultants remembered Jack Livingston's Angora goats. Josephine Schwoerer recalls seeing them on the hillside with their long coats flying in the wind. "They looked like waves in the ocean." Another consultant mentioned a man named Livingston who lived on the Calaveras side of the river near Melones who pastured goats near the river.

The Morales Ranch was founded by Antonio Morales, a Mexican who fenced off and claimed an area on the side of Carson Hill above the town site of Melones that ran down almost to the river between the land owned by Pendola and Wood. Dorothea, Antonio's wife, filed the patent on the homestead. The Morales Ranch was devoted mostly to goats, sheep and a few cattle. However, most of their income came not from ranching but from the freighting business that Antonio Morales owned and operated between the Carson area and Stockton. Antonio died at a relatively young age from a hernia he acquired trying to lift a wagon wheel. One consultant remembered a Mexican family named Morales that ran cattle on the hillside west of Indian Gulch in the area of the new Melones bridge. Another consultant added that this ranch raised goats and sheep and was relatively poor as compared with the other ranches in the area.

Ben Marshall, a native of Kentucky who rode with John Fremont in the cavalry during the California Campaign, homestead-

ed 160 acres between Carson Creek and Angels Creek. The Marshall Ranch primarily raised cattle with some grains and orchards planted. In comparing these two ranches one consultant said, "The Marshall Ranch was more productive than the Morales, but the Morales Ranch had more value due to its location on Carson Hill." The bulk of the Morales Ranch was bought by the Carson Hill Company and the Melones Mining Company.

According to Ted Bird, the Pendola Ranch supplied the townspeople with vegetables, fruits, milk and eggs. The Pendola Ranch also had a large vineyard--"it was a fine vineyard." Elaine Segali said that "the Pendolas at the Pendola Ranch had beautiful vegetables. People could buy fresh vegetables from them. They had a lot of cows too, so you could buy milk from them; they didn't have a regular dairy or creamery, just extra milk sometimes."

Lorenzo Pendola came to the gold fields directly from Genoa, Italy in 1852. In the late 1860's after the Gold Rush was over and the "easy" gold found, Pendola had an opportunity to make a living as a farmer, a consultant related to us. He either purchased, patented a claim or homesteaded on the area known as the Pendola Ranch. He grew many varieties of fruits and vegetables, including wine grapes. Vegetables ripened early down in the canyon--the Pendola tomatoes were about three weeks earlier than the tomatoes everywhere else in the area. In the winter Lorenzo Pendola grew cabbage, beets, celery and potatoes and also dried fruit such as apples, peaches and figs.

Besides vegetables and grapes, the Pendola ranch always had milk cows, even though the dairy operation was never very big until World War I. Shortly thereafter, however, the dairy operation stopped. Chickens were also raised for their eggs, but the sale of eggs was a small sideline to the vegetable sales. Lorenzo Pendola himself would sell the vegetables to markets and private individuals. He would go three times a week to Angels Camp, twice a week to Sonora and once a week to Murphys. In August when there were many vegetables to haul, Pendola would load up the wagon in the middle of the night and leave around 3:00 in the morning. In order to climb out of the canyon, he used a "spiked team." On the tongue of the wagon was hitched an extra horse; and when he reached the top of the grade, he would release this extra horse to return home to the ranch.

In the 1880's after the Sonora Pass was open, men would come with wagons and teams from Bodie, California to buy vegetables from

the Pendola Ranch. They would try to buy most of the vegetables a little green so they would ripen on the trip back to Bodie. Mr. Pendola would get about $20.00 a wagonload for vegetables, and the teamsters paid in gold which they carried in the horsecollars of their teams.

Lorenzo Pendola's main summer crop was not vegetables, but wine grapes, according to a consultant. The grapes were the mission variety originally brought over by the Spanish. In a good year he would produce about 3,000 gallons of wine. In addition to wine, he also did a good business in wine vinegar.

The Peirano Ranch, also near Melones, was begun by John "The Goat" Peirano who left Genoa, Italy shortly after the Gold Rush to avoid being drafted into the army. At one time this family owned 1600 to 1800 acres in and near the Project Area in the vicinity of Carson Hill. One consultant remembered that shortly after the turn of the century the area around the house looked "like a park." John Peirano had a winery at the ranch and many acres of vineyards. He shipped his wine to Nevada and New York and sold it locally at Melones and Angels Camp. Lorenzo took pride in his winemaking and fussed over its clarity. One consultant said, "you might call the kind of wine that he made champagne." He also supplied the church in Angels Camp with altar wine. He had one 1000-gallon tank, two or three 500-gallon tanks and several ten- and twenty-five gallon tanks. He insisted that these had to be oak barrels. The barrels were cleaned out with soda so the wine would not be sour. Della Peirano Soleri told us that the mainstay of the ranch for many years was wine, and her father sold out his wine stock every year. He sold the wine for under fifty-cents a gallon and the wine vinegar for twenty-cents a gallon. Most of the wine and vinegar was sold to individuals who came to the ranch especially to purchase it. Another consultant said the Peiranos had a huge wine cellar; he added that all the Italians in the area made wine and most had wine cellars that were bigger than their houses.

The Peirano Ranch had many orchards. Peirano had planted different kinds of peach trees so that there would be a different crop each month for several months. A consultant remembered that some of the peaches weighed as much as a pound. She added that the soil on the ranch was very fertile. This ranch also had a few chickens and about 300 head of cattle. Cattle was sold to a butcher named Conrad Rose in Angels Camp. Wood cut on the ranch was sold to the mining companies in Angels Camp; they used the wood to produce steam to help operate the machinery.

One consultant remembered the farmers bringing wine to sell in Melones and thought the wine to be the farmers' principal income. During Prohibition the farmers would bring in a "lethal" compound they called 'jackass brandy.' Jackass brandy was distilled from the local wine, made on various "ranches and in old mines whenever they didn't see the sheriff go in for his payoff." Another consultant stated that there was bootlegging throughout the area at this time. There was no problem of supply; the bootleggers never "got hit too hard" by the law, and they were able to supply everyone. One still operated on Mormon Creek near the river, and there were a couple around Rawhide. Bootleggers would make runs from Calaveras County to Tuolumne County at night. One of their trails was down Bowman Gulch to Bean Gulch and across the river. "All kinds of people were bootlegging; it was an easy way to make money."

One consultant told us that "the Italians were the ones who grew vegetables commercially. The Italians would have their entire family working in the gardens." Many of the large produce farmers were Italians; however, others also entered into this market. Another consultant informed us, for instance, that a Mr. Francis raised vegetables in the area of Bostwick Bar Bend about 1900. He raised peanuts, sweet potatoes, melons and alfalfa and would take his produce all the way to Columbia to sell.

Chinese were another ethnic group known for their gardens throughout the Project Area. Many consultants remembered seeing Chinese men carrying their produce on pongs, a long pole carried over the shoulder with a basket suspended from each end. One consultant recalled an old Chinese man who "had a vegetable garden in Melones." This was probably Ah Yet who had his gardens at Bostwick Bar until 1906-1907 and sold his vegetables in Melones to the families living in the town. Ah Yet was not the only Chinese who grew vegetables and sold them in neighboring areas. One consultant said that he had heard of an "old Chinaman who had a garden just below the Moaning Caves." He would carry his goods all the way to Angels Camp on a pong. Another consultant remembered a Chinese who had a vegetable garden by the railroad tracks near Montezuma, and the vegetables grown there were carried by pong to all areas.

The Williamson Ranch

The Williamson Ranch, located within the Project Area, gives an insight into farming and the changes this lifestyle has undergone in the last one hundred years.

James M. Williamson, founder of the Williamson Ranch, came to California from Ireland. He became a citizen of the United States in Tuolumne County on September 24, 1866. When he was in his 40's or 50's, Williamson settled in the area south of French Flat; in October, 1882 he filed for a homestead of 160 acres. (Note: Most of the dates for homesteads are patent dates which are given at the end of the homestead period and indicate that the person now owns the land.) After cutting the brush in one field and burning it, he plowed around each tree (oaks) to cut the roots. Once the trees were felled, he cut and sold them for firewood. This field was then planted in grain and hay crops (wheat, barley and oats). Plowing this field was hard work with a team of oxen or horses and a hillside plow. Grains were harvested with a threshing machine (partly owned by Williamson) powered by a team of horses walking in a circle. A large hay barn was constructed in the field (Plates 23, 24).

Williamson also had income from freight hauling. He owned his own wagons and teams of oxen and horses and hauled freight from Stockton to Columbia, a two-day trip during the late 1800's. He also raised some livestock.

He met the Kahl family of Union Hill near Columbia. The Kahls had come from Germany to San Francisco and then to the Mother Lode. James M. Williamson persuaded the Kahls to homestead near him; "he had marriage in mind" to one of Jacob Kahl's daughters, Margaret Kahl. She was born in Germany and had come to this country "as a babe in arms." Jacob Kahl homesteaded 160 acres on the northern border of the Williamson place in 1882. In 1884 James Williamson set up an old French prospector, Louis F. Chantereau, on a homestead to the west of his own on land he had chosen. Once this homestead was patented, Williamson bought it for $200.00 in gold.

James M. Williamson built a home on his homestead that has been used for two generations by the Williamson family. The bricks for the foundation and basement were locally made and believed to have come from Columbia. The floor joists had been cut and fitted into the sill. The original house (which was later enlarged) was built with square nails. Margaret Kahl and William M. Williamson were married, and on September 29, 1872, twin children were born, a girl and a boy, and another boy was born later. The baby girl died of smallpox in 1873; the boy, William J. Williamson, took over the ranch after his father's death in 1892.

The old house built by James Williamson was enlarged, and various outbuildings were constructed. The horse barn was just west

of the house; horses were kept closer to the house because they needed more attention at times than the cattle. The cattle barn was in the hay field, and Williamson often did his own veterinary work on the stock. For a mare that had colic, he tied her head up and poured a mixture of baking soda and water down her. She swallowed this mixture which helped her to get rid of the gas. "This would work on horses, but not for cattle--a cow would drown." There was also a small blacksmith shop just above the garage. Once Williamson dropped a spark into a box of old dynamite; he just picked up the box and carried it out of the shop and dropped it in the creek.

The cellar of the house was used primarily as a storage area for the family food supply. Homemade jams, jellies and pickles lined the walls. Both summer and winter gardens provided most of the vegetables. The farm raised chickens, ducks, and turkeys as well as cattle and pigs. The chickens were kept for their eggs, but pigs were butchered in the winter. Some pork was smoked, some salted and stored in the cellar and the rest eaten fresh. Rarely would a steer be butchered since it was difficult to use all the meat before it spoiled. When one was butchered, most of the meat would be salted down in brine which made it taste like corned beef. Some meat was obtained by hunting; and after a deer had been killed, the carcass would be hung outside for the first night to cool, then quartered and hung in the cellar. A crust would form on the quarters, and the meat would keep for two to three weeks, improving with age.

Margaret Kahl Williamson worked in the fields, pitched hay, chopped firewood "just like a man" right along with her husband. The only work that she did not do was plowing. In 1911 Margaret Kahl Williamson completed a homestead northeast of her husband's. She added more land to the family holdings when she purchased some of the homestead of Hatty Douglas Boothman, daughter of Henry A. Douglas, in 1894.

Margaret Williamson told her children and grandchildren that Joaquin Murietta used to come by their home to get something to eat in earlier days. If everyone was out working, he would fix himself something and leave a little change with a note saying "Joaquin was here." She added that he never bothered poor people, therefore they never told the Law about him.

William J. Williamson homesteaded in 1900 to the west of the family's acreage, adding another 160 acres. The hay field was planted only a few years in grains and then used for pasture for

livestock. The major crop on the ranch during the tenure of William J. Williamson was livestock, both cattle and hogs. He kept his cattle at the ranch all year long and did not take any to summer pasture out of the area. At one end of the hay field was a spring where a watering trough for the livestock was constructed. This area had many springs, and water for the livestock was never a problem.

Although William Williamson worked for others for short periods, the majority of his livelihood came from the land. When he was young, he worked for other farmers in the area on threshing machines. About the turn of the century, he worked for a cyanide recovery operation on Bear Creek in the western area of the Henry A. Douglas homestead. This cyanide plant, constructed to recover gold from the sands of Bear Creek, was not very successful and soon closed.

Cattle, dairy cattle and hogs brought in cash, and during the 1920's the ranch had milk cows. In the spring the family would separate the cream in a separator right in front of the house; and when they had a five-gallon can full of cream, they would send it to San Francisco. A few days later the empty can would come back with a check for $23 to $24. The skimmed milk was fed to the pigs. Cattle were also sold during this period: a cow sold for $20 to $25 and a big calf for $15. Men were hired to help with some day work such as hauling hay; Williamson would hire anyone who was available to work for the necessary time.

William Williamson would take a two-horse team and spring wagon into Jamestown once a week--"he had to get his chewing tobacco." Surplus eggs and potatoes would be traded at the store for staples like flour and sugar, used mostly in canning. A dozen eggs would sell for ten to fifteen cents at the store. When cattle and/or hogs were sold, the bill at the store would be settled.

The Williamson family "always ate good." Mrs. Williamson's bread, butter and noodles were well remembered. To make butter, fresh milk, warm from milking, would be placed on the back of the stove to help the cream rise to the top. Milk for drinking was kept in the cellar where it would cool.

The Williamson children attended the Rawhide School, a one-room, one-teacher schoolhouse with grades one through eight. The children would walk about six miles a day to school and back; their route would take them up and across Table Mountain. The two

Williamson boys' daily duties included milking the cows before school and, in the afternoon, gathering the cows and milking them again. They also walked all over the area looking for their stray beef cattle.

During Christmas vacations in the 1920's, the Williamson boys would run trap lines from the hay field all the way to the Laughen /sic/ Ranch in Peoria Flat (in the area of the New Melones Dam). Ranchers did not mind their trapping on their lands; some of the people who had sheep would lend the boys traps. They trapped racoon, skunk, coyote, ringtail cat, gray fox and bobcat. They would dry the pelts and sell them which brought them "a dollar or two" for spending money. Mrs. Williamson and the children used to go all over the hills, including Table Mountain, to collect flowers and plants for an aunt who was a botanist.

In the 1920's the Williamsons would have barn dances in the hay barn before the hay was put in for the winter, and families would come from all around to attend these dances. William Williamson played the violin by ear, and Mrs. Moile, a daughter of Andrew Poor, played the organ. The organ would be picked up in the Model T truck that William Williamson bought in 1923. Entire families would come to the dances - mostly ranching families. Everyone arrived in the early evening. The younger children would watch the dancing and play outside in the moonlight; their noise would sometimes drown out the music. The last dance, always a waltz, would be played about three in the morning, after which everyone went home. Other ranchers and farmers in the area would also have dances or get togethers "every once in a while."

William Williamson died of "blood poisoning" from a scratch on the back of his hand he received from a pipe on July 1, 1927. His oldest son, James Williamson, took over the running of the ranch. He had just graduated from the eighth grade the month before. He operated the ranch much in the manner of his father; beef continued to be the most important activity. More acreage was added to the ranch by James Williamson and his brother, William Williamson. During the 1930's beef cattle were driven to the McCormick Ranch where they were weighed and sold to buyers, and everyone at the scales would try to guess the weight. Once these two brothers missed the weight of five cows by only ten pounds.

Employment

Many of the early settlers who became involved in agriculture had come to the area for other reasons. Some came for gold and decided to stay and work the land. Even on the land, they were not always financially secure. During the period from 1860 through the 1880's, Lorenzo Pendola had a payroll of $1,000 a year, a very large expense. Through the years some ranchers have entered the labor force in other occupations and have had to hire help to care for their ranches. Prior to the turn of the century, Frank Marshall of the Marshall Ranch worked at the Jones Mine and hired an older Chileno to do all the heavy work and the plowing. Another rancher in the northern vicinity of the Project Area made extra money by taking "dudes" through the mountains. He would take trails which stretched from Tahoe down to the San Bernardino Mountains.

Ranchers also employed people to help out around the land. Lorenzo Pendola employed a crew of five men from Italy. In addition to room and board, he paid each about $200 a year. One of these immigrants married one of Pendola's daughters.

Many local people (including Indians and Chinese) were employed in various capacities on local ranches or farms. The Airola Ranch hired Indians for putting up hay in the summer, pick and shovel work, wood chopping and cattle driving. Indian women helped with the wash on old wash boards, worked cleaning up yards and assisted the women. Some worked for only short periods of time, but others stayed on. One Indian man has worked on the Airola Ranch for almost fifty years. He started cutting wood and then handled the irrigation for over 20 years. A consultant remembered that Indians helped them with their haying and also worked digging ditches - "Papa always worked along with them." Indian women also helped with clothes washing at this ranch. The Peirano Ranch employed an older Indian woman to work around the house and do laundry. She would often hide clothes if they were too dirty. She reportedly stole things, but "the things she took seemed to be of little value since Mother did not seem to care much about it." The Kenny ranch also had an Indian woman who came every Monday to do the wash.

The ranchers near Chicken Ranch hired the Indian men from there to do various jobs. They were known as good wood cutters, and stovewood was cut and stacked in tiers that were 14" X 4' X 8'. They were paid by the tier and received $1.00 to $1.50 a tier. A "good man" could cut and stack two tiers of wood a day, all the work

done with a hand saw. They also worked cutting hay and putting it loose into the barns. Working from sunup to sunset in the summer heat, they could make $1.50 to $2.00 a day. Other odd jobs such as gardening were also available, but all of this work was parttime. Chinese were also employed for garden work by the ranchers and were considered good workers. A consultant said his family had a Chinese servant as did most of the ranchers. "After the Gold Rush many Chinese went to work for ranchers building stone walls."

Ranchers would call on relatives to help out, and one consultant reported that he often helped a relative who did not pay him much. Instead, the relative might buy him a "pair of cowboy boots or something and then he had to work them off."

Social Life

A rancher in the Project Area remembered dances at the dancehall in Sonora, at the school in Tuttletown and at the school in Rawhide. He stated that he rarely went to them. He also remembered attending a Vaudeville show in Sonora on the 4th of July. The Williamsons gave dances in their hay barn; other ranchers and farmers would also host dances, usually in the largest room of the house or barn.

Local people would get together for picnics down by the Stanislaus River. Everyone would bring potluck, and "everyone got to sample each other's cooking." After the old Melones Dam was built, the lake became a favorite picnic spot.

Haying and pig-slaughtering time were also events that brought people together. Della Soleri remembered that hog-killing time was a big event, a lot of work, all the men would share, then there would be a barbecue afterward. This was a big event in Carson Hill from the time Mrs. Soleri was a little girl (approximately 1900) until World War II. She also remembers haying as a community project.

Children of the ranchers and farmers helped their parents and usually had tasks they were responsible for every day, such as feeding and gathering livestock. But, many consultants remembered going to the river to fish and swim when they were children. One consultant remembered that around 1917 the Mitchells had horses in their pasture that all the ranchers' children were free to ride if they could catch them. They also provided the saddles and bridles, and the children could go into the tack room and borrow whatever they wanted. Mexicans and Indians were not included on the list of

children that she mentioned. The riders varied in age from teenagers to ten-year olds. They would ride to Angels, Murphys and to Camp Nine. They had no adult supervision, but the older kids were responsible for the younger.

The white ranchers enjoyed an active social life among themselves. They would have frequent picnics in the summer complete with organized events such as tug-of-wars and horseshoes. The consultant could not remember how the teams for the events were chosen. One child earned the nickname "Tug" by being the deciding factor in every tug-of-war that he entered. They also enjoyed many outings to the Natural Bridges which were run like a park in the early days by "Old Bach," an old timer who owned the bridges.

People helped others whenever they could. One story was told about Leon Ponce who would sometimes camp with Joe Sanguinetti near the confluence of the Stanislaus and the South Fork of the Stanislaus while he was chasing cattle. One day he ran into Joe while he was chasing some cows by the river, and Joe asked if he had any tobacco. Ponce offered him some Bull Durham and refused to take anything in trade. Joe was mad about that, and would not speak with Ponce for some time. One day Ponce was in the area again and found Joe at the bottom of a bluff where he had fallen. He was badly hurt and Ponce left him and returned with some others to pack him out. Joe recovered from the fall and forgot the previous incident. He and Ponce continued to be friends until Joe died.

Irene Ponce said that "all the neighbors would share whatever they had plenty of. If someone butchered a pig, then they would share the pork so nothing went bad." She added that when her father went salmon fishing, he would give the neighbors all they could use. James Williamson said that neighbors were friendly and always ready to help with either farm work or in case of illness. Everyone was always ready to return a favor. Louisa Kahl, a neighbor woman, was a good mid-wife and delivered babies all over the county. Neighbors would help out with butchering, too; everyone was "handy doing most anything."

The Depression Period

The Great Depression brought another gold rush to the hills of California; there was an influx of people from the cities into the Project Area. These people lived anywhere they could find shelter--in old shacks, mining tunnels and tents. There were both families and single men; the families tried to find an old cabin or shack to

live in. People panned and ground sluiced all along the creeks and river and could find four bits to a dollar a day in gold--enough to buy food. These newcomers also hunted for meat if they had any ammunition; otherwise they would set out snares for rabbits. If someone shot a deer, they would often share the meat with others who were not so fortunate.

The Depression and this influx of population affected the ranchers and farmers established in the area less than it did those in the cities. These years "in Calaveras County were lean ones in economic terms until World War II. Therefore, many of the local residents depended upon P.G. & E. for seasonal work to supplement the incomes from their ranches or other part-time employment" (Joy 1975:42).

However, those consultants whose families were engaged in mixed and/or subsistence agriculture reported that "things were not much different than before" the Depression. Irene Ponce noted that there were the fruit trees, gardens and chickens, so there was always plenty of food. Those things the family did not use were given away to people who needed them. The Williamson family gave extra produce from their garden to some men who were trying to work and live in the old Badger Mine.

Consultants did not report any problems with squatters. "There were a few sticky fingers but not many." Many of these people moved into old mining shacks or built their own near the river. Many lived on Bureau of Land Management land that was too poor for homesteading, farming or ranching.

During the Depression, money was in short supply and a little went a long way. Irene Ponce shot a mountain lion near the river for the bounty she would receive in 1936. She and her dog went walking to gather mushrooms, and she took her rifle, hoping to get a rabbit or some type of meat for the dog. She took one 22 short shot with her. While she was looking for the mushrooms, her dog started barking. Even after her unsuccessful investigation, the dog continued to bark and became very excited. She looked again and found that he had treed a mountain lion. She decided to try to shoot it because there was a bounty on them, $20 for males and $30 for females. She took aim and, with her single shot, hit the lion right between the eyes. When the cat was brought into town, everyone came out to see it. They all lifted the tail to see if it was a $20 cat or a $30 cat. It was a $20 cat.

Rich or poor, successful or not, the miners had to eat. Those who became engaged in supplying these necessities found they were able to make an adequate living and in most cases were probably more successful in the long run than the miners themselves.

Most ranching and farming was of a mixed character--they produced what they needed and/or could sell. They were soon able to provide for their own needs, and within a few short years the availability of certain kinds of food, especially vegetable and citrus fruits, had reversed an early trend of serious, often fatal, disease among miners which had resulted in many deaths.

This mixed character and an accompanying tradition of barter among agricultural families had continued to the present. The rigors of the Depression, therefore, were less keenly felt in the Project Area.

PLATE 22

Henry A. Douglas homesteaded in the Project Area in 1873. Douglas, a carpenter, then built this house on his parcel. The foundation was laid of local bricks which may have come from Columbia. No cement was used and the bricks were held with only an ash and sand mortar. The roof was originally covered with sugar pine shakes. A portion of the Douglas homestead parcel was purchased by the Williamsons and a member of the Williamson family lived in the house until 1950. The house has suffered from neglect and vandalism since that time. This photograph was taken December 1975.

New Melones Ethnographic Research
Photograph, December 1975

PLATE 23

The Williamson family is shown here during haying. James M. Williamson is standing to the left of the wagon with two work horses. The photograph includes other members of the Williamson family and family friends. The photograph was taken about 1880.

Courtesy of James Williamson,
Jameston

PLATE 24

James M. Williamson (seated at the reins) is pictured here with members of his family and his haying crew. The scene is a hayfield on the Williamson homestead in the Rawhide Flat area. The structure in the right central portion of the photograph is a haybarn used by Williamson. In later years (around 1920), Williamson's son William J. Williamson held dances in this barn. (Photograph taken in 1880's).

Courtesy of James Williamson,
Jamestown



PLATE 22

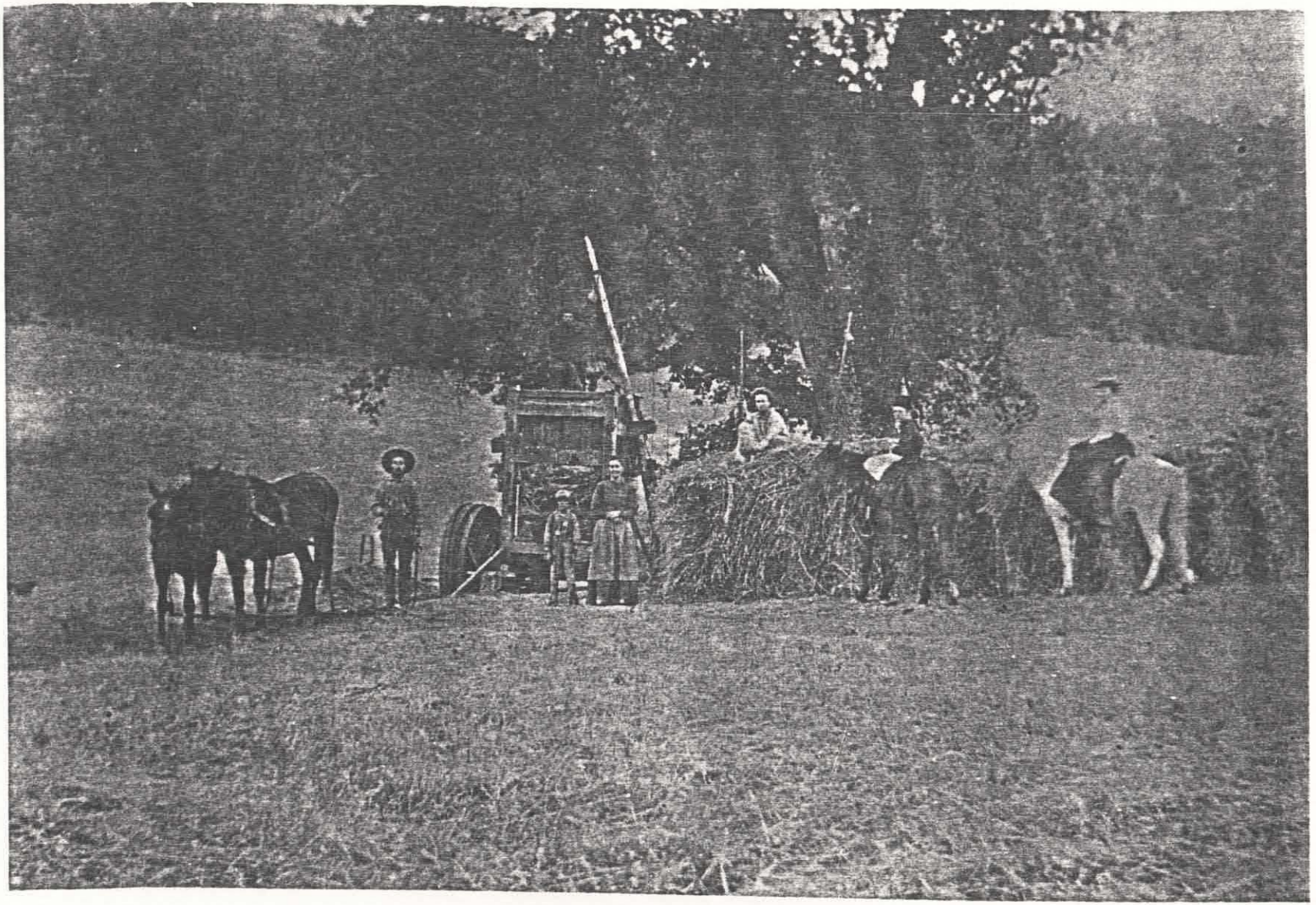
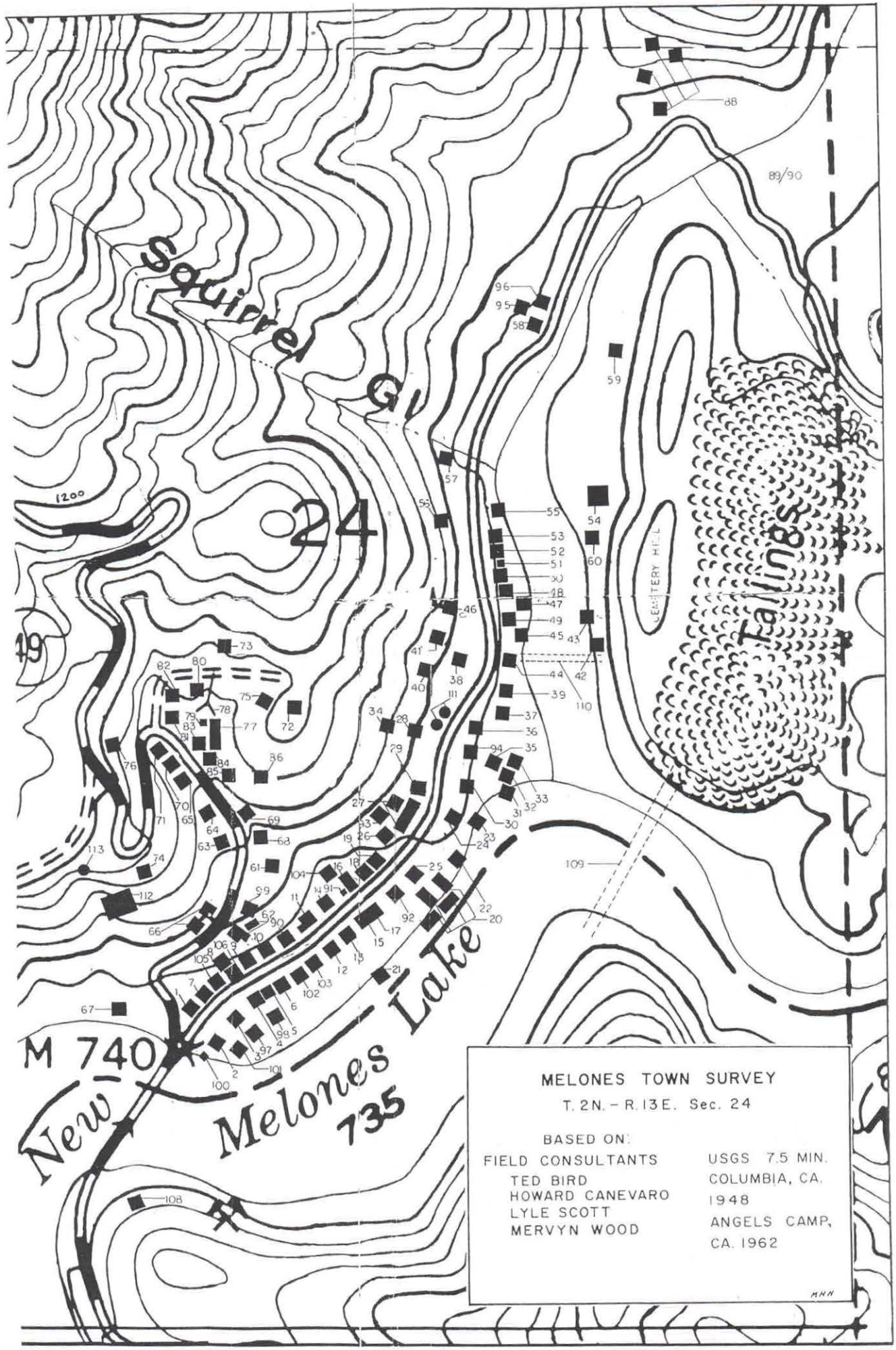
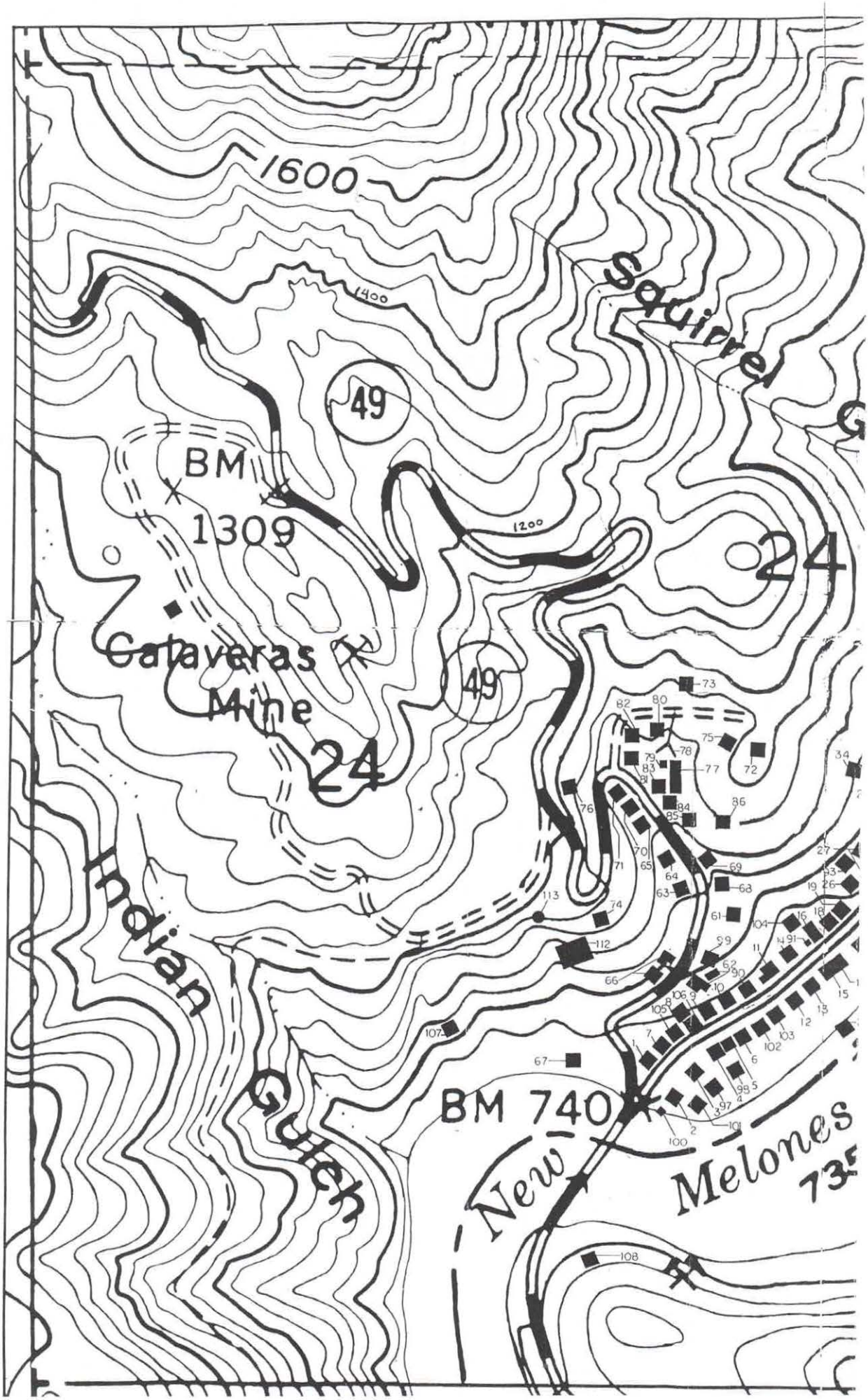


PLATE 23



PLATE 24


Squirrel Gulch
24
1200
19
Tailings
CEMETERY HILL
89/90
M 740
New Melones Lake
735
MELONES TOWN SURVEY
T. 2N. – R. 13E. Sec. 24
BASED ON:
FIELD CONSULTANTS
TED BIRD
HOWARD CANEVARO
LYLE SCOTT
MERVYN WOOD
USGS 7.5 MIN.
COLUMBIA, CA.
1948
ANGELS CAMP,
CA. 1962
MNN


1600
1400
1200
Squirrel
49
BM
1309
Calaveras
Mine
24
Indian
Gulch
BM 740
New
Melones