



Donner Summit Historical Society

April, 2011 issue #32

Newsletter

Summit Hotel Part II

Last month there just was no space and this month it almost looked like there was no space for Summit Hotel II but we'll just take a chance that readers can put up with a longer newsletter this month. There's still Summit Hotel III information too.

Two months ago Margie Powell wrote about the Summit Hotel and we learned its first incarnation which had 78 rooms was built in 1870 near Tunnel 6 (which we will be comprehensively covering so don't let your subscription lapse). Mr. Cardwell opened it initially but went into bankruptcy in 1878. The hotel was closed for some time, reopened in 1881 and was run by the Gowlings until they sold it in 1920.

In 1892 a fire burned it to the ground. Within a year it was rebuilt and stood until 1925 when it burned again. Note that the Soda Springs Hotel, just down the road in Soda Springs was built of stone in 1927. Enough was enough.

The new 1892 hotel was built just 1/8 mile west of the old one and had 87 rooms, specialty rooms, a dining room accommodating 320, a grocery, meat market, dry goods store, post office, one bathtub, and a two story outhouse (women used the second floor and men the first). Such a large and comprehensive structure

pictured top: The Summit Hotel first edition, top and snowsheds and second edition, bottom.



make the building sound like the first mall and maybe, for the day, it was. Certainly with 35 or 40 feet of snow falling on the Summit, large covered areas were important.

Some of the information here following comes from James Sherritt, the grandson of Joseph and Isabell Gowling who ran the hotel starting in 1881. We'll be running a 1949 speech Mr. Sherritt gave about Summit history in the future (again, don't let your subscription expire).

Such a large hotel, with so many businesses, makes one wonder what all the people who patronized it did on the Summit. The Summit today does not have as many businesses as were in the hotel and in those days, there were even more businesses on the Summit.

First there was a substantially larger permanent population: the railroad had a major presence on the Summit with line walkers, fire crews, snow shovelers to clear the snow sheds and keep them from collapsing, maintenance workers, carpenters, helper engine crews, round table operators, etc. Workers required support so there were cooks, laundry people, etc. In addition to the railroad there were also telephone and telegraph company workers, and postal workers. There were dairies on the Summit, some ice industry, sawmill operators, loggers, and sheep herders. The hotel had a good sized staff too. Because horses were the major source of transportation and were used for work, there were many stable workers as well. Finally, there were stage station operators for the two stations on the Summit. There were freighters who ran freight wagons from the Summit train stations to nearby resorts, businesses, and mines.

Then too, tourism was becoming popular. The completion of the railroad over the Summit in 1867 brought opportunities for well-heeled people to travel to the Sierra. Travel they did, taking excursions to the Summit Hotel on the Summit and to Summit Soda Springs Hotel down in the original Soda Springs. Tourists were not as mobile in those days so whole families would come for extended stays at the resorts.

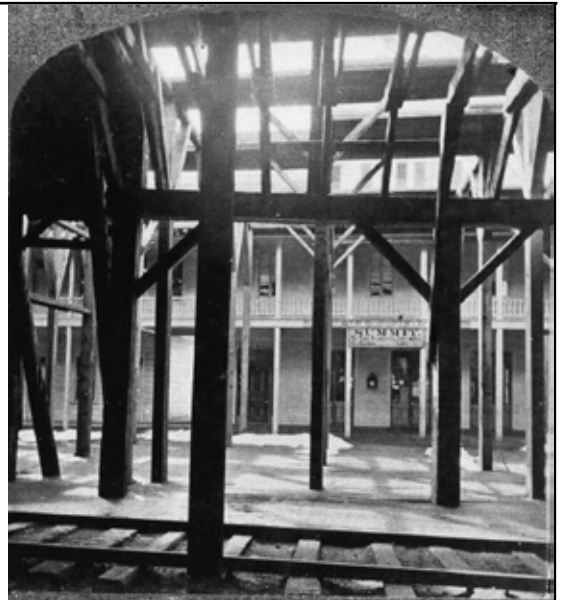
The Summit was a well-populated place and that was before the highway had come (1910 to Emigrant Gap and 1913 to Truckee) and well before the highway became all-weather (1932-3).

People arriving at the Summit Hotel had plenty to do just like visitors today: hiking, trips to Donner Lake and Lake Tahoe, taking the waters at Soda Springs, horseback riding, and fishing. The Summit Hotel ran special deals too giving discounts to groups of art students, holding regular balls to attract people by train, and running special excursion trains.

For old newspapers items related to the Summit Hotel go to pages 14-17

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pictured here top: The Summit Hotel through the snow shed. Everything was interconnected in those days and walking through snowsheds to get from one place to the other was De rigneur. This picture is half of a stereopticon slide. Bottom: the Summit Hotel back left and the Summit snowsheds.



Lost Horse in the Royal Gorge

By Jim L White

[Editor's Note: Jim White wrote the article about "Fong the Snowshed Cook" in our February issue. His bio is on page two]

Our horses charged up the hill toward Devil's Peak in the early morning November light, snorting with clouds of steam coming out of their noses. Kathy, my 18 year old daughter was on Misty and I was riding my crazy old mare Rusty. Rusty shied and jumped four feet sideways as a little forked horn buck jumped out of the brush near the railroad crossing at Troy. It was going to be a race against a forecasted snow storm to find that lost horse down in the Royal Gorge of the American River that nobody seemed to own.



Phone calls from friends on Donner Summit reported the lost horse on the American River near Heath Springs and I had waited until the last minute to go search, hoping that whoever lost the horse would go find the horse and get it out of this wild canyon. No one I knew in the Soda Springs-Donner Summit area seemed to know anyone who lived in the area who owned a horse or who would dare ride a horse down that rugged trail. I had no plans to ride my horses all the way to the river but knew the only good

horse grass in that canyon was some miles higher in the canyon at the junction of the Long Valley trail, near an old Basque sheep camp. The year was 1978 and the old Forest Service trail down to the sheep camp had long been abandoned in favor of a new trail that started near the Cascade Lakes and went down the canyon way east of the Basque camp.



We had to find the old abandoned Heath Springs trail on the east side of Devil's Peak and that was hard to do, since the area had been heavily logged recently. We dropped down past Devil's Peak Lake and got out of the logging debris and there, after all these years was the old trail. I had watched Howard Drago and his Forest Service crew out of Big Bend re-build this trail back in 1958. We pushed our

way thru the heavy growth of Yerba Santa that crowded the old trail in places and the strong aromatic smell reminded me of the wonderful Basque lamb stew flavored with this herb I had eaten years ago with the shepherders in the camp below.

Rusty stopped so fast I almost went over her head. Her ears were up and her body stiff as a rock. I braced for something to happen by pushing on the stirrups hard and hanging on to the saddle horn. She had dumped me like this once before when she spotted a mountain lion on the backside of nearby Lyons Peak. Kathy thought she had heard something in the canyon below. A far off screaming whinny came from the canyon below. Rusty scared me to death with an ear-piercing reply. We rode down to the



meadow and there he was, a beautiful well built, roan- colored Appaloosa gelding. Wow! I loved him at first sight. Now how do we catch him?

Kathy thought we ought to just stop and sit still and see what happens. Smart move! The Appy walked right up to us and nuzzled up to Misty. Kathy grabbed the dragging lead rope and we were one horse richer. Boy was that Appy a beauty! Now to get that horse home.

Kathy thought the trip had been too easy and wondered if we could go home another way and see some new country. We tied up the horses and looked at all the Basque carvings on the many Aspens in the meadow, had lunch and with the Roan in- tow, we were on our way up the steep Long Valley trail. The plan was to go over the east shoulder of Snow Mountain and down to Huntley Mill Lake where I promised her a surprise.

We were struggling up the steep, rocky, dusty trail and up ahead I saw a large Red Fir had fallen across the trail. It was on a steep side hill with the larger limbs up the hill. Our only hope was for me to saw some limbs off the trunk below the trail and jump the horses over the trunk. My fear was one of our horses would hang-up on the trunk, with front legs over the trunk and the horse high-centered. Kathy led Misty up to the tree trunk and she jumped right over. Rusty got half way over and gave up. I smacked her on the rump with a lead rope and she went crazy. Some blood and skin on the trunk but she had to go over or die, so I smacked her again. Her rear legs pushed on some lower limbs and she was over. She was shaking all over and foaming at the mouth but no serious injury. The new roan-colored Appy just walked up to the tree and sailed right over. I loved that horse already.

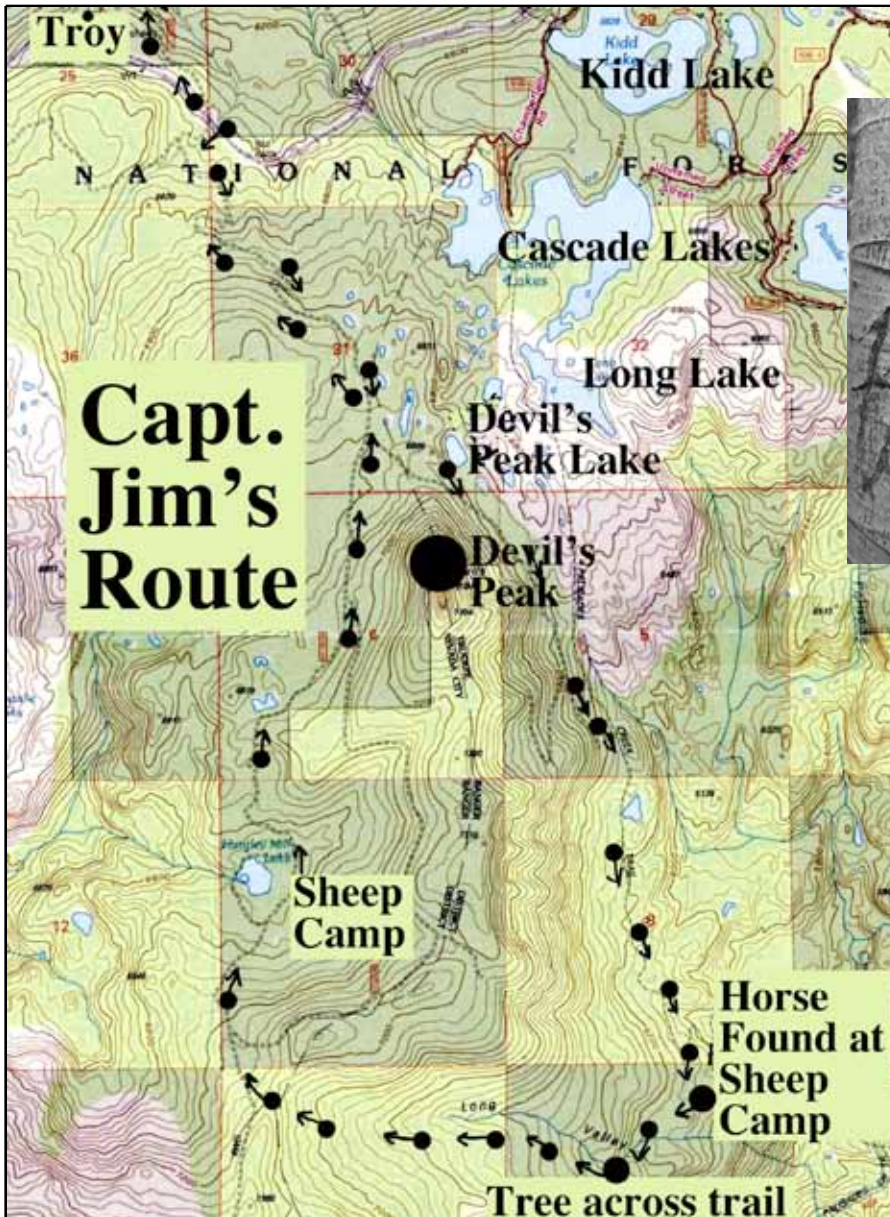
Two hours later and we were at Huntley Mill Lake and the sheep camp. We were hot, sweaty, tired and dirty. We tied the horses to some trees and headed for the cold creek behind the camp. I led Kathy up-stream to a deep hole I knew about and there they were. Three rusty cans of ice cold beer. I am not sure if the sheep herders for Bobbie Blackford who camped there with the sheep had left the beer or perhaps Bob Robinson, the attorney from Auburn who had a deer camp there, but the beer was usually there yearly when I rode by.

We had my horses in the trailer and Kathy was riding the new Appy bareback as we headed up old highway 40 to Bob Goss's house at Kingvale. Bob had horses and was willing to pen the new horse until we could come back up and get him. We were standing in the horse pen talking when up the road walked a tall, dust and dirt covered young guy carrying a lead rope who looked like he had been hiking all day. I yelled at him and asked if he had lost a horse. Yep, he said. He thought he had been following his horse all day. He never had been able to catch up.

I watched him lead the Appy out of the pen and up the road towards Soda Springs. Kathy had tears in her eyes. It snowed hard three days later.

Copyright 2011 by Jim L White padhorski@wavecable.com





Pictures here by Jim L. White.

Page 3, Jim White with Rusty, The Royal Gorge of the American River Canyon (North Fork), Kathy on Misty.

Page 4: Devil's Peak, Basque sheepherder's carving on Aspen trees in the old sheepherders' camps. Top one says 1897, second one, 1922. Last one, age 5, is undated.

Soda Springs was a top sheep shipping center for many years. Sheep were brought off the meadows in the fall to the railroad at Soda Springs.

Butterflies on the Summit

Folks on the Summit have gotten used to seeing me tramping along, butterfly net in hand, between the Soda Springs turnout and the Donner Lake overlook. And on Castle and Basin Peaks, too. Every two weeks, from snowmelt to the first real snowfall, for 39 years now. A few have even gotten up the courage to ask me what I'm doing. The answer is that I am documenting the response of one of the most diverse butterfly faunas in the United States to climate change. Yes, you read that right: Donner Summit has one of the most diverse butterfly faunas in the country. 115 species have been recorded, 62 of them in one day! Consider that only 58 species have been recorded in the British Isles!

As I explain in my chapter "Status of Butterflies" (http://pubs.usgs.gov/dds/dds-43/VOL_II/VII_C27.PDF) in the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project, this region is so rich because as a pass at a moderate altitude, it taps elements of both the west-slope (adapted to the montane-Mediterranean climate and vegetation) and east-slope (sagebrush steppe-Great Basin) faunas. And it is geologically diverse, with granodiorite and basaltic and andesitic soils supporting different vegetations and associated butterflies. And the very best place to look for biotic impacts of climate change is in extreme climates (I am writing this on February 18, 2011, perhaps the biggest snow day of the season at Donner). And we have the use of the magnificently-detailed weather records at the Central Sierra Snow Lab.

115 Species of Summit Butterflies

The first Lepidopterists (butterfly folks) at Donner were Charles Fayette McGlashan, the leading citizen of Truckee at the turn of the last century, and his "Gibson Girl" daughter Ximena. They collected Sierran butterflies and sold specimens by mail (for 5c each), hosted visiting collectors from the East and abroad who traveled to Truckee by train to go afield with them on horseback, and for a short time published a magazine, "The Butterfly Farmer," which can be downloaded in its entirety as a pdf from Google Books. A tiny remnant of the McGlashan collection is at Donner Memorial State Park. Thousands of McGlashan specimens are in museums all over the world. Unfortunately, almost everything is labeled "Truckee," regardless of where they caught it.

In the early 1960s two young brothers, Tom and John Emmel, were counselors at the Audubon Camp and decided to do a butterfly survey of the Pass. This resulted in three published scientific papers that were decades ahead of their time. Not only did the Emmels survey the Donner fauna; they correlated its distribution with plant communities and climate, analyzed the impact of meteorological conditions on flight activity, and discussed the taxonomic makeup of the fauna and its potential ecological implications. Tom, who at that time was an undergrad at Reed College, went on to become a distinguished Professor of Zoology at the University of Florida. John, then a Stanford student, went on to medical school and practices in Hemet, Riverside County. Both remain among the leading authorities on the California butterfly fauna and, with Sterling O. Mattoon of Chico, are working on the definitive book on the subject.

I'm just a few years younger than the Emmels. When their papers came out I was just graduating from high school, and those papers were a huge inspiration to me. I grew up in Philadelphia, and Donner Pass was a romantic fantasy for me, oh, so far away! I wanted to see those exotic high-mountain butterflies flying over lofty Sierran crags. When I moved to U.C. Davis in 1971-72 I decided to resurvey Donner. To my delight, I found the Emmels hadn't found everything. They had "only" 74 species! One of the reasons for the discrepancy was that they quit at the end of the Audubon Camp season, thus missing the autumnal fauna altogether—several things only come out after late August, and usually there are butterflies out well into October (and occasionally, November!). As I wrote in a paper called "Autumnal False Broods of Multivoltine Butterflies at Donner Pass, California," published in 1977: "This research...has benefitted from remarks made by students and associates to the effect that anyone taking a butterfly net to Donner Pass after Labor Day must be crazy, thereby obliging me to do it."

"The first... butterfly folks at Donner were Charles Fayette McGlashan, ... of Truckee at the turn of the last century, and his 'Gibson Girl' daughter Ximena."



For more information on Donner butterflies and our research, please visit <http://butterfly.ucdavis.edu>. There is a bibliography on the Web site. Send questions or comments to me at amshapiro@ucdavis.edu. Pdfs of selected publications are available on request.

ART SHAPIRO, Center for Population Biology, U.C. Davis, Davis, CA 95616.

If you have questions or would like further reading, please feel free to contact me at amshapiro@ucdavis.edu. If you go to www.exploredonnersummit.com (then activities and then lepidoptery, you will find links to the articles



and books mentioned here, including Ximena McGlashan's book, *The Butterfly Farmer* and a PDF about butterflies and climate warming.

A visit to Dr. Shapiro's website is instructive particularly for his Donner Summit study areas
<http://butterfly.ucdavis.edu/sites/donner>
<http://butterfly.ucdavis.edu/sites/castle>

Pictured here: page 6 Ruddy Copper *Lycaena cupreus*, mating; page 7 top, Purplish Copper, *Lycaena helloides*; middle, Mourning Cloak, *Nymphalis antiopa*.

A Few Words About Summit Butterfly Collecting



Nowadays when you see me doing my studies I will rarely be carrying a net. That's because after 39 years doing this, I can identify just about anything I see by sight, without having to catch it. If I do have a net, it's because we need fresh material, either to get eggs for a lab experiment, or to get DNA for sequencing (for ongoing studies aimed at helping us understand the history of our Sierran fauna).

There's no way I can prevent people from collecting butterflies at my study sites, and because they are so thoroughly-documented and publicly accessible, I run the risk that by maintaining my Web site I may indirectly encourage people to do so. But the Sierra is a big place. Almost anywhere else that you collect, you will not run the risk of damaging an ongoing long-term research program. Damaging? How? In

the short term, if you collect on Tuesday and I sample on Wednesday, I could get a seriously skewed sample that would not accurately reflect the species present and their abundance. In the longer term, there are several species that maintain extremely small and localized populations at my sites. Of course, they are relatively "rare" and therefore desired by collectors—and thus are vulnerable to being extirpated (wiped out) locally. Unfortunately, there are people who will take every specimen they see of a "rare" species, either out of avarice or to sell or trade to other collectors.

collectors—and thus are vulnerable to being extirpated (wiped out) locally. Unfortunately, there are people who will take every specimen they see of a "rare" species, either out of avarice or to sell or trade to other collectors.

Photographing live butterflies is both more challenging than collecting them, and nondestructive. Please help us maintain the integrity of our data set. Photograph, but don't collect! And thanks.

If you have questions or would like further reading, please feel free to contact me, amshapiro@ucdavis.edu.

20 Mile Museum - New Signs 2011



Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass Forest Gift Shop, Cisco Grove 3

History

Before the coming of I-80 all traffic crossing Donner Summit came right through here. Cisco Grove was an active little community oriented to highway travelers. If you look closely here you will see the ruins of foundations of the various commercial establishments that included a gift shop, lodge, restaurant, grocery store, gas station, housekeeping cabins, bar, and ski club.

Just a few hundred yards up the road was the Auburn Ski Club with its rope tows, ski runs, ski jumps, and lodging. The Auburn Ski Club pioneered and helped popularize modern skiing and was responsible for opening Highway 40 to winter travel. Later I-80 went right through the club's ski runs and ski jumps and the club moved up to the Summit where it owns the land where Boreal is.

These interesting stone buildings are the remains of the Forest Gift Shop which supplied tourists with locally produced souvenirs. Best sellers were owl ashtrays made from pinecones and pine rounds and corncob/pinecone pipes. Next door, the fruit stand sold ice-cold orange juice, fruit, and orange candies.

The gift shop was built in 1938 by John J. Wegman on land owned by Jim Gould Sr. with the masonry done by Lester Hammond. The Forest Gift shop venture lasted for ten years until WWII and a decrease in traffic reduced business. After the war the shop reopened as the Sierra Gift Shop which lasted until the arrival of the freeway.

The coming of I-80 changed Old Highway 40. Leisurely rides along the two-laned highway were a thing of the past. Better cars zipped along the new highway at high speeds and tourists no longer wanted to stop before reaching their destinations. The many small stores, cafés, lodges, service stations, and motels, disappeared and a way of life ended.

A Good Story

The Gould family originally bought the Cisco Grove land from the Central Pacific Railroad. The land then became the start of a 22 mile flume and ditch of the Gold Run Ditch and Mining company. The water ran all the way to Gold Run to be used for hydraulic mining. In 2008 the Gould Family donated the building and park to Placer County.

Things to do right here

Go across the road to Gould Park and walk along the river. Explore along the road on both sides for the stone ruins of foundations. Go west from here just a ways to the last right hand turn before the campground. That road winds up and up past waterfalls and good hiking spots. A really good, though exhausting, hike is up Red Mountain. The trail head is two miles up the dirt road. Go to www.exploredonnersummit.com and click on activities and then hiking to see how to do it and to see Red Mountain's story.



We redid 22 of the 28 20 Mile Museum signs and you'll be impressed with the improved quality as well as the 10 year guarantee. Look for them to reappear as the snow melts and they can be installed.

At the same time we decided to add five signs this year, assuming we can find sponsors. This year's additions will be: Petroglyphs below Rainbow Bridge (sponsored partly by the Truckee Rotary Club and produced by the Brisbin Crew - see the January newsletter; Nyack Lodge - to go at the Cal-Trans overlook on I-80 overlooking Lake Spaulding; Forest Gift Shop - see above; Donner Pass Airway Station and Beacon - across from the Sugar Bowl Academy. This one has been sponsored by the Pat Malberg; and Soda Springs Sheep Shipping Center - at the public travel way along Van Norden.

If you're interested in sponsoring Nyack, the Forest Gift Shop of the Sheep Shipping, let us know. Sponsorships cost \$500, increased to cover the cost of the better production method for signs and County permits. To see a larger version of the above sign go to our 20 Mile Museum webpage and click on the Cisco Grove Stone Buildings <http://www.donnersummithistoricalociety.org/PDFs/20milemusemsigns/ForestGiftShop.pdf>. You can also see the new petroglyphs and Airway signs.

Emigrant Trails

The Long Road to California

Marshall Fey
A Review

Eastern Oregon is pretty empty and driving across it, after the first few miles, is not so interesting.

More interesting on the satellite radio was a news piece about [Emigrant Trails](#) by Marshall Fey. It sounded really good.

So through the wonders of the internet I ordered the book and it was waiting for me on our return from Canada.

[Emigrant Trails](#) is a must for any history buff especially one with an interest in the emigrant wagon trains that helped populate and build California. For those with an interest in Donner Summit, parts are especially interesting.

The book is not a typical history book. It tells its story through pictures, maps, and sidebars. There is no continuing prose. The cover says a lot, "A History and Guide To the Emigrant Routes from Central Nevada to the Crossing of the Sierra with The

End Of The Trail For The Donner Party Includes How to Follow the Trail, Diaries, Original Trail Guides, Maps and Points of Interest."

The emigrants' voices, their actual words, are particularly interesting and poignant.

The forward says, the book "presents a useful guide for exploring the routes of the California Emigration Trail by automobile, hiking, and bicycle." The book also serves as a guide to old Nevada settlements.

Both the cover and the foreward describe the book very well. What sets the book apart from others is the reliance on primary sources in particular the quotes of the emigrants traveling to California.

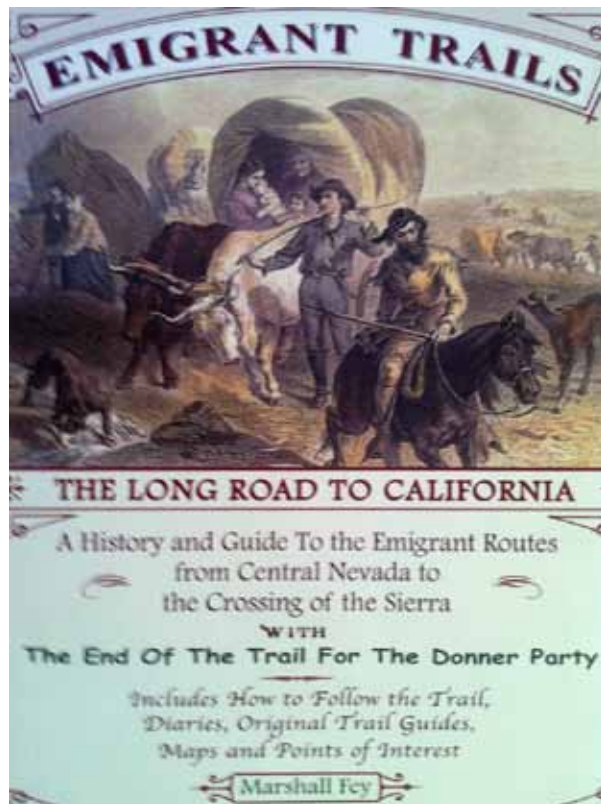
If you want to follow the old Emigrant routes to California, The Humboldt, the Truckee, The Carson, and the Johnson cut-off this book will help you do that with driving instructions to the markers that delineate the trails. Parts of actual trail

guides are reprinted.

Another facet that makes the book interesting are the many facts which set the truth about wagon trains and put the lie to the Hollywood version. Reading or paging through this book looking for the interesting parts, you will discover interesting facts and how tough the pioneers were. I couldn't have done it.

Interesting Facts:

- how to emigrate in case you have a hankering
- what to take and the cost if you decide to go
- some wagons had rudimentary odometers
- why to take oxen instead of mules and certainly not horses



- 250,000 people came to California by wagon train from 1841 to 1869
- 10% of the emigrants died.
- there were on average 10 graves per mile of travel
- graves were oriented east-west and put within the trails which were then driven over to discourage scavenging by Indians and animals.
- The Donner Party's troubles with Indians, and later their stories
- The Amazing and tragic story of the Eddy Family
- The Truckee River used to be called the Trout Salmon "from the multitude of fish of that name that fill its waters." (from the 1849 Emigrant's Guide to California)

Fans of hiking trails will also find instructions for hiking parts of the Emigrant trails.

The book is available from the Western Trails Research Association 775-747-0800

The "Emigrant Voices" scattered throughout the book are particularly powerful (all misspellings are the emigrants')

Emigrant Voices: About the 40 Mile Desert in Nevada

Thousands of dollars worth of property thrown away by the emigration as laying here. Wagons & property of every kind &* description not saying anything dead animals, & those left to die. Wakeman Bryarly 1949

"...we struck heavy sand 10 miles from the Trucky River, & had the utmost difficulty in getting our stock thro stopping every few years to rest.... All along the desert from the very start, even the waysides was strewed with the dead bodies of oxen, mules and horses and the stench was horrible..." Bennett C. Clark, 1949

"The road from the sink to Truckee's River was lined with dead cattle, horses, & mules with piles of provisions burned & whole wagons left for want of cattle to pull them through....the desert is truly the great Elephant of the route and God knows I never want to see it again."

Lucius Fairchild 1949

Emigrant Voices: and then out of the desert

My fine mule stopped and brayed. "The wind was from the mountains toward us and it was bearing humid air of the stream and mountain. Arrived at the stream the famished animals plunged their heads to their eyes ad even to the rears. It was a glorious scene. We had but little water...for two or three days past."

William Tell Coleman 1949

Emigrant Voices: Roller Pass on Donner Summit

it was snowing...and in order to get the wagon over the precipitous slopes ten oxen were hitched to a wagon, then it was driven as far as it could go and then a chain was attached that worked on a roller on top of the mountains. With a man on each wheel the summit was at last reached.

Mary Jones 1946

We put about five yoke on a wagon, and had as many men with it as was necessary to keep it from sliding sideways. Then with five yoke o the summit letting down our long one hundred and fifty feet rope, and hitch it with the leader that were on the wagon, by this process we succeeded in getting all the wagons up safely.

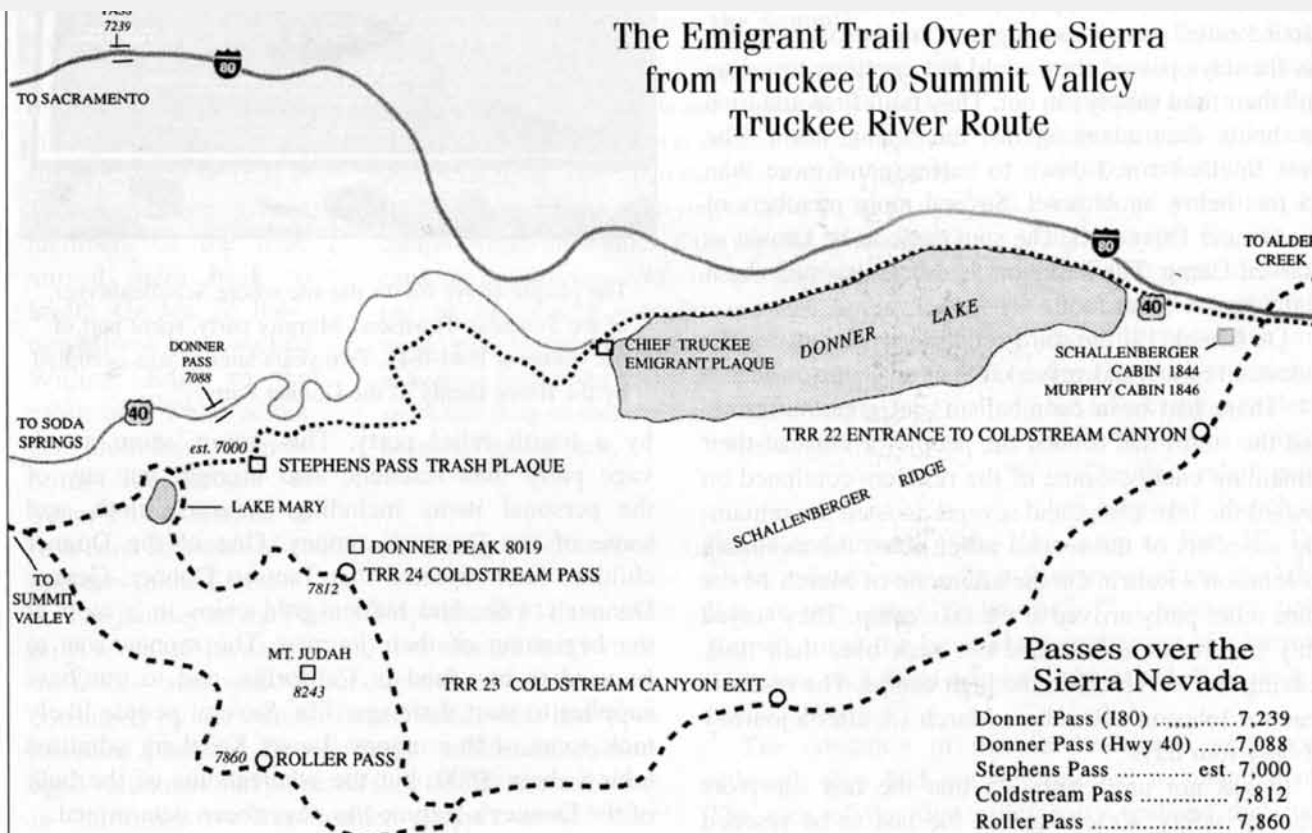
Joseph Aram 1844

Emigrant Voices: On reaching the Sierra and Donner Pass

About nine o'clock we doubled teams and began the ascent for the summit.. While the teams were slowly toiling up the summit, Father, Mr. Buck, Margaret and I climbed one of the highest peaks near the road [Donner Peak] and were well repaid for our trouble by the splendid view. On one side the snow-capped peaks rise in majestic grandeur, on the other they are covered to their summits with pine and fir, while before us in the top of the mountains, apparently an old crater, lies a beautiful lake [Donner lake] in which the Truckee takes its rise. Eliza McAuley 1852

“at last we came to the Sierra Nevada Mountains which seemed insurmountable it was soe time before we could see which way we must go, at least we had to take the agons apart & take them up in pieces over the mountains & the poor cattle got ove[r] or rather they were dragged up with bleeding shins, the folks got ove[r] the best they could.... Eliza Gregson 1845

“You can form no idea, nor can I give you any description of the evils which best us. From the time we left the [Donner] lake ...until we reached the top [Lake Mary] it was one continued jumping from one rocky cliff to another. We would have to roll over this big rock, then over that; then there was bridging a branch; then we had to lift our wagons by main force up to the top of a ledge of rocks... Three days...found ourselves six miles form the lake...you never saw a set of fellows more happy than when we reached the summit.
William Todd 1845



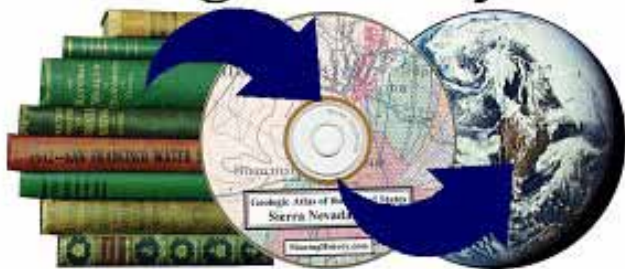
Emigrant Voices: and to Roller Pass

...the Sierra Nevada being very steep and our cattle very poor....[we followed the advice of our fellow traveler] who had proposed to make a roller, and fasten chains to the wagons, & pull them over the mountains wit the help of twelve yokes of oxen. Nicholas Carriger 1846

From Mark Twain's Rouging It 1872

We crossed the Great American Desert – forty memorable miles of bottomless sand, into which the coach wheels sunk from six inches to a foot...From one extremity of this to the other, the road was white with the bones of oxen and horse, It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that we could have walked the forty miles and set our feet on bone at every step! The desert was on prodigious graveyard. And the log-chains, wagon tire, and rotting wrecks of vehicles were almost as thick as the bones...Don't these relics suggest something of an idea of the fearful suffering and privation the early emigrants to California endured?

SharingHistory.com



Those interested in history and primary sources (written in the old days rather than modern day interpretations) will be very interested in this website.

It was Art Clark, about whose search for Sierra Skiways signs we've written who told us about this website. A quick look at the site and a following order for some CD's reinforced Art's opinion that this is a good site. The site is local too, coming from Auburn. Below you will see the kinds of things they offer. Reprinted here on this and the next page are two maps representative of what can be ordered.



SharingHistory.com makes hard-to-find books, maps, and images available on CDs as HTML webs, so that you can view them with a web browser. Be aware that you really do need a computer that has a Windows operating system. They do not work with Macs - the pictures are all missing.

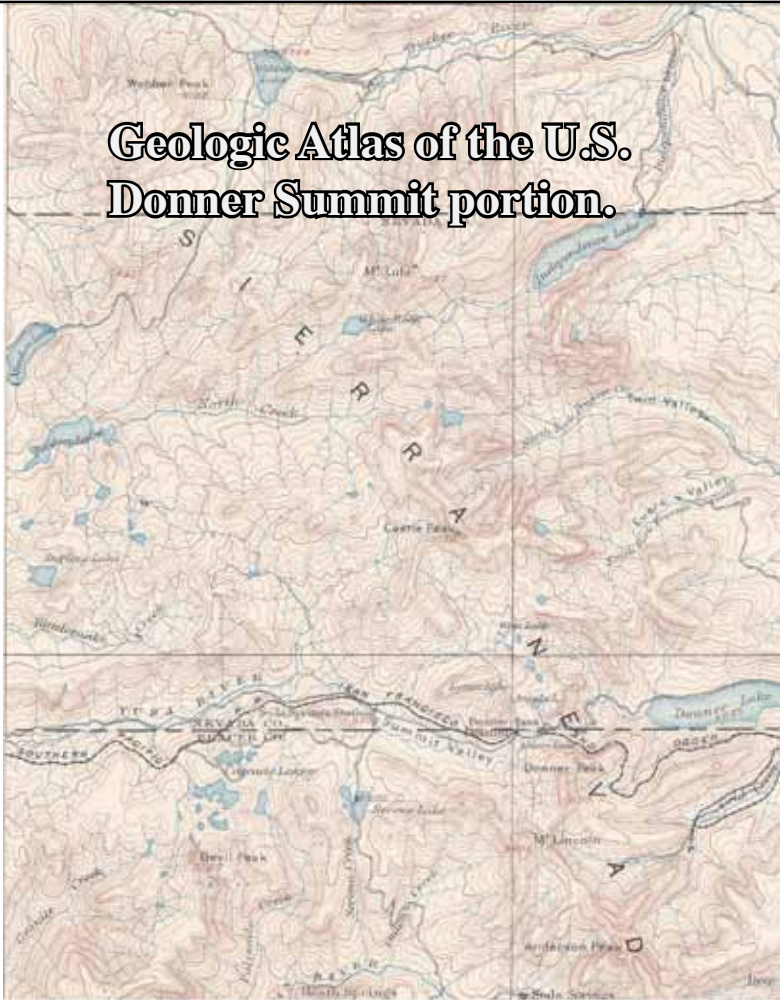
Books on CD:

California Gold Mining and Geology
California Gold Lodes series
Local California Histories Collection
United States Railroad Travel Guides
Early Water and Electric Power Development
Victorian Technology Collection

(Waterpower, Steam Fire Engines, Naval, Maritime, & Rail)

Mining Machinery
Picturesque Travels Collection
American Cities Memories Collection

**Geologic Atlas of the U.S.
Donner Summit portion.**



Geologic Atlas of the United States
by Waldemar Lindgren (1897)
United States Geological Survey

Folio #39 - Truckee, California
Topography - northwest
Source: Sacramento Room, Sacramento Central Library

**Want to sponsor a
2011 20 Mile Museum
sign?
Contact us**

www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org/
click the top link
info@donnersummithistoricalsociety.org
209-606-6859

DONNER SUMMIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Membership 2011

I/we would like to join The
Donner Summit Historical Society
and share in the Summit's rich history.

DATE _____

NAME(S) _____

____ New Membership

MAILING ADDRESS _____

____ Renewing Membership

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

____ Individual Membership - \$30

(Please mail this card with your check payable to DSHS to Donner
Summit Historical Society, P.O. Box 1, Norden, CA 95724)

____ Family Membership - \$50

____ Friend Membership - \$100

____ Sponsor - \$250

____ Patron - \$500

____ Benefactor - \$1000

____ Business - \$250

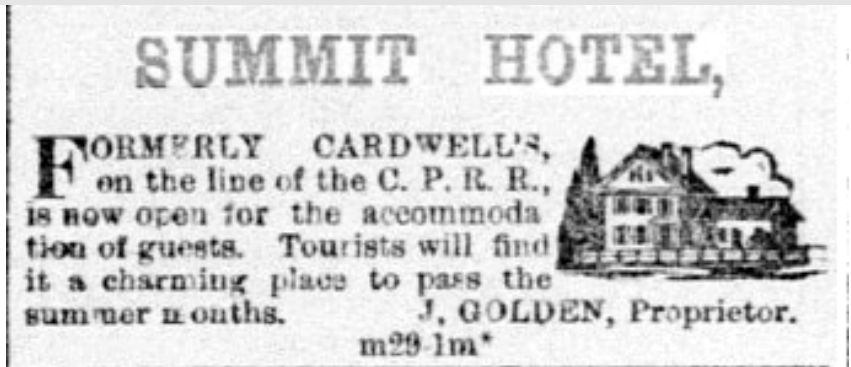
____ Business Sponsor - \$1000

Donner Summit Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Newspaper Items re: Summit Hotel

They did not use headlines for most things in those days nor did they use many paragraphs.

SUMMIT HOTEL, AT THE SUMMIT OF THE SIERRA Nevada Mts., on the Central Pacific Railroad. JAMES CARDWELL, Proprietor. This Hotel is the finest Summer Resort in the State of California. The climate is cool and pleasant in the Summer months; the hotel overlooks Donner Lake, and is but a pleasant drive from the famous Soda Spring.



A fine Livery Stable in connection with hotel, at which last turn-outs can be had at any time.

The Table will be supplied with all the delicacies of the season.

For Invalids no better resort than this can be found in the world,- as the air is always pure and invigorating.

SPECIAL RATES.— Visitors to the House, buying railroad tickets from San Francisco, Sacramento or Marysville, to Summit at the regular ticket rates, can purchase Special Return Tickets here at rates which, In addition to the fare paid to Summit, will make but two-thirds of the FULL PRICE OF TICKETS FOR TUB ROUND TRIP.

9/17/1870 Sacramento
Daily Union newspaper

Summit Hotel
in its second
incarnation.



Free Breakfast at the Summit of the Sierra Nevada.

When the westward-bound overland train arrived at the Summit on the morning of the 1st Inst., breakfast was served as usual, and about one hundred and fifty hungry passengers partook thereof. But there was something in the arrangements, or the cooking, or the quantity of provender supplied, that did not suit the ideas of James Cardwell, mine host of the Summit Hotel, and when the guests were leaving he would not take a cent from any of them. Our informant, a passenger, tells us, that notwithstanding the breakfast was a good deal ahead of most which he had eaten on the road. Passengers certainly cannot complain of California, when they are met on the very threshold of the State in this hospitable way; but we are afraid that it's only on the threshold that they can be guaranteed such treatment.

8/3/1872 Daily Alta California newspaper

James Cardwell paid snow shovelers to open the road earlier than nature would allow.

These are snow shovelers working for the RR and not Cardwell but the principle is the same and we get to illustrate Cardwells' snow shovelers.



Newspaper Items re: Summit Hotel

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SUMMIT HOTEL,

*At the Summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, on the
Central Pacific Railroad.*

JAMES CARDWELL, Proprietor.

This Hotel is the **FINEST SUMMER RESORT** in the State of California. The Climate is cool and pleasant in the Summer months; the Hotel overlooks "Donner Lake," and is about a pleasant drive from the famous Soda Springs.

A FINE LIVERY STABLE

in connection with the Hotel, at which Fast Turn-outs can be had at any time.

**The Table will be supplied with all the
Delicacies of the Season.**

FOR INVALIDS no better resort than this can be found in the World, as the air is always Pure and Invigorating.

33.23

ad above left, California Farmer and Journal of Useful Sciences July 14, 1870 just after the hotel's first opening.
Right, Sacramento Daily Union newspaper, Sept. 21, 1878



GIVING A GRAND DAYLIGHT VIEW

—OF—

THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS.

—

Wednesday, September 25, 1878,

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A SPECIAL CHARTER TRAIN WILL LEAVE Sacramento at 8 A. M., running through to the Summit, stopping at Cape Horn and the North Fork of the American River, giving the excursionists an opportunity of viewing the **MAGNIFICENT SCENERY** at those points.

There will be a tip-top supper furnished at Cardwell's Hotel, and a mountain top dance in the evening. After the ball the train will return, arriving at Sacramento early on Thursday morning.

Price of tickets, including the railroad trip, supper and ball, \$6. No half fare rates, as there can be but a limited number of tickets sold. Purchases should be made on the Tuesday previous, at W. A. & C. S. Houghton's book store, or at the lunch stand in the Railroad depot, Sacramento. Music will be furnished by Church & Jones' band.

JAMES CARDWELL,
Contractor for Charter Train.

s9-td

Newspaper Items re: Summit Hotel

They did not use headlines for most things in those days nor did they use many paragraphs.

It is announced by James Cardwell that a special train has been chartered for the purpose of giving an excursion from Sacramento to the Summit on Wednesday, the 2-[nd] instant. The train will leave the city at 8 a. m.. stopping en route not only at the usual way stations, but at Cape Horn and the North Fork of the American River, giving the excursionists an opportunity of viewing the magnificent scenery at those points. At Cardwell's, in the evening, a fine supper will be served, and, later, all will be invited to participate in a ball. After the ball the train will leave on its return, arriving here Thursday morning. The price of tickets, including excursion, supper and ball, will be but \$6.

9/9/1878 Sacramento Daily Union

These ads appeared regularly in Sacramento newspapers.

Ball in the Snow.— A large number of the ladies and gentlemen of Sacramento are looking forward with anticipations of great enjoyment to the ball in the snow, which Cardwell & Gordon of the Summit Hotel have promised to give... and for which Church, Jones & Beebe's band of this city will furnish the music. The fine railroad ride, with the grand and beautiful scenery presented to the view, is of itself sufficient to cause the excursion to be extremely enjoyable, added to which will be the novelty of a ball with winter surroundings within a few hours' ride of Sacramento. The hotel boasts an excellent dancing ball, and the proprietors of the establishment are well known to be among the most capable and obliging. Everything therefore indicates that those who attend the merry-making will have as good a time as they ever enjoyed.

6/24/1874 Sacramento Daily Union
newspaper

These notices appeared regularly in Sacramento newspapers, attracting attention and business to the Summit Hotel.

JAMES CARDWELL, PROPRIETOR This Hotel, at the summit of the sierra Nevadas, on the Central Pacific Railroad, having seen recently refurnished, offers superior accommodations to permanent boarders, or transient customers, at the most reasonable terms. Parties visiting Donner Lake, the Mineral Springs or beautiful scenery of the Sierra Nevada mountains, can find the most ample and superior accommodations at this house. Horses and Carriages will always be in readiness, and furnished by the proprietor to parties who may desire them.

7/29/1869 Sacramento Daily Union newspaper

THE BALL. At length, at 10 p. m., reached the Summit Hotel, and found the ball in full operation - It was given in a building erected within the last week by Caldwell & Gordon, the energetic proprietors of the Summit Hotel. From the haste in which the building was constructed I hardly expected to see a hall, yet there is but one better dancing floor in Sacramento than the one at the Summit. The hall was decorated with national colors and trimmed with evergreens, and presented a gay appearance. The music was furnished by Church, Jones & Beebe and needs no other recommendation to Sacramentans.

The dancing commenced at 9:30 and continued till midnight, when the guests partook of an elegant supper prepared by the originators of the ball. At 1 a. m. the dance was resumed and kept up with spirit until broad daylight. The floor was conveniently full dining the entire time, while many, other than the dancers, enjoyed the scene and the music. Without going into details of dress, all the ladies were dressed nicely and in accordance with the circumstances. The weather was so cool as to prohibit dresses decolette, etc.

The affair seemed to result very happily for all concerned, especially for the guests. But one serious mistake was made in regard to the tickets. They were made good for only two days, thus forcing the guest to leave by the early morning train after a night in the ballroom, which is too fatiguing for pleasure.

The snow is not of uniform depth about the Summit and in places the ground is bare, but as evidence of the quantity on hand, Cardwell offered to take us a five minute's walk and leave us in a snow fifty feet in depth. There is an opportunity for some one who is in need of snow. After a pleasant ride returning, we reached the city at 1 p. m. on the 26th, feeling; somewhat tired, but with pleasant recollections of the ball in the snow.

Sacramento Daily Union newspaper 7/27/1874

Newspaper Items re: Summit Hotel

They did not use headlines for most things in those days nor did they use many paragraphs.



ONE ENJOYS

Both the method and results when Syrup of Figs is taken; it is pleasant and refreshing to the taste, and acts gently yet promptly on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels, cleanses the system effectually, dispels colds, headaches and fevers and cures habitual constipation. Syrup of Figs is the only remedy of its kind ever produced, pleasing to the taste and acceptable to the stomach, prompt in its action and truly beneficial in its effects, prepared only from the most healthy and agreeable substances, its many excellent qualities commend it to all and have made it the most popular remedy known.

Syrup of Figs is for sale in 50c and \$1 bottles by all leading druggists. Any reliable druggist who may not have it on hand will procure it promptly for any one who wishes to try it. Do not accept any substitute.

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
LOUISVILLE, KY. NEW YORK, N.Y.

Syrup of Figs
Sacramento Daily Union
Feb. 9, 1892

FIRE AT SUMMIT.

Hotel and Contents Burned and SnowSheds Slightly Damaged Summit, Feb. 6.— A Fire occurred here at half-past 1 o'clock this afternoon. Goulden's hotel was completely destroyed; nothing was saved. The loss will aggregate between \$20,000. and \$25,000. The snow-sheds were slightly damaged. No one was injured seriously, though a few were slightly hurt. The fire was still burning at 9 o'clock.

2/9/1892 San Francisco Call newspaper

SUMMIT HOTEL BURNED.

Completely Destroyed, With Three Hundred Feet of Snowsheds.

John Golden's large hotel at the Summit was burned to the ground yesterday afternoon, and with it three hundred feet of snowsheds. The fire started shortly after 2 o'clock, and about ten minutes later the west-bound overland train arrived. It was able to pass, however, before the flames had communicated with the sheds.

When the fire broke out word was sent to the railroad office in this city, and the fire trains at Truckee and Blue Canyon were ordered to the scene. The fire train at the Summit was also out in readiness to fight the flames, and by 3:30 o'clock the fire was out, though not until three hundred feet of the sheds had been burned.

About two hours' time was required in which to clean up the debris and repair the track, and no passenger trains were delayed.

The hotel was a total loss. The property was valued at \$8,000.

Summit Hotel Burned
Sacramento Daily Union newspaper 2/9/1892