

The Donner Summit

Heirloom

History and stories of the Donner Summit Historical Society

April, 2012 issue #44



Robbery

From the Truckee Tribune October 24, 1868:

The store of messrs. Sisson, Egbert & Co., at Summit Valley [across from what today is Donner Ski Ranch] was entered by burglars, on last Saturday night, and the safe carried off. The burglars effected an entrance by cutting the wood from about one of the panes of glass in the sash door, and removing the glass, and then taking the iron bar from the door and opening it. The safe was then taken a distance of about three hundred yards and then broken open. The thieves took a lot of cloth from the shelves and [attached] the safe with it to the bar and were thus enable to carry it out without awaking the men in charge of the store who, five in number, slept directly over where the safe was.

They obtained about five thousand dollars for their trouble. The firm offer a reward of one thousand dollars for the arrest and conviction of the thieves and the recovery of the treasure. Constable Martin has arrested three men on suspicion.t

\$10000
Reward!

Sisson Egbert & Co.

Wholesale and Retail Dealers in
GROCERIES, PROVISIONS

Clothing

Boots and Shoes

Liquors

Hardware Iron and Steel

FLOUR, GRAIN, ETC. ETC.

Truckee

California produce, Butter Eggsw, Cheese,
Preserves and can Fruit, California Honey, and
every descriptions of FAMILY SUPPLIES

Orders delivered at lowest rates

TRUCKEE.—The annexed items of local interest are from the *Tribune* of October 24th:

The store of Sisson, Egbert & Co., at Summit Valley, was entered by burglars on last Saturday night, and the safe carried off. The burglars effected an entrance by cutting the wood from about one of the panes of glass in the sash door and removing the glass, and then taking the bar from the door and opening it. The safe was then taken a distance of about 300 yards and then broken open. The thieves took a lot of cloth from the shelves and swung the safe with it to a bar, and were thus enabled to carry it out without awaking the men in charge of the store, who, five in number, slept directly over where the safe was. They obtained about \$5,000 for their trouble. The firm offer a reward of \$1,000 for the arrest and conviction of the thieves and the recovery of the treasure. Constable Martin has arrested three men on suspicion.

A most sanguinary feud occurred at Cisco on Thursday afternoon. It appears that Tom Cox, attorney at law, went from this place to Cisco to attend a law case, and after the trial got on a "run" with a lot of railroad hands, and finally got into an altercation with one of them named Whisky Jim, and drew a revolver and fired, the ball taking effect in the right thigh of a man named Sullivan. The crowd then turned on Cox and beat him over the head in a terrible manner with a revolver, bruising him so that his life was at one time despaired of. Cox was rescued from his assailants and put to bed, and medical attendance summoned. Sullivan, it is thought, cannot recover. Two men have been arrested by the officers.

Above is an actual ad, though retyped, for the Sisson store in Truckee. Sisson also had at least one more store which was on Donner Summit. They may have had a chain of stores since there are references to them in other places. Sisson, maybe the same company, also contracted Chinese railroad workers.

\$1,000 REWARD!

WE WILL GIVE THE ABOVE
REWARD for the apprehension of the Thief or
Thieves, and the recovery of the Treasury stolen from
us on the night of the 17th instant, at Summit Valley
o21-6t1p* **SISSON, EGBERT & CO.**

11/7/68 Truckee Tribune

Men frozen to death -

Three men were found near the summit yesterday morning frozen to death. It is thought that they must have been under the influence of liquor as they were but a short distance from shelter.

editor:
Bill Oudegeest
209-606-6859
info@donnersummithistoricalociety.org

History of the Norden, California Post Office

Milli Martin, Homer, Alaska

The old well used folder is marked, "History of P.O.", written in my uncle's distinctive European hand. Otto Herbert Frederick, Herb, as he was known, with his wife Lena operated the former Norden Store and Post Office at Norden, California. I discovered that Herb's 37 year tenure as Postmaster of Norden was a continuation of a longer history for the Post Office.

Established in March of 1882, the first Donner Summit post office was housed in the Summit Hotel, in Placer County, and known as the Donner Post Office. The hotel was located west and south of railroad tunnel 6, (just west of Donner Pass) and across from what is now Donner Ski Ranch. The hotel was operated by Joseph and Isabella Gowling. Joseph was the first Postmaster. The hotel burned to the ground [for the second time] in November 1925 and was not rebuilt. On August 4, 1926 the post office moved a mile north to Nevada County, to the Norden Store and Ski Lodge, located along the newly constructed Highway 40. The Post Office name changed to Norden. The appointment of Thrift Baker as Norden's first postmaster is confirmed in a letter dated 22 January, 1973 from Mr. Baker's son Conrad, who wrote to Herb that his father was the Southern Pacific Telegrapher at Donner in the 1920's, prior to becoming postmaster. Conrad said his mother was not happy with the harsh winters at Norden and two years after taking the position they moved to Pittsburg, California, turning over postmaster duties to Bliss H. Forbes on 7 April, 1928.

In 1938, Herb and Lena purchased the Norden Store and Ski Lodge, which consisted of cabins, lodge, restaurant, store, gas station and post office. On September 30, 1938 Herb took his oath of office as the Norden Postmaster.

At the outset of the World War II, Herb was drafted into the army. His induction was delayed a month when it was discovered he had pledged his oath to the U.S. Army, while still under oath to the U.S. Postal Service.

Seven months after his induction, Herb was honorably discharged "to accept employment in essential industry." The store, lodge and post office provided support to the railroad, which was so integral to the war effort. On March 16, 1947 Herb was re-commissioned Postmaster of Norden, his commission personally signed by President Harry S. Truman.

In 1946 Herb and Lena remodeled the lodge building, enlarging the living quarters and the store and adding a separate section just for the post office. Access from the living quarters was through the short hallway to the store. The counter on the right was the store counter and the shorter one on the left the post office counter, with the door to Herb's office behind it. Between the counters was a waist high wooden double swinging gate, to the store proper. As a youngster, I often stood by the gate and watched Herb work. Evenings he sorted outgoing mail, hand cancelling it. In the mornings he put up the incoming mail, expertly tossing envelopes into the pigeon-hole boxes, accessed by the owners on the porch just outside the entry door. The Sacramento Bee and San Francisco Chronicle were set on the counter. He enjoyed talking with all who came in. Uncle Herb rarely missed a day to deal with the mail, and, raising and lowering the flag. I was allowed to help with the flag and was strongly warned that the precious flag could never touch the ground. In the morning, after sunrise, it was carefully hooked and then pulled up to gently unfold from his hands and flutter gracefully in the breeze. Before sunset, it was lowered and together we folded it lengthwise, and then lay it on the counter to do the military style finish up.

In the early years the mail was picked up and left by the east and west bound trains as they came through overnight at the Norden Station. The station was located across the highway, and a decent long hike, maybe 200 ft. down the steep hill in the enclosed walkway that safely went over the rail tracks, made a turn and then an easy walk to the station and passenger reception area. Most days, Herb would get his vehicle out of the big garage, and drive across the highway to the walkway entrance about 7 in the morning, and then walk to the station. I often was allowed along. Then stationmaster Ralph Duncan would show this city girl his brightly and colorfully lit rail control panel, which I loved to look at. The station smelled of oil and smoke and creosote soaked timbers of the surrounding snow sheds. It was noisy and a little scary. Herb took me to see the engine turntable, just as an engine was being prepared to go back down the pass and

assist the next train coming up. It was fascinating to watch yet frighteningly

Unless otherwise noted, the photographs and other historical ephemera in The Heirloom's pages come from the Norm Saylor collection at the Donner Summit Historical Society

screechy loud.

Outgoing mail was taken down in the evening, a reverse of the morning procedure. This mail was sorted and put into grey canvas bags. Each class of mail and packages had a separate bag, marked in bold black lettering and with a tag indicating destination. In the 1960's a storage locker was installed near the flagpole at the post office, and delivery and pick up came by truck making Herb's job vastly easier.

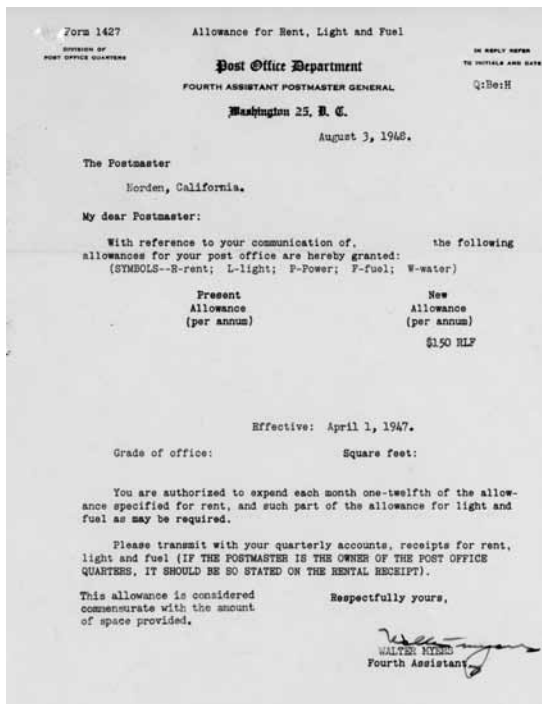
Letters in Herb's "History of P.O." folder gave insight into the tug of war between Herb and the U. S. Postal Service officials. Rental for building space was one point of contention, starting at \$150.00 per year, to be expended 1/12th per month, for rent, heat, light and water. Herb

wrote, explaining the need to heat 7 months of the year due to the 7000 ft. elevation. He requested \$300 a year. The top letter to the left is their answer, saying \$300 was excessive. The bottom letter was their initial offer of \$150.

They offered, and he accepted, \$210. That was increased to \$270 per year after the storage locker was added, with the additional requirement of quarterly written reports.



The interesting and challenging days and years rolled on. The 1952 big snow storm closed the road east for 28 days, and the railroad too was closed for a time. Construction of Interstate 80 in the 1960's dramatically changed traffic patterns, yet the post office and store remained busy. And, Herb was always on call to ferry injured skiers to the hospital in Truckee. Herb was awarded the 6th Honorary Badge of the National Ski Patrol in appreciation of his services.



Lena closed the store and retired in 1967. However, it was not until February, 1975, as Herb reached the mandatory retirement age of 70, that he turned over postmaster duties to Mary L. Hanns. The post office remained at the Norden site until September 2, 1989, when it closed permanently, and was made a place name of Soda Springs, California. To this day, Zip code 95724 remains active. Herb's P.O. Box 1, is now the official mailing address of the Donner Summit Historical Society.

Herb's final crown, after 37 years as a member of the California Branch of the National League of Postmasters, came at the 74th Annual Convention held at Squaw Valley, California in April of 1975. That convention was dedicated to Otto [Herbert] Frederick, Friend of All Postmasters.



Pictures page 4

Herb Frederick in his military uniform during WWII

Letter denying the request to raise the rent payment to \$300/month including light, fuel, and water as "excessive" compared to floor space. Dated Dec. 14, 1948

Expense allowed at \$150/month including light, fuel, and water dated August 15, 1948

Above on this page,
Otto Frderick retires,
1975

Right, accounting done
at postmaster switch
from Thrift Baker to
Bliss Forbes, 1928

Certificate of Incoming Acting Postmaster.	
(1) Domestic M. O. forms No. _____ to No. _____	_____
(2) International M. O. forms No. _____ to No. _____	_____
(3) Drafts on Treasurer U. S. No. _____ to No. _____	_____
(4) Postal cash items	\$ 59.49
(5) Postage stamp stock	\$ 40.51
(6) Total (equal to fixed credit)	\$ 100.00

Listed below are the Post offices, and first Postmasters for the Donner Pass area, as cited in: The History of California Post Offices, by H.E. Salley.

What is now Soda Springs -- Summit Valley, established 9/9/1870; name changed to Soda Springs 1875

Located near the summit of the Lincoln Highway, 3 miles west of Donner, 13 miles east of the Cisco railroad terminals. J.A. Tinker, first Postmaster

Soda Springs; established 3/8/1875, same location as Summit Valley. Name change. First Postmaster William Jones. Closed 6/15/1881. Re-opened 8/1/1929. Bertha B. Jones first Postmaster.

The real Soda Springs **where the Soda Springs** are and where there was a hotel – today the Cedars.

Hopkins Post Office, opened 1885 to 1886, named for Mark Hopkins, one of the “Big 4” to build the railroad, and developer of the Soda Springs Resort and Hotel located at the site known as the Cedars. William B. Vinegard Postmaster.

Donner Summit-Norden
Donner Post Office established 3/13/1882, and discontinued 8/4/1926 when it moved 5 miles east to Nevada County and name changed to Norden. Joseph Gowling first Postmaster of Donner; Thrift Baker first Postmaster of Norden. Norden Post Office closed 9/2/1989, and made place name of Soda Springs.



This gorgeous picture of the east end of Tunnel 6 appeared on the back cover of [California History](#), the magazine of the California Historical Society, in January, 2012. Note the buildings just outside the tunnel and note the smokestacks on the snowsheds. Note too, that the first snowsheds were continuous. Passengers complained about the dark, missing the views, and the smoke as they traveled the transcontinental route over Donner Summit. You can see why fire was such a problem.



The contemporary picture of the picture on the previous page above is by Art Clark showing close to the same view. Today we have concrete snow sheds and they are not continuous. The many buildings are gone.

If you are interested in historical photographs you can search the U.S. Geological Service and the Library of Congress. If you are really interested you can spend hours perusing.

DONNER SUMMIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
www.donnersummithistoricalociety.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) non-profit organization

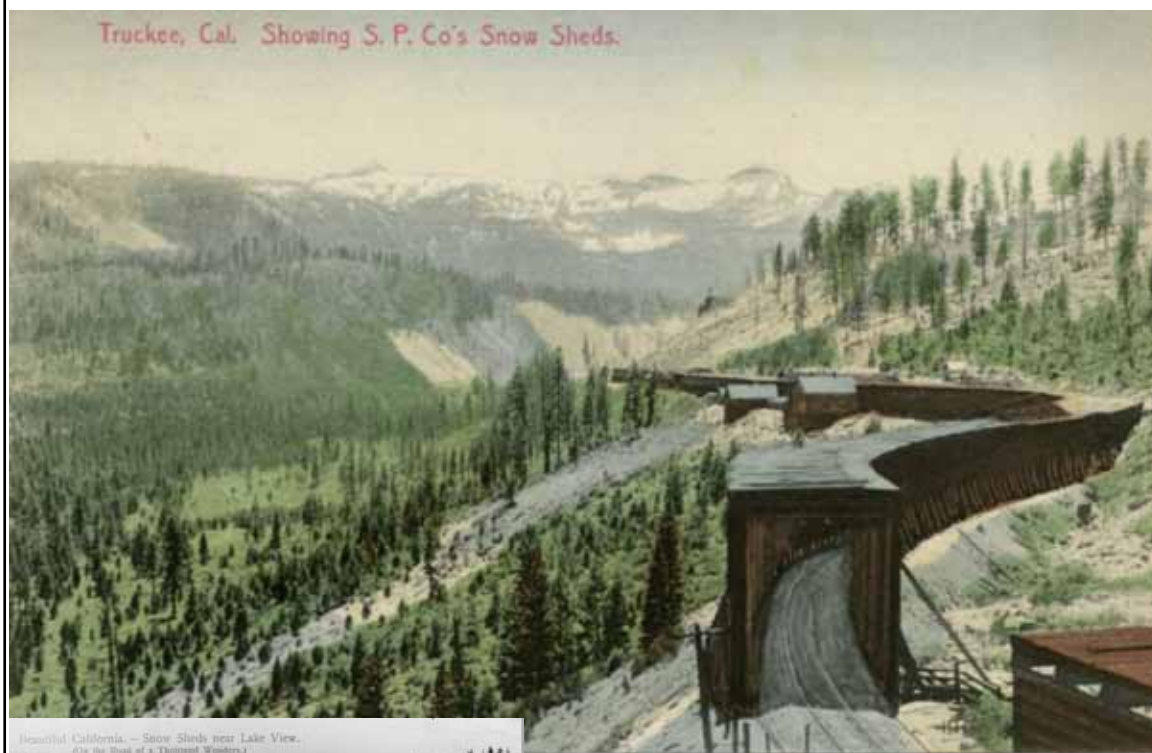
If you would like monthly newsletter announcements, please write your email address below VERY neatly.

From the DSHS Archives



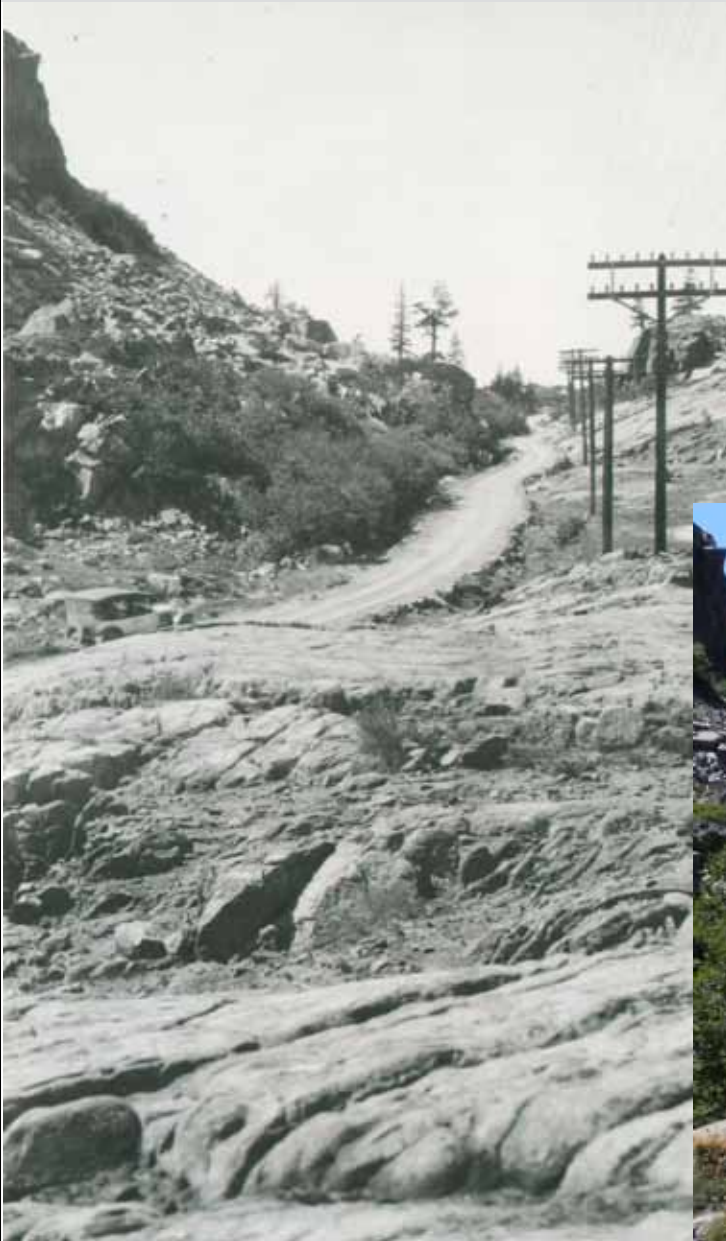
Bottle Him of the Republic hung above the bar in the Soda Springs Hotel. It was drawn in 1933.

Today it belongs to Starr Walton Hurley whose grandfather, Oscar Jones, built the hotel.



snowsheds circa 1910. These were telescoping snowsheds. Parts were on tracks that enabled the sheds to be opened in winter and so stop fires. The sun baked wood was quick to catch fire from snokstack sparks and then the sheds acted like chimneys. Fires blazed into conflagurations and miles of sheds could be destroyed in one fire. Fire trains were always at the ready and track walkers continually inspected for fires.

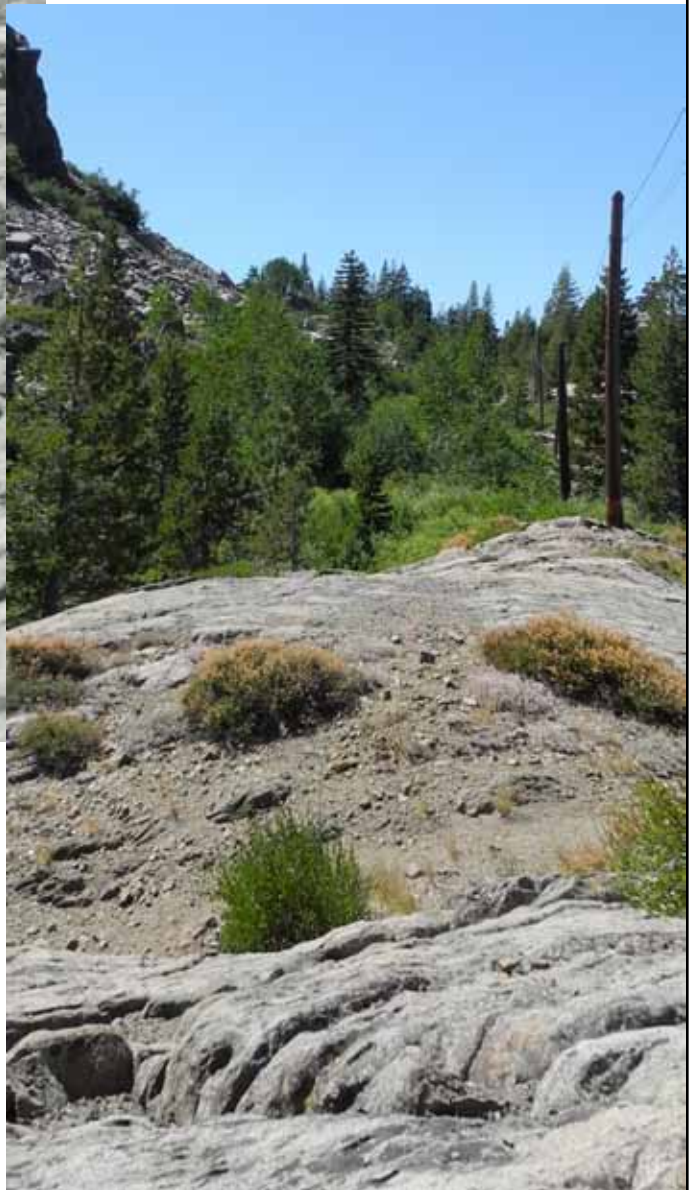
Then & Now with Art Clark



Left is a view of the Lincoln Highway on the east side of Donner Pass taken in the 1910's. Note the car on the road. The Lincoln Highway was the first transcontinental highway; this was the route across America.

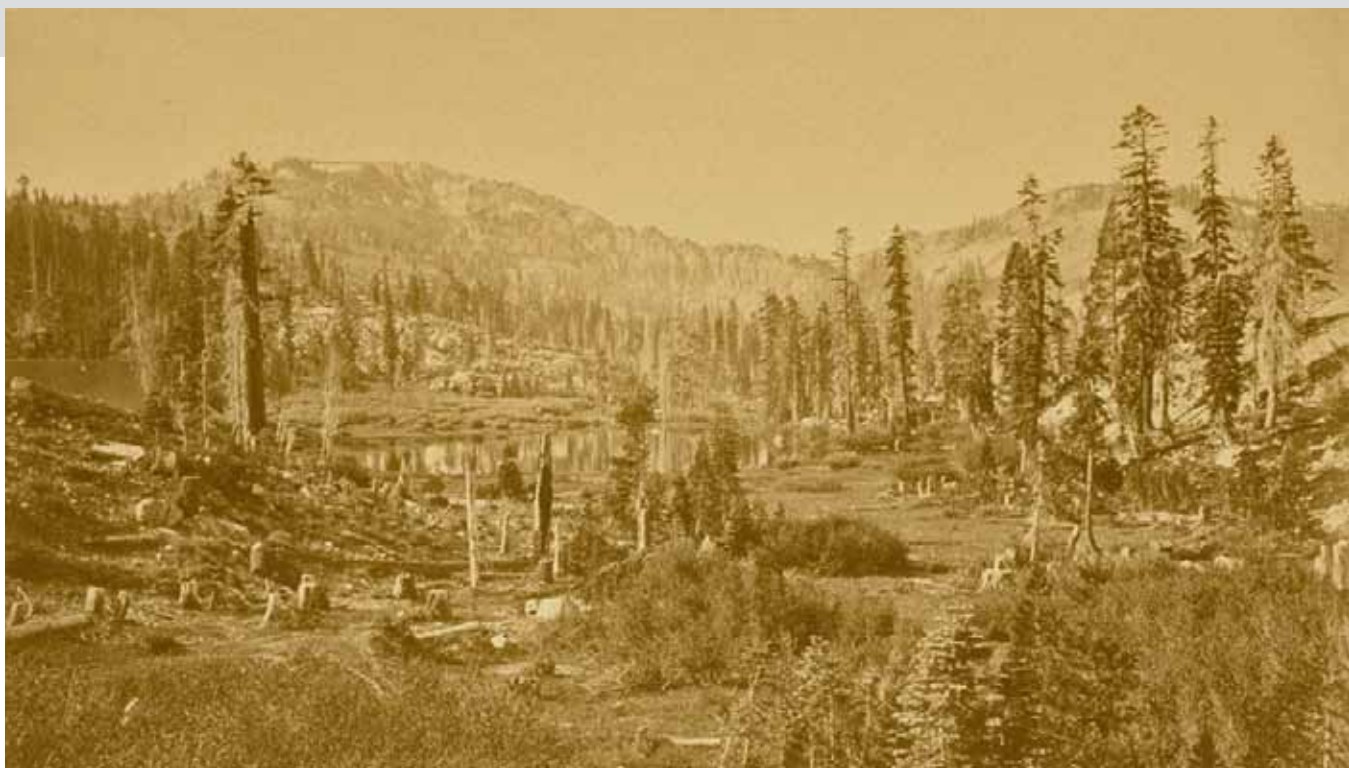
Below is the spot today. Through that same route to the left of the rocks there has been a lot of disturbance over the years. A transcontinental fiber optic cable follows the routes as does a petroleum line.

Location: 39° 19.380'N 120° 18.799'W



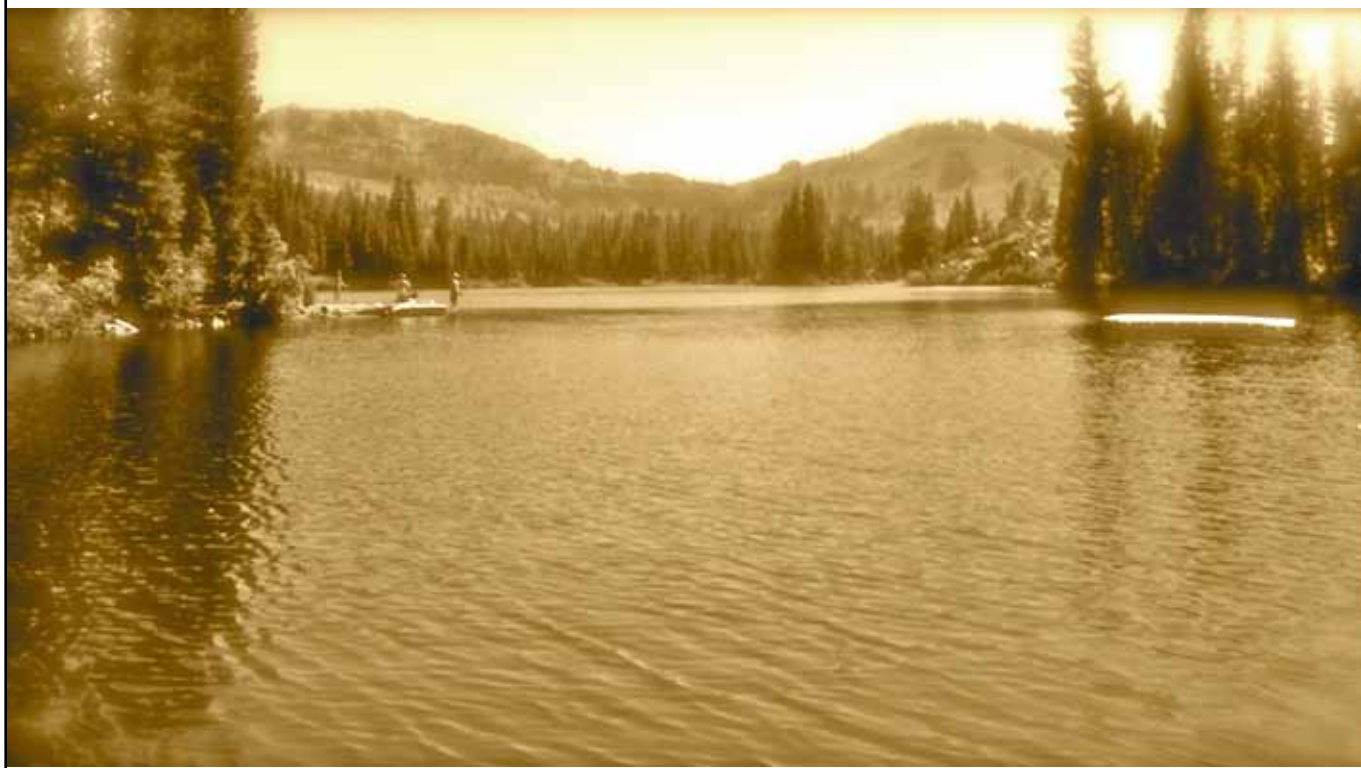
You can walk this route today. Take the Lake Mary Rd. to the Pacific Crest Trailhead. Instead of following the PCT go through the trees to the left. You will be able to follow the route easily downhill through the 1913 underpass which allowed cars to avoid the tracks, to the Chinese Wall, and to Native American Petroglyphs. You will have great views of Donner Lake and Rainbow Bridge (1926) as well as rock climbers on the granite faces. The Lincoln Highway route is pretty easy to follow and takes you through a lot of different types of areas from rock faces to forests. You can follow it all the way to Donner Lake (see "Summit Canyon" in our Oct '11 issue).

Lake Mary - by Bob Williams



Lake Mary was first dammed to provide water for the steam locomotives on Donner Summit. Just downhill was a large turttable for turning the auxiliary locomotives that helped the trains up to Donner Pass. A fire train was also kept on the Summit to extinguish the frequent snowshed fires started by the sparks from engines. The old shot is by Carlton Watkins.

The new one below, is from 2009 and by Bob Williams who has a house on Lake Mary. Lake Mary today serves as a reservoir to provide water for snow making at Sugar Bowl



Book Review

The Plains Across The Overland Emigrants the Trans-Mississippi West 1840-60 by John Unruh

The title and subtitle give you an idea about this book. It is serious. If you're after a quick read or an exciting story, this is not for you. If you are after a serious treatment of the emigrant experience, then you'll like it.

John Unruh worked on his doctoral thesis, The Plains Across, for ten years. This is the standard by which all books on the westward migration are measured. The research is exhaustive with footnotes by the hundreds of both primary and secondary sources. For that reason it's an amazing book. Unfortunately the author died shortly after finishing it in 1979 at age 38.

I had picked up the book looking for clues and sources about the westward migration as it went over the Sierra. There is not much in the book about that besides a description of Truckee Lake (Donner) from Edwin Bryant's book, What I Saw in California (1846), "The Alps, so celebrated in history and by all travelers and admirers of mountain landscape, cannot, I am satisfied, present scenery more wild, more rugged, more grand, more romantic, and more enchantingly picturesque and beautiful. than that which surrounds this lake, of which the lake itself composes a part."

Even without much about the Sierra, it's a fine book for those interested in the emigrants' experience. It covers all aspects of the migration: public opinion, motivation, perspective, personal experience, relations (emigrants to Indians, army, gov't), entrepreneurs, etc. Unruh's approach is topical as opposed to chronological, geographical or experiential which is how other authors have approached the subject.

The book delves deeply into the subject, maybe too deeply for the casual reader, but that reader can always skim the unwanted detail.

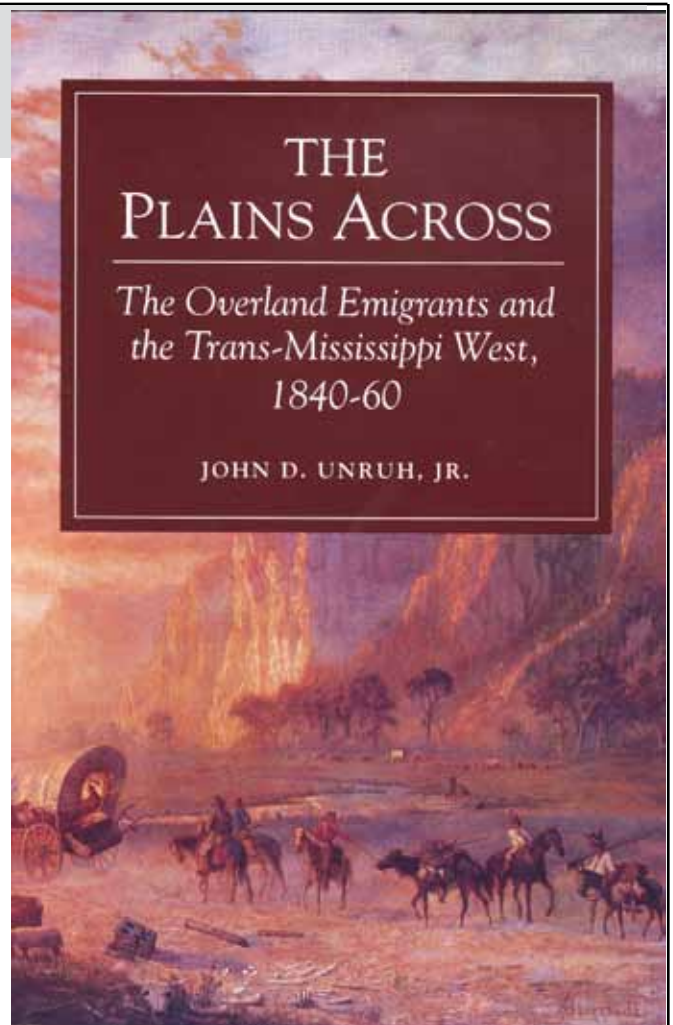
In general Unruh makes statements, for example about the traders or government supporting emigrants and then follows with example after example. There are charts covering the cost of sugar and flour at different trading posts over the years for example. That detail is good but not everyone will enjoy it.

A book that has so much detail will then give the reader a lot of new information in facts, stories, lessons, and reflection.

Not only did a few hundred thousand emigrants head for California and Oregon, about whom we've all heard, but there were many who went back because the trip was too hard. There was communication between the trains. Letters went back and forth and messages were left scratched in animal skulls, what the author calls the "roadside telegraph." There was an amazing number of ferries which emigrants paid to use. As time went on there were many many trading stations along the emigrants' route. Emigrants paid people returning and passing traders to mail their letters back home.

Entrepreneurs were a big part of the emigrant experience both from among the emigrants themselves and in the communities the travelers came across. They were critical to success.

Emigrants decorated their wagons with paintings, slogans, names and origins. The emigrants not only brought wagon



with them, but herds of cattle and sheep as well as fruit trees and seeds.

Some years the emigrant experience was not one wagon train crossing the prairies as we see in pictures. Sometimes the wagons traveled in huge crowds four or more abreast and the dust, pollution, and debris were amazing. Some emigrants wore goggles to be protected from the dust the many trains raised.

Truckee Station was an emigrant relief station dispensing 500-880 lbs of beef a day to starving emigrants in 1850.

Then there are the stories.

There was the fellow who thought emigrants would want chewing tobacco so he stocked his wagon with the tobacco and sold it to emigrants as he traveled west, making a lot of money.

There was a young girl who "inherited" a baby because the mother died. Each night the girl sought out a woman to nurse the baby. She was never refused.

There were stories of kindness. For example, after crossing the desert emigrants would fill barrels with water and head back to help others. When the people who had been helped reached the end of the desert they would do the same.

And we learn about the relationships of people which are good lessons for today, "When we left the frontier we were told great stories about the selfishness & want of feeling among the Emigrants.... I wish to bear my testimony against this slander. Never have I seen so much hospitality & good feeling anywhere exhibited as since I have been on this route...1849."

There are plenty of horrors such as traveling the Hastings cutoff. One man was found surviving by drinking his own urine. "By mid-July fifteen to twenty overland were reported to have died of starvation." According to incoming emigrants it was commonplace to find flesh sliced off the thousand of mules, oxen, and horses who had not survived the diminishing grass and water supplies. Decomposing animals and abandoned wagons "littered the trail mile after odorous mile" – according to one traveler's account seventy dead animals were visible at one time and ninety-two wagons were abandoned within one two mile stretch. A small emigrant party was known to have lived for six days solely on a few pounds of coffee.

Unruh's final thoughts put the topic into perspective as he talks about how the emigrant experience is difficult to categorize. The weather varied year to year, the emigrant population changed over time, the relations with Indians changed, routes changed and improved, new routes opened, more trading stations opened, there were more traders, there were more forts over time, ferries and bridges increased, emigrants' preparation changed.

If you are up to it, it's a fascinating read. You will learn a lot.

Right, the second ad is for the Summit Valley Sawmill in today's Van Norden Meadow, from the [Sacramento Daily Union](#) 9/27/63

THE CELEBRATED
HOWE SEWING MACHINES SOLD
— ON —
Easy Monthly Installments.
Machines Rented and Exchanged. All kinds of machines repaired. Silks, Cottons, etc., for sale.
147 J street, bet'n 5th and 6th, Sacramento.
s13-1m1r D. W. CAMPBELL, Agent.

SUMMIT VALLEY SAWMILL,
ON THE LINE OF THE C. P. R. R.
Red Fir Fencing, Flooring and Building Lumber, of the best quality; also, Shakes.
Lumber Dealers or Farmers wishing to purchase can have shipped at shortest notice, by the car-load, to all parts and lines or branches of the C. P. R. R.
RICHARDSON BROS.,
Summit Valley C. P. R. R.
a30-1m1p*

WM. GWYNS, Sacramento | H. T. HOLMES, San Fran'co
H. T. HOLMES & CO.,
MANUFACTURERS OF LIME AND
IMPORTERS OF PLASTER AND
FIRE MATERIALS,
I street, between Fifth and Sixth.
s10 /SACRAMENTO. 1m4p

HOUSEKEEPERS, HOTELS, ETC.
LOOK AT THE PRICES!—GREAT
Reduction in JAPAN TEAS, 5 bits to \$1 50 per lb.;
CRUSHED SUGAR, 7 lbs. for \$1; Granulated Sugar,
extra quality, 7½ lbs for \$1; Golden C. Coffee Sugar,
8 lbs for \$1. CHOICE GROCERIES and PROVIS-
IONS, California Hams and Bacon, Cheese and Eggs—
all at equally low prices.
J. J. CADOGAN,
s9-1m4p 186 J street, bet'n Sixth and Seventh.

The Discovery of Roller Pass

"The next day we reached the Sierra Nevada mountains. We spent three days there exploring the mountains to find a pass where we might make a crossing. A party of us took our horses and went to the summit, and traced it both ways and finally decided on a place to make the crossing. It was quite an undertaking to get our wagons up. 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 on the summit letting down our long one hundred and fifty feet rope, and hitched it with the leaders that were on the wagon, by this process, we succeeded in getting all the wagons up safely, and soon was ready to push ahead on our journey. Here we received our first intelligence of the Mexican War, by two young men that had been as far as Sutter's Fort. We then pushed on as fast as possible for the Sacramento valley."

Joseph Aram

Captain Joseph Aram was born in New York in 1810. His wagon train party may have been the first to discover Roller Pass. Although difficult it was much easier than the previous route, one ridge to the north, Donner Pass. He arrived in the Santa Clara valley during the Mexican war in 1849. He was a nurseryman and was one of the first legislators in 1849 at San Jose, the first state capitol.

For more on Roller Pass see our November '11 issue and see our October '11 issue for Donner Pass.

Coming May, 2012

The Most Interesting Unknown Historical Spot in California: Tunnel 6

One of the most amazing engineering achievements of the 19th Century: The Great Sierra Tunnel.

We'll be looking at granite, engineering, Chinese immigrants, avalanche, rock fall, star drills, the first locomotive in California (used on Donner Summit but not as you'd expect), the first locomotives over the summit (but not in the way you'd expect) and so much more.

Don't let your subscription expire.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

TRUCKEE

— SANDY —

TAHOE STAGE LINE

J. F. MOODY, PROPRIETOR.

*Carrying U. S. Mail and Wells, Fargo & Co's
Express.*

Stages leave Truckee for Tahoe Every Morning, making close connection at Tahoe City for McKinney's, Tallack, Rowland's, Glenbrook and other points on the lake, thus enabling passengers to make the trip around the lake and return to Truckee in ONE DAY.

The Most Romantic Route on the Coast.

*Private Conveyances, with or without Drivers, for
Tahoe, Webber and Independence Lakes, and
Sierra Valley, Furnished if Desired.*

Address all communications to

JOHN F. MOODY,
Truckee, Cal.

Crossing DONNER Summit



Just for fun, a column from Western Skiing in November, 1946 about the state of things on Donner Summit.

The magazine was provided to us courtesy of the Auburn Ski Club

Commercial building of the ski resort variety is so prevalent that our bride of a few days had little trouble persuading us to shed our honeymoon indolence for a few hours the other day in order to take a check on what "gave" along Highway 40.

So we cranked up our favorite hunk of iron, handed our bride into the observer's seat and pointed the rusty radiator cap east from Soda Springs.

As we churned up the grade we were, in a fit of nostalgia, prompted to regale our companion with the tale of the 1933 blizzard which caught us on the top of Mt. Lincoln and sent us staggering half frozen into the old Norden Store some hours later. The kindly owners took us into their living quarters and fed us steaming mugs of tea laced with brandy, following it with a sumptuous dinner. It is, therefore, a real pleasure to report that upon rounding the next turn we saw that the Norden Store and Lodge was nearly ready for reopening after undergoing a face lifting that has more than doubled the size of all of its facilities.

Three turns later, the right hand shoulder of the road widened considerably, and there, nestled half out of sight below the highway level was Kiski Lodge. Kiski is a comparative newcomer to the area and we have been away for some years, so it remained for our bride to give us the word on the past history there.

As up-to-date skiers of Donner already know, Kirbyb and Lola Schull

and their partner Henry (Snuffy) Piche run a highly informal, wholesome, and friendly lodge. Their specialty has been real home cooking and comfort of accommodations, this latter feature now including sleeping space for 45 people, a new dining room, and an upper deck sun porch. The absence of a bar has kept out the whiskiers, but nightly schottisches, etc., have prevented the passage of any dull hours there.

A mile later, we didn't know whether to look to the right or to the left. Over to the left, bulldozers and power shovels had given clear notice that Donner Summit is to have a real honest-to-goodness parking lot. What facilities will this lot serve? Well, Herstle Jones, who has just sold Rainbow Tavern, has teamed up with his nephew, Bud Walton, to construct a Constam Lift up the back of Signal Hill, a coffee shop at the foot of the slope and, of course, the parking lot. Next year's plans call for the construction of a whopping big hotel there. The lift, by the way, is a T-bar 1,600 feet long with a 650-foot vertical rise, and is reached by way of a 1,000-foot rope tow originating at the parking area.

We mentioned that we hadn't known whether to look to the right or to the left. The confusion was caused by the fact that across the road from the Jones-Walton development a ghost of the old House of Vanderford is beginning to take substance. Veterans of the ski slopes and of the services, Gene Woods and Ernie Nordstrum, have pooled their resources and those of their wives to form Woods and Nordstrum, Incorporated. The corporation has big plans, which include the raising of a new and better House of Vanderford, but is being content for the coming season with the operation of a small lodge, two tow trucks, and the 20-car Donner Summit Garage, plus a shuttle bus service up and down The Hill, providing that the State of California will come through with a Certificate of Public Necessity and Convenience. The boys already have the bus, and who can deny that such a service is a necessity and convenience to the public?

The lodge, the Ski-Hi, will have dorms for 20 people, a lunch counter, dining room with seating for 50 customers, the Summit Sport Shop, and a bar with dancing to the "music" of a home grown orchestra.

The Sport Shop itself is worthy of mention. Rollie Galloway has taken on the concession here. He will sell skis and equipment, including all clothing, and will rent skis and poles. Rollie is a professional photog and will operate a photo lab in conjunc-

tion with the store. In addition he has erected two rope tows on Johnny Ellis' old hill south of the Summit and will have one going in back of the lodge this winter.

After gazing for a few appreciative moments at the new Viking Ski Club lodge being erected a few yards up the line (on Woods and Nordstrum land, for free) we headed at moderate speed back toward the lower reaches of what is called the Summit.

As we passed Soda Springs and its newest hostel, the Beacon Hill Lodge, we observed to our wind blown bride that the hotel and the lodge, under the owner-directorships of Dennis Jones and Elmo Moriano, respectively, will house 110 and 145 guests, also in the order named. Needless to say, the rope tows and J-bar on Beacon Hill will be back in operation this season.

We finally ended our descent at Cisco Grove, where Cam Roumage took us across the river to have a look at the enlarging job he has completed on his Sitzski Lodge. He'll take 40 people at a time this year in his sleeping bag dormitories, and will feed them and many more at the lunch counter. Dancing to a juke box completes the indoor picture, and the two tows on the nearby hill round out Sitzski as a resort.

It was almost dinner time, so we had only time to find out on the return trip that Charlie Butler is bringing the 24-hour restaurant to Donner Summit at his Big Bend Inn.

Also, we had the pleasure of meeting Rainbow Tavern's new owners, the J. J. Navone husband-wife combination. Rainbow will be essentially the same as previously, with space for 150 guests, a bar, good food in the dining room, and the renovated quarter mile J-bar lift behind the hotel.

Kingvale reports no essential changes this season, just the same nice cabins for skiing parties, the men's dorm, the lunch counter, the towing service and chain service, and the garage.

Almost home, we gave the car a breather at the Donner Summit Lodge while we introduced Mrs. Reynolds to the Summit's one-man C. of C., Bud Horak. Bud is ambitious, and rightly so, along the lines of a unification of all Donner Summit resorts, but for the moment has vented his energy in putting his lodge on the map. In the attempt he has produced a 150-person hotel composed of nothing less than 100 per cent radio equipped rooms, each one with bath, a large dining room, a private ditto, a ski shop, a barber shop and beauty salon, a photo and curio shop, six dorms, cabins for 40 people, and a gas station. Whew!