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By J.M. HANA, Date 12/7/97

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(May, 1929)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL MONUMENTS NATIONAL PARK

FILE NO. 0.36
PART 1

NATIONAL MONUMENT
COMSTOCK LODE

LAST DATE ON TOP

IMPORTANT

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HORACE M. ALBRIGHT,
Director.

PROPOSED COMSTOCK LODE NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEVADA.

The Comstock lode is about ten miles northeast of Carson City, Nevada, and within T. 17 N., R. 21 E. Of all mining areas in this county none have a more interesting or romantic background than the Lode.

The prime movers for the establishment of the monument were Senator T. L. Odie of Nevada, and principally William R. Gregory, a local realtor. Their interest was chiefly confined to 1931.

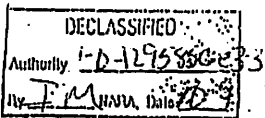
On June 30, 1931, Assistant Director C. L. Wirth, following a visit to the Lode, made a detailed report in which he recommended that the C. & C. shaft, from which practically all of the gold and silver of the "Great Bonanza" was taken, be established, under certain conditions, as a national monument. This report was then turned over to Superintendent O. A. Tomlinson, who for many years had lived in Nevada, for his comments. Mr. Tomlinson's opinion was that acceptance be conditioned on the State or private parties interested turning over the entire property without cost to the Government, and that the equipment, tunnels be repaired and placed in proper safe condition for exhibition without cost to the Government.

On November 2, 1931, Mr. Roger Toll visited the Lode, and in his resulting report of December 2, 1931, recommended: "It does not seem that the Comstock Lode ^{is} any similar mining, industrial or commercial landmark is suitable for consideration as a national monument."

Mr. Toll's conclusions were concurred in by Mr. Camerer, who pointed out that he did not believe that the Service should accept any offer of a monument which would require large amount of Federal funds to put it into presentable shape, maintain it in satisfactory condition for sightseeing purposes, and develop it, which in the case of the Lode appeared inevitable.

The agitation for the establishment of the monument became inactive toward the close of 1931, with the leasing of the C. & C. shaft, and its operation as an active mining property.

See detailed file on "National Monument - Comstock Lode."



COMSTOCK LODE NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEVADA.

LOCATION: Within Township 17 North, Range 21 East. Ten or twelve miles northeast of Carson City, Nevada and on the edge of Virginia City.

AREA: Unknown.

HISTORY AND REMARKS: The Comstock lode was discovered in 1859. It is reported to have produced \$700,000,000 worth of gold and silver and saved the country from bankruptcy during and after the Civil War. It is claimed that President Lincoln proclaimed Nevada a State because of this fact. Nevada was admitted into the Union on October 31, 1864.

STATUS: No definite steps have been taken towards making this a national monument. Only correspondence has passed between the Secretary's Office and Senator Oddie.

PERSONS INTERESTED: Senator T. L. Oddie, U. S. Senate.
Mr. Milburn R. Gregory, Reno, Nevada.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: 1-D-129586-3
By: J.M. HAVA, Date: 12/9

*Little
Hager
Cowan*

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

February 16, 1939.

Mr. J. A. Fulton,
Mackay School of Mines,
University of Nevada,
Reno, Nevada.

Dear Mr. Fulton:

We appreciate your letter of January 23, concerning a report on the proposed Comstock Lode National Monument in Virginia City, Nevada.

Our only report on this area was prepared in 1931 by Mr. Roger W. Toll, former Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park. Only one copy of this report is available and it must therefore be retained in our files. The following excerpt from Mr. Toll's summary will give you the most important facts which his investigation disclosed:

"There have been many events of commerce, industry, and agriculture that have been vitally important in the history of the country, but which were the result of individual effort rather than of national action. The nation could not have existed and grown without the development of agriculture and its many products, without the livestock industry, without the mining of gold, silver, copper, iron and other metals, without the production of oil, without the manufacture of steel, machinery, automobiles, and many other products, without railroads to handle the commerce of the country, or in short, without the many achievements of its people. While these events are of undoubted national importance, they are not Governmental acts of the nation, and it would seem that the history of such events should be preserved by the various industries, by commercial associations or by the people of the localities most directly interested. They do not seem to offer appropriate material for the creation of national monuments.

"The Comstock Lode produced gold and silver. Gold is unique among metals in that the unit value is fixed and because the Government is one of the largest purchasers, and exchanges, in effect, gold coin for an equal weight of gold bullion. However, the mining of gold is an enterprise of individuals and corporations, operating a sovereign state, under state laws, and taxed by the state. The Federal Government does not purchase gold until after it has been mined, smelted and refined.

"The value of the silver produced by the Comstock Lode was greater than the value of the gold. If the outstanding events in the mining of gold and silver were to be commemorated by national monuments, similar recognition might be expected for other metals and for the leading events of other industrial and commercial enterprises.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

ADDRESS ONLY
THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

"The importance of the Comstock Lode and the phenomenal mining production of Virginia City are unquestioned. Many visitors now make the trip to Virginia City because of its historical interest. The half abandoned city, with its many ruined and dilapidated buildings has the romantic interest that attaches to ghost cities. The interest of visitors could be greatly stimulated if there were informational signs giving the high lights of the history of the city, its mines, its buildings, and its notable characters. There is more of general interest to visitors along the main street of Virginia City than there is among the many mine buildings, shafts, dumps and other surface workings of its mines. The C. & C. shaft is not accessible to visitors, and the risk of taking average visitors into a timbered shaft and mine is such that the opening of the mine is a doubtful part of any development program. The lower workings of the mine are exceptionally hot.

"The story of the Comstock Lode, if told by a sign on the main street of Virginia City, and supplemented by a pamphlet, and by the available books and by photographs, would satisfactorily meet the needs of visitors for more information. Such a program would be inexpensive, practically self-supporting. The people of Virginia City, of Reno and of Nevada could obtain by a program that they could readily accomplish, practically all of the benefits that it is hoped would result from the establishment of a national monument.

"It does not seem that the Comstock Lode nor any similar mining, industrial or commercial landmark is suitable for consideration as a national monument."

Sincerely yours,

Fred T. Johnston,
Acting Supervisor of Recreation
and Land Planning.

cc: Region IV ✓

cc: Mr. Little ✓

WHEI-fmd

0-35
Virginia City

DRAMA OF THE COMSTOCK

The Drama of the Comstock
Edited and Published by
PAUL SMITH
Contents Copyrighted 1937
By PAUL SMITH
Virginia City, Nevada

A short pictorial account of VIRGINIA CITY and THE COMSTOCK LODE published in commemoration of the hardy Pioneers who blazed the trail, suffered untold hardships, settled and built this most romantic, historic and the greatest gold and silver mining camp of all time. A purpose of this little paper is to acquaint the thousands of visitors to Virginia City and the Comstock with some of the past history of this old camp. You can read in a few minutes what took Nature and Man thousands of years to accomplish.

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Latitude 39-17' 36" N.
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Attitude very Encouraging
Gratitude 1000 per cent

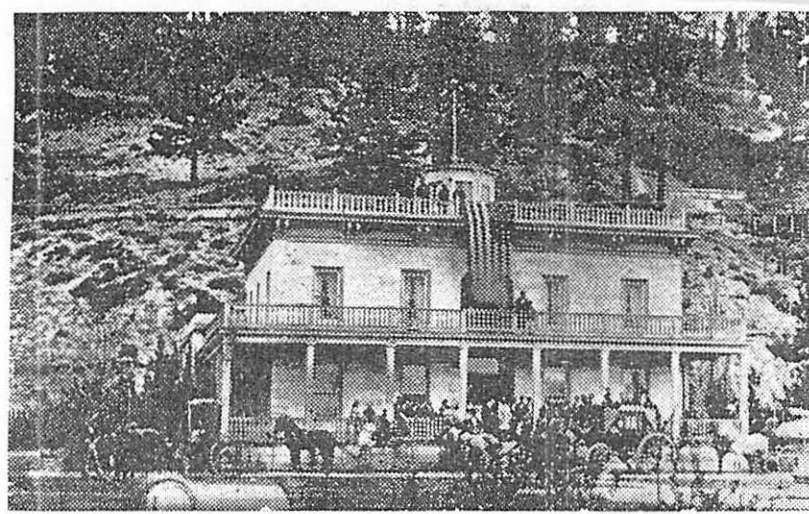
WORLD FAMOUS VIRGINIA CITY SILVER AND GOLD STARTS RUSH TO WASHOE

Virginia City the most historical, romantic mining camp in the World is situated at the base of Sun Peak or Mt. Davidson, about fourteen miles from Carson City and twenty two from Reno, nine miles from Dayton and sixty-five from Lake Tahoe. The history of this famous camp dates back to the early sixties. At that time all supplies and equipment were hauled over the mountains from Sacramento by mule and ox team. Camels were also used to transport salt from the immense salt deposits in Churchill County, which was used in the treating of the ores. A few of the prices paid in Virginia City in 1860; flour \$75.00 per hundred; sugar \$62.50 per hundred; candles seventy-five cents each; shovels five dollars each; picks six dollars; powder one dollar a lb. and eggs three dollars a dozen. Thirty mills were in operation at one time in the district. On Dec. 31, 1877, a shipment of bullion was made from an eight day run of the Con-Virginia mill (gold and silver)

which weighed sixteen tons with an assay value of twenty-nine cents less than \$1,100,000. From 1876 to 1878 the population was around 35,000 people. The total production of the mines is over the billion mark. This camp is unusual in many ways; Why did Nature see fit to deposit in these vaults of the Comstock more gold than anywhere else in the whole world? Why was it that the Comstock was honored with such an array of men as Mackay, Fair Flood, O'Brien, Sutro, Lucky Baldwin, Geo. Hearst, Steve Gillis, Sam Davis, Mark Twain, Dan DeQuille, Sandy Bowers, Sharon and Ralston and a host of other great men. Such men have never gathered in one camp in the history of the world but they did gather here in the old Virginia City camp. There must be some significance to all this. It is for the future writers to conjure with.



Sandy Bowers, (1830-1868)



Bower's Mansion—Built By Washoe Seeress of Virginia City Fame



Mrs. Eilley Orrum Bowers, (1816-1903)

Eilley Orrum and Sandy Bowers Build Mansion With Silver Door Knobs -- Best of Everything

Eilley was born in Scotland and was not a strange woman. In fact she was all woman, intelligent, wise, alert and industrious thruout her entire life; she was above the crowd about her. True, she married several times—she started young—she wanted a home and children. She did not get these until she met and married that good old faithful miner, Sandy Bowers, who made her a good husband and gave her a home and children which was her life's desire. An ideal couple like Sandy and Eilley were bound to be smiled upon by Lady Luck. They owned a mining claim between them right near their home in Gold Canyon and it produced a million dollars or more for them each year. They did not squander their money as some would have you believe. Yes, they entertained royally, their friends and all who visited them, for that was the proper thing

to do in those days. They helped their less fortunate friends. The Gold and Silver that they dug from the Earth, they did not hoard but they spent it, turned it back to the Earth, made many people happy. They even went to Europe, and made Kings and Queens happy and laugh heartily at their native humor and Sandy's honest to goodness wit.

Today Bower's Mansion, majestic in its pioneer simplicity, stands on the main highway between Reno and Carson City, stands there in a most beautiful setting inviting you to come in and rest and enjoy yourself. It is a fitting monument to their foresightedness. To those who say Eilley died in poverty, I point with pride to that naturally rich and wholesome playground that she left to the World.

Mail a Copy of "THE DRAMA" To Your Friends -- They Will Appreciate It

THE DRAMA OF THE COMSTOCK LODE

Historic Old Piper's Opera House Still Stands

Historic Old Piper's Opera House still stands. Like a veteran actor at B and Taylor St. waiting its next curtain call. If this old theatre could only talk, what beautiful memories it would voice.

When you enter this famous edifice, every step you take fairly tingles with romantic thoughts of the past: drama — comedy — pathos is sensed in this noble structure of the arts.

The great Mazeppa is in the wings ready to come out on the stage. Mark Twain is sitting down in front making notes for his paper, The Territorial Enterprise. Eilley Orrum and Sandy Bowers are sitting comfortably in their box seat, Adolph Sutro, their guest for the evening. Across from them in their elaborate box sits James Mackey and Jim Fair with their party. While in the upper boxes one can see Isaac Requa, Lucky Baldwin, Mr. Lyman and Mr. Sharon with their parties. And in the orchestra dress circle and



in the peanut galleries you will see the millionaires, merchants, miners, brokers, and the general population of the Comstock.

It was the same when the great stars appeared there. The greatest actors and actresses were glad when they were to appear at Piper's Opera House in Virginia City. It was the money

spot of the world. Let's mention but a few of the great who honored the footlights there.

Edwin Booth, Frank Mayo, who delighted in Davey Crockett. Joe Jefferson in Rip Van Winkle; Fay Templeton, James O'Neil, Tony Paster, Nat Goodwin, Denman Thompson and the Victoria Loftus' British Blondes.

The great Patti and Modjeska trod old Piper's as well as the great Adah Menken, General Tom Thumb and Buffalo Bill and great men like Henry Ward Beecher, Col. Robert Ingersoll, Henry George. No less a person than Mark Twain frequently lectured in old Piper's. All of the famous melodramas were given at Piper's Opera House; Uncle Tom's Cabin was a favorite. Palmers Comedians, O'Briens Mastodan Minstrels, Lew Dockstrader, Geo. Primrose, Jas. J. Jeffries and gentleman Jim Corbett and a host of other world notables in the entertainment field played to the host of admiring Comstockers. Again I say if Old Piper's could only talk it would scream down the canyons and up the mountain sides with its reminiscences of comedy, tragedy, drama and all the emotions of a seething Comstock.

GUIDE YOURSELF SERVICE

The visitor could stay in Virginia City for months and see something different every day. You want to see all you can in an hour before you have to get back to the Lake or home somewhere. Here we are on the main street of Virginia City. It is called "C" St. But let's you and I honor Mark Twain and call it Mark Twain Blvd. for wasn't he the Editor of the Territorial Enterprise here and wasn't it here that he garnered most of his experiences to write his famous book "Roughing It." Let's walk down hill one street onto 'D' St., all the while drinking in the beautiful panorama spreading out before us. Those big piles of dirt you see are 'dumps,' they were mucked up and out of the mines and contain gold and silver values. Some of them are being worked over and in time all of the values will be separated from them by means of the more modern methods now being used. The old timers could not work these dumps profitably with the old methods.

Here we are at beautiful Old St. Mary's Cathedral. If it is open let us walk in to this old Catholic Church for a moment: see the lovely altars and above the beautiful paintings, the quaint pews with their individual doors. Here the great bonanza kings worshiped alongside the poorest, and why not? They both wrested their livelihood from the bowels of the earth. One of them happened to hit it richer. See the old gas light fixtures now fitted with electric lights. While browsing in the quiet of old St. Mary's let us think of some departed friend and light a blessed candle in their memory. In leaving we may dip in the holy water trough and depart knowing that we have really enjoyed a few moments in America's most fascinating and romantic old St. Mary's of the Mountains. As we walk a little farther we see old St. Paul's Episcopal Church. We would go in but it is closed now. Turn around and look up towards Sun Peak or Mt. Davidson. See how the buildings are out of line. This is due to the shrinking and compressing of the big timbers that are supporting over 700 miles of underground workings here on the Comstock. The underground workings consist of the shafts, tunnels, drifts, winzes, stopes, raises, of the various mines of which there are hundreds. Dozens of the mines are now working.

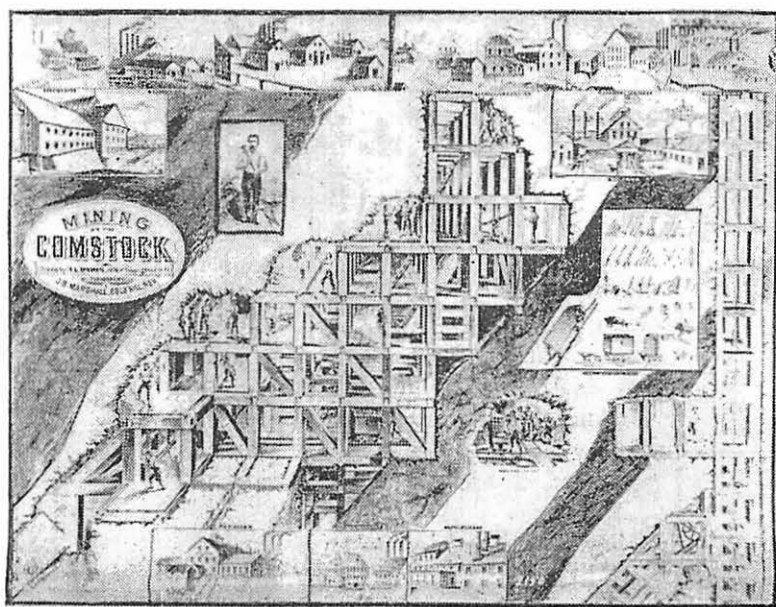
From the Churches look over to the Northeast and you may glimpse of what is left of the old OPHIR and CON VIRGINIA mine and mill buildings. They were great producers in their day, and their day is by no means done. Right now a new mill is being built to treat the ore. Look now to the North and see the cemeteries on the side of the hill. Many of the old pioneers are at rest up there. If you have time drive up and stroll among the old graves, you'll enjoy it, and it tends to have a good reaction on us. Back again in town, and by the way, these old streets are paved with ore that values from \$10 a ton up. There are some very interesting bars in town where one may visit and where the usual refreshments are served. There are very good restaurants and you may enjoy a very fine meal at reasonable prices. You should eat a meal here and enjoy the old pioneer atmosphere while resting for the balance of your trip. Ask anybody in town where the Museum of Memories is. There you will see the most unique shop of its kind in America. People drop in here to break the monotonous routine of a too busy life. Here for an hour or more you can reminisce, see the things that you knew as a child, the old ox-yoke, the tin bath tub, old grandmother's castor set (how you had to shine it every Saturday) and the old flannel petticoat they used to wear on account of so much horsehair in the furniture. Oh, so many things that will make you laugh and maybe a tear or two will appear. The atmosphere in this shop is different than you will find most anywhere, you feel as if you are at home, you are free to browse and ask all sorts of questions about the history of the Comstock. You may be able to find out almost anything you wish about anything. The old Wells Fargo Bldg. that stood next to the Old Virginia Hotel was torn down a few years ago and now some modern cottages grace its site. The old National Guard Hall still stands here on 'C' St. Now let's go up the hill one street and we walk along 'B' street. In the very early days this was the main street, when Virginia City was known as the Ophir Diggins: the shanties and tents and makeshift stores lined either side of this road, now 'B' street. Later 'C' street took over the job of being the main thoroughfare for the big freighters and stage coaches and mail stages and the busy stores. You can now see some of the big mansions, but they are

(Continued on opposite page)

THE DRAMA OF THE COMSTOCK LODGE

GUIDE YOURSELF SERVICE — Continued

not open to visitors. There is the impressive old Courthouse built in 1876 and a few yards north we come upon the Famous Piper's Opera House where the world's greatest actors and actresses played and it proved their best money spot. Sometimes the miners showered money upon the stars if they took a liking to them. Inquire at the Museum of Memories and Paul Smith will arrange to show you thru. We have only touched the highlights of this most interesting old camp. Sometime you may stay over a little longer and then you can visit a mine and mill and see how the ore is obtained and treated to extract the gold and silver from its baser ores. Well we hope that we have guided you around a little and if we can be of any further service to you and your party while here or at home don't hesitate to let us know and we'll sure do our best for you.



The above picture shows the method of timbering on the Comstock. Enlargements size 8 x 10 in. can be obtained from the Museum of Memories. Price 75 cents postpaid anywhere in the United States.

Lake Marlette Furnishes Water For the Comstock

When silver was first discovered on the Comstock, the flow of water from natural springs was sufficient to supply all the needs of the small communities of Gold Hill and Virginia City. As the population increased, wells furnished more water and for a long time water carts peddled the water of both the springs and the wells. Presently the water of several tunnels added to the supply but as mills and hoisting works multiplied, the demands for more water became so great that it was impossible to use it without creating a famine among the people, now numbering thousands. This emergency caused the Virginia City and Gold Hill Water Co. to be formed. The rugged contour of the country presented a big problem for the building or obtaining of a sufficient water supply from the main range of the Sierra Nevada Mts. At this point a famous engineer, Mr. H. Schussler, who had planned the Spring Valley Water Co. of San Francisco was employed to superintend the work of bringing in a water supply sufficient for what was to become the world's greatest mining camp.

In 1872 surveys were made and the first section of pipe was laid June 11, 1873 and the last on July 25 of the the same year. The total length of the pipe was seven miles and 134 feet. The pipe's interior diameter is twelve inches and was capable of delivering 2,200,000 gallons of water each twenty-four hours. The big pipe lies across the valley in the form of an inverted siphon. The water is brought to the inlet from the source of supply in two large covered flumes and at the outlet end of the pipe is delivered into two large flumes which carry it to Virginia City, a distance of twelve miles. Some changes have been needed and now the pressure allows ten million gallons to flow each twenty-four hours. The water comes from Lake Marlette, which lies above Lake Tahoe.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority 1-D-129583G-3
By J. M. N. W. Date 10/17/77

The Pony Express Carries The Mail



PONY EXPRESS
RECORD, SEVEN DAYS, SEVENTEEN HOURS

The period in which the Pony Express operated was one of the most eventful in the history of the U. S. The riches of the Comstock Lode had been but recently opened up, and was but natural all about was in a state of feverish excitement. Over the mountains from Placerville, in all sorts of conveyances, and on foot, came as motely a horde as could be imagined. The Civil War was on and more speed was demanded in carrying news to mining camps of the west from the East where the war was raging. Just who devised the plan of the Pony Express is not known. It was an ambitious program, requiring great numbers of men and horses in order to operate it successfully. Jones, Russell and Co. took hold of the matter and W. A. Finney was appointed agent for the new enterprise between Sacramento and Salt Lake City.

The prime essential was light weight riders, combining many desirable qualities so as to keep the burden on the horses as low as possible. Boys of from 15 to 17 years of age were selected. These boys were exposed to the very gravest of dangers. Stories of riderless horses bringing the mail pouches into the stations were not uncommon and goes to show that the horses entered into the spirit exhibited by their courageous riders — and the mail went thru in conformity with schedule. The relays were generally 25 miles and the riders were allowed two minutes at each station passed. The speed was about nine miles per hour, a snails pace compared with the air mail of today.

The first Pony Express left Sacramento April 4th, 1860, at 2:45 P. M. and carried fifty-six letters from San Francisco; thirteen from Sacramento, and one from Placerville, at five dollars per letter. The first Express from New York arrived April 13, 1860 bringing eight letters. The time from St. Joseph was ten days. The fastest Pony Express trip was made carrying Pres. Lincoln's first message; it took only five days and eighteen hours in coming from St. Joseph, Mo., to Carson City a distance of 1780 miles. In the seventy-six years that have passed, the young men who carried the mail have passed to their final reward.



OVERLAND STAGE -
TWENTY DAYS TO SAINT JO

Mark Twain Stops at Local Hotel

Old Deacon Toomey tells this one about Mark Twain and Hank Monk, the ace stage driver. Hank was driving the coach on which Mark was coming to Virginia City from Sacramento and was in a great hurry to reach the Comstock to deliver a lecture at Piper's Opera House. He continually told Hank to step on it. So they finally reached Virginia City and Mark went to the leading hotel and engaged a room. He was quite tired and dusty so he went upstairs and washed and cleaned up a bit. Presently he came down to register and while doing this a little bug crawled across the page; Mark was dumfounded and called for the manager; he laid the pen aside and said to the manager, "Now, see here Jim, I have travelled from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Gulf to Canada and have put up at all sorts of hotels and boarding houses but this is the very first place I've been in where the little crawling creatures come down and look at the register to see which rooms are occupied." Of course I don't know but Deacon tells me the hotel was funny that way.

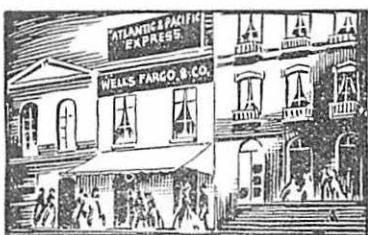
The system of timbering on the Comstock was invented by Philip Deidsheimer in 1860. It is said that he received the idea of his method of structure from studying the structure of the honey comb of the industrious bee. Up to the present day there has been no better method discovered.

Population on the Comstock Lode in the Bonanza days was sixty-five thousand. Sometimes miners were kept underground for days so they would not tell their folks or friends if they had struck anything rich. This might cause the stocks to go the wrong way.

It seems that the old V. & T. R. R. may be through on account of the great number of big trucks that are getting the freight and express business. This old road played an important part on the Comstock and now it could rest nicely in a place like the Smithsonian Institute or Ford's Museum.

On Monday, August 11th, 1862, Wells-Fargo & Co. started "A pony Express, daily between Sacramento and Virginia City, carrying letters and exchange papers through from San Francisco in 24 hours; Sacramento, in 15 hours, and from Placerville in 10 hours. Rates: All letters to be enclosed in our franks, and 10 cents prepaid in addition for each letter weighing a half ounce or less.

WELLS FARGO DOES ITS PART



FIRST WELLS FARGO OFFICE
MONTGOMERY NEAR CALIFORNIA

No story of the early mining camps, especially Virginia City, would be complete without a word or two about Wells Fargo & Co. If any one factor helped to build up these frontier towns it was this Pioneer Company, Wells Fargo. They hauled out of the Comstock millions of dollars in bullion under the most hazardous circumstances. They were forced not only to be on the lookout for Indians but the greatest force against them was the bad white man, the early day gangster, the holdup man on the unpaved road. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were stolen but the Wells Fargo Co. developed conditions to such an efficient point that the gangs of road agents were put to rout. Wells Fargo Co. was one of the very high lights of all these pioneer mining camps and yet today this company is an outstanding organization in their line throughout the world. Wells Fargo today is nearing her centennial of service to mankind. When you are in the West be sure to visit their San Francisco home, on Montgomery at Market Street. You will marvel at their historical museum. The bank deposits of Wells Fargo Bank and Union Trust Co. are well over two hundred million dollars.



THE BONANZA KINGS
(L. TO R.) FAIR, MACKAY, O'BRIEN, FLOOD

Pony Bob, probably the ace Pony Express Rider, brought the news of Abe Lincoln's election to the Comstock and what an exciting time ensued in Virginia City for some time to come.

Jerry Lynch who made millions in the Lady Bryan, had his horses shod with silver shoes.

VIRGINIA CITY

By Joseph T. Goodman

In youth when I did love—did love
 (To quote the Sexton's homely ditty)
I lived six thousand feet above
 Sea level above Virginia City;
The site was bleak, the houses small
 The narrow streets unpaved and slanting.
But now it seems to me of all
 The spots on earth the most enchanting.

Let art with all its cunning strive,
 Let nature lavish all her splendor;
One touch of sentiment will give
 A charm most beautiful and tender;
And so that town, howe'er uncouth
 To others who have chanced to go there,
Enshrines the ashes of my youth,
 And there is Fairyland, or nowhere.

Who tends its marts, who treads its way
 Are mysteries beyond my guessing,
To me the forms of other days
 Are still about its centers pressing;
I know that loving lips are cold
 And true hearts stilled—ah, more the pity!
But in my fancy they still hold—
 Their empire in Virginia City.

Unhallowed flames have swept away
 ~~The structures~~ in which I delighted,
The streets are grass grown and decay
 Has left the sunny slopes benighted—
But not for me; to my dimmed sight
 The town is always like the olden
As to the captive Israelite
 Shone aye Jerusalem the Golden.

I would not like to see it now,
 I choose to know it as I then did
With glorious light upon its brow
 And all its features bright and splendid;
Nor would I like that it should see
 Me, gray and stooped, a mark for pity,
And learn that time had dealt with me
 As hard as with Virginia City.

o

Mr. Goodman had written this poem when Virginia City was left alone. The good folks who had torn the precious metals from her bowels had thought that they had gotten it all but not so. Nature had hidden some of her treasures for another day and for some of her future children who are now digging where their ancestors left off. The writer is often asked, "Well, is the town coming back?" You see, the town has never gone away, the folks went away and now they are coming back. The mines on the Comstock have produced well over a billion dollars in gold and silver and are on their way to the second billion. And you know what they say—The first billion is always the hardest.

o

Fred Somers, a resident now on the Comstock tells me that his father framed the first square set of timbers that went into the Virginia City mines. It is a delight to know that some of this pioneer family still are in the land of the living and much credit must be given for it is this system of timbering that has made it possible for mining to be carried on here on the Comstock Lode.

Hundreds of Mines on the Comstock

There are over 600 miles of underground workings on the Comstock Lode, consisting of tunnels, shafts, drifts, inclines, winzes, raises and stopes that have produced over twenty million tons of ore. The deepest shaft is the Combination, 3262 feet; the deepest workings the Mexican winze, 3300 feet. The Comstock proper extends from the Utah mine on the north to the Alta on the south and the entire distance of about four miles can be traversed underground, without once having come to the surface. The largest ore body was mined from the Con-Virginia in 1873, the amount being \$180,000,000.

Fire in the Mines

The mines of the Comstock have not escaped fire: there have not been many, but they have been fearful as experiences, and have cost many lives.

The first and most terrible of these fires was that which broke out in the Yellow Jacket mine, Gold Hill, about 7 o'clock on the morning of April 7th, 1869, in which forty-five men lost their lives. The fire started at the 800 level (that is 800 feet below the surface). The miners and firemen of Virginia City and Gold Hill struggled every minute of the time until May 2nd, when it grew worse. Occasionally the fragments of men's bodies were found on the lower levels where they had fallen down the shaft. Three years later the fire was still burning and the rocks on the 800 level were red hot.

Climate Just Right

On account of the altitude, the atmosphere is very light and thin, but the climate is as healthful as that of any town on the Pacific Coast. When the town was first settled, for some reason never explained, a notion prevailed that it was a bad place for children—that children could not be reared there; but this was a great mistake. Finer or more robust children can be seen in no town or city in the Union than those of Virginia. They grow like mushrooms. This is probably because they have to contend with but a small amount of atmospheric pressure—there is nothing to prevent their shooting up and expanding in all directions.

Pioneer Journalism

The two main daily papers published in Virginia City were the Territorial Enterprise and the Chronicle, a morning and evening paper, respectively. The Enterprise is the oldest paper in Nevada. The first number (it was then a weekly), was issued at Genoa, on Sat. Dec. 18th, 1858. This was the year before the discovery of silver in Nevada, and Genoa was then a town of about 200 people. The paper was moved to Carson City in Nov. 1859, and remained there till Nov. 1860, when it was moved to Virginia City. The first office of the Enterprise in Virginia City, was a small one story frame building with a shed or lean-to on one side, and was a queerly arranged establishment. The proprietors had the shed part fitted up as a kitchen, dining and lodging place. Bunks were ranged along the sides of the room, one above another, as on shipboard, and here editors, printers, proprietors, and all hands bunked after the style of the miners in their cabins. A Chinaman, "Old Joe", was the cook. Well, Mark Twain worked on the Enterprise in this homey atmosphere and look what he did to American literature. Maybe some of the big sheets of today might do well to go back to these conditions. Well, who knows?



See for yourself how different Boraxo is from ordinary hand cleaners. How easily it removes dirt, grease and stains . . . how soft and smooth it leaves the skin. Yet it contains no grit, or caustic! Boraxo is a special combination of pure 20 Mule Team Borax and a fine toilet soap. Try it! Get Boraxo at your grocer's or druggist's. Pacific Coast Borax Company, New York—Los Angeles . . . Producers of the famous 20 Mule Team Borax Products.

Tune in the Old Ranger's radio tales of "Death Valley Days." N. B. C. Blue Network, Fridays; Pacific Coast Red Network, Tuesdays. See local papers for time.

THE LURE OF THE SAGE BRUSH

Have you ever scented the sagebrush
That mantles Nevada's plain?
If not, you have lived but half your life,
And that half in vain.

No matter where the place or clime
That your wandering footsteps stray,
You will sigh as you think of her velvet fields
And their fragrance of leveled hay.

You may loiter a while in other lands
When something seems to call,
And the lure of the sagebrush brings you back
To hold you within its thrall.

You may tread the Halls of Pleasure,
Where the lamps of folly shine,
'Mid the sobbing of sensuous music,
And flow of forbidden wine;

But when the revel is over
And the dancers turn to go,
You will long for a draught of her crystal springs
That leap from her peaks of snow.

You will sigh for a sight of her beetling crags
Where the snow king holds his sway,
And the sinking sun, with its brush of gold,
Tells the tale of the dying day—

And when you die you will want a grave
Where the Washoe Zephyr blows,
With the green of the sagebrush above your head,
What need to plant the rose?
—By Sam Davis, Virginia Territorial Enterprise.

SUTRO TUNNEL DRAINS MINES

Makes Working Lower Levels Possible

Great delays in mining were caused by the great bodies of both hot and cold water underground in all the mines. Levels were flooded so suddenly that many times miners were drowned by subterranean reservoirs that were unexpectedly tapped. Adolph Sutro who came to the Comstock along with thousands of others, early conceived the idea of running an immense drain tunnel under the Comstock Lode from the lowest possible point. Sutro started his project Oct. 19, 1869. On every hand he met with the most stubborn interference from the big shots on the Comstock who did not want to see him succeed with this great project. But he was a man with a will and a will to see that what he wanted and thought was good, would be accomplished.

The tunnel starts at the edge of the valley of the Carson River and is 20,145 feet—nearly four miles. It taps the central part of the lode at a depth of 1650 feet. The tunnel is sixteen feet wide and twelve feet high. Drain flumes are sunk in the floor and over these are two tracks for horse cars. It required nearly eight years to construct the Tunnel and the total cost was about \$4,500,000.

Connection was made at the Savage Mine, July 8, 1878, about ten p. m. when Mr. Sutro and his daughter passed thru into the Savage works. The building of the Sutro Tunnel was considered the greatest piece of engineering work in this country up to that time. Too much credit cannot be given Adolph Sutro for his great work, especially in the face of the many obstacles and the jealous opposition.

The Editor Soliloquizes

You know, folks, I'd like to see the old International Hotel standing again, with its lobby filled with celebrities, smoking their cigars after dinner, and talking of the new veins and leads that were being found here on the Comstock. The rattle of china in the large homey dining room as dozens of waiters hurried from the kitchens to the tables filled with happy diners and there on the tables were the lazy suzans (caster to Sandy). And the old hydraulic elevator replaced by an up-to-date automatic lift. A snappy orchestra playing its conception of the old waltzes. What a rendezvous for the modern divorcee!

Don't be surprised some day if you do see a modern hotel here catering to the ultra modern divorcee. It looks as if it might have already started in a small way. Some one has seen the wisdom of taking down the big bugaboo signboards that were hiding some of the most beautiful views in all the West. I dare say that in all the World, you will not find any more awe inspiring vistas from a main street than right here in Virginia City. Let's not have any more sign boards on C St. I think it should be rechristened and named, "Mark Twain Boulevard."

Major Problems on the Comstock Solved

"1. Drainage. — The lode is completely drained to the 2,000 level on its dip by the Sutro tunnel.

"2. Transportation.—The Virginia & Truckee railway furnishes broad-gauge railroad facilities, with convenient sidings to most of the properties.

"3. Power.—The Sierra Pacific Power company furnishes an ample supply of electric power for all purposes.

"4. Water.—The Virginia City Water company provides an abundance of pure mountain water for mining, milling and domestic purposes.

"These four great problems are solved."

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: 1-D-129588G-233
By: J.M. NAVA, Date: 10/1/77

THE DRAMA OF THE

Masons Commemorate Captain Edw. Storey



MASONIC HALL, VIRGINIA CITY, NEVADA

The Dedication Ceremonies At The Grave Of Edward Faris Storey, Captain Of The Virginia City Rifles

Grand Master (Wm. R. Adams)—Ladies and Gentlemen: Before I unveil this monument to the memory of our distinguished Brother, Edward Faris Storey, I desire, on behalf of the M. W. Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Nevada and the Brethern of Escorial Lodge No. 7, to express to Mrs. Harry Hunter, Mr. George Muckle and the County Commissioners of Storey County, the very deep appreciation of their generosity in donating this beautiful shaft of marble. And now, in the name of the Great Architect of the Universe and the M. W. Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Nevada, I unveil this shaft of marble to the memory of a pioneer, a man who, through his broad vision, sensed an empire in Virginia City, and while he lived endeavored to carry out the principles of Masonry in the characteristic manner of a man of the great open west.

We are here met today to pay our tardy tribute to a soldier and a Mason. We honor him who adopted Nevada for his own, and yielded up his life for it. He assumed the lead to wipe out a menace, and died just at the time he could see that he had succeeded. He has slept here for a whole span of life, three score

years and ten, through the vicissitudes and inclemencies of the weather, and while the greatest Mining District in the world rose to the peak of its popularity, and fortunes were won and lost. It is therefore with the keenest of pleasure that we, his brethern, and I as Grand Master of Masons in Nevada, dedicate this shaft of stone to his memory.

Ed. Note: Capt. Storey, after whom this county was named, and in whose memory the dedication ceremonies were held, was born in Georgia, July 1, 1828. He came of a military family who were kept busy protecting the country from the attacks of the Indians. Early in 1846 he and his three sons enlisted in a company of Texas Rangers, and only himself and Edward Storey survived the campaign. Shortly after the strike here on the Comstock, he came to Virginia City and immediately stepped into the whirl of life among the people of this community. When the news of Major Ormsby's death was received, he attacked the Piutes with the Virginia Rifles, in their fortified camp, and during the battle was shot from ambush by one of the Indians. He died later in the day. This was June 2, 1860. Capt. Storey was instinctively a gentleman, he championed the cause of right and was loved and respected by all who came in contact with him. He was a staunch friend, a real man among men, an ardent Mason, and a good soldier.

Let us help you to sell your old things that are stored away in the attic such as old letters, stamps, hoop skirts, bustles, thunder mugs hand painted or otherwise, old Mark Twain books and anything pertaining to Twain.

Let us mail your friend a sack of ore from the Comstock Lode for 15 cents.

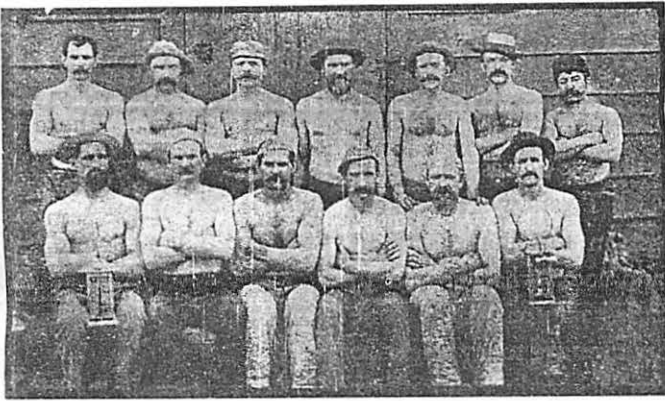
Any of the pictures in this Drama can be obtained from the Museum of Memories.

Big Fire Sweeps Virginia City in 1875

Everything was flourishing and prosperous—the Big Bonanza was pouring forth its millions and other mines on the Lode were making their owners rich—when Virginia City was overwhelmed by a great disaster—fire.

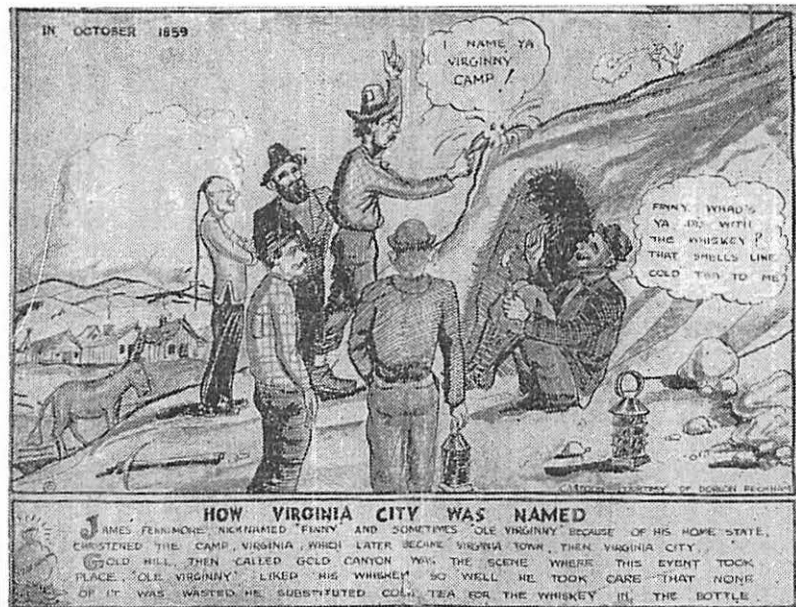
On the morning of Oct 26, 1875, a fire broke out in Crazy Kate's a frame lodging house on A street in the West part of town, just above all of the great business blocks, and in a few hours, everything in the area of half a mile square was laid in ashes. In this great fire more than 2000 buildings were eaten up by the roaring flames. Included were mills, hoisting works, churches, business houses and structures of all kinds. Over ten million dollars in property was lost. Other previous fires had visited the Lode but this was the greatest calamity and threw many people out of homes. Examples of heroic effort and sacrifice are too numerous to mention. Help to the sufferers was sent from all over the U. S. and other parts of the world. The silver and gold of the Comstock had helped the country and now the country was coming to the aid of stricken Comstockers.

Rebuilding the City began the morning after the big fire and hardly ceased day or night until all the ground of the burnt district of the old City was rebuilt and with larger and finer structures. The Virginia and Truckee R. R. was kept busy hauling new supplies to rebuild Virginia City. No fewer than forty-five trains a day came up the grade with new merchandise, timbers, food and clothing and everything that goes to make up a new city.



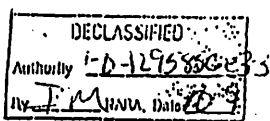
HOT WATER PLUGS

In the early days the heat was so terrific down in the mines that it was not only necessary for the men to strip while working but a water spray had to be played on them. They could only work a few minutes at a time, then go to the cooling room. If a man failed to perspire he would talk in a rambling fashion and in a few moments would pass out of the picture.



HOW VIRGINIA CITY WAS NAMED

JAMES FENNIMORE "ACK-FINNED" FINNY AND SOMETIMES "OLE VIRGINNY" BECAUSE OF HIS HOME STATE, CHRISTERED THE CAMP, VIRGINIA, WHICH LATER BECAME VIRGINIA TOWN, THEN VIRGINIA CITY. GOLD HILL THEN CALLED GOLD CANYON WAS THE SCENE WHERE THIS EVENT TOOK PLACE. "OLE VIRGINNY" LIKED HIS WHISKEY SO WELL HE TOOK CARE THAT NONE OF IT WAS WASTED HE SUBSTITUTED COLD TEA FOR THE WHISKEY IN THE BOTTLE.



THE DRAMA OF THE

America's Most Scenic By Thousands Visited

Blasting out an inclined shelf on the sunset side of the Virginia Range of mountains, a northeast branching arm of the Sierra Nevadas in western Nevada, the State Department of Highways, under a Federal Works Program Highway Project has completed the construction of the north stretch of one of the most scenic as well as the most historic highways in the West—the new Geiger Grade.

This highway will provide a direct, primary high-gear route from Reno to the world famous Comstock Lode at Virginia City. Simultaneously it completes an improved segment in a scenic loop tying together Reno, Virginia City, Silver City, Carson City, the State capital, and the Washoe Valley—places whose names stand out prominently in Nevada's history.

Slightly longer than the old one, which it displaces, the new road will be wider; will have a lower gradient; eliminates several extremely dangerous curves—one of which is commonly referred to as "Deadman's Bend"; provides an all-year travel route; shortens the time between the State's metropolis and the Comstock, and, in the course of the first seven miles climbs 1,800 feet from the floor of the Truckee Meadows to the summit of the range, and in consequence materially helps to prolong the mechanical life of thousands of motor cars driven over the course.

With each foot of ascent gorgeous mountain panoramas are unfolded, ~~culminating at the top, 6,300 feet, in a sweeping view~~ embracing many miles of western Nevada in all directions as well as an extensive north and south picture of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

The new road roughly parallels the famous old Geiger Grade over which Comstock high-grade ore and bullion traveled on its way to California over the northern outlet. A road over which stage coaches with whip-cracked teams of four in the harness, bullion bars in the strong box under the high spring seats, and three or four badly shaken and frightened passengers, rattled perilously down the steep grades, brakes screeching, iron-tired wheels spitting fire while rounding the sharp stony curves on two wheels, bound for Reno and the depot to connect with trains of the newly functioning transcontinental railway in the early 60's of the last century, and then on to California.

Competing express company's riders drove their mounts over this 23-mile Geiger Grade from Reno to Virginia City in those days, sometimes in spirited races, riding madly for honor and glory to reach first, the goal at the Comstock. Thousands of dollars were won or lost in wagering on these exciting events, and the keenest rivalry existed.

That old Geiger Grade became the shortest connecting link between the gold and silver excited populace of the lode, and the fast-growing railroad town on the Truckee River during the first flush years of the newly discovered metal deposits of that famous old mining district.

Following closely the day when "Old Virginny" and his prospecting pals let loose the stirring cry of "Gold," at the east foot of Mount Davidson, this steep, winding, mountain highway also served as the north outlet toward the Selby smelters, where much of the Comstock treasure was taken for refining.

All through the years that followed, Geiger Grade served the district well until the iron horse came to town, and the construction of mills forced it to yield—not to be abandoned, however—some of its usefulness to more expeditious transportation and milling methods.

Since the discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859, memorable in the history of the Nation as well as the Pacific Coast, and more strikingly of Nevada, almost a billion dollars in gold and silver, in the raw, have been taken from the gigantic fissure at Virginia City. This wealth made millionaires, helped materially in the rapid

ic Highway Enjoyed iting Virginia City

development of one of the largest cities on the Pacific Coast, brought birth to a new State, and played a vital part in the saving of the Nation in the throes of a civil war. .

During all that exciting period the old Geiger Grade loyally served its purpose, despite the dangers incident to its traverse.

What mattered even if a pack of mules rushed headlong over the precipice near the grade summit and perished; or a stage rolled over the side and smashed to pieces, perhaps killing the passengers as well as the driver and his team; or if a heavily laden wagon got out of control on the slippery hill and rolled over, spilling the contents and sending the team and driver hurtling to the bottom of the canyon, three or four hundred feet below? Such incidents actually occurred during the early days of the lode development.

All of these disasters were philosophically tolerated, however, for the old Geiger Grade served the Comstock people in the days when silver was king, and food, fuel, machinery and timber for the mines, as well as inner refreshment for the miners, had to be hauled to the seething camp from the "outside." And the "Grade" was the north connecting link with the "Outside".

Like many other things which are obstacles in the march of progress, the Geiger Grade must be modernized. Too many dangerous curves over which automobiles might plunge and roll to the bottom of the canyon; too many steep grades—some of them ran as high as 12 per cent—for modern travel existed. During the winter seasons, when snow came heavy and often, sometimes for weeks, the road was entirely closed to traffic, and Virginia City and Silver City became semi-isolated from the north.

A complete new alignment of the historic road has been the result. The general right of way follows the contours of the hills, coursing and climbing around knobs of iron-stained volcanic rocks and into the narrowing lines of the dry canyons, moving upward from one hillside to the other.

Along the lower elevations several long, sweeping bends have been necessary to give the road a 6 per cent grade or less.

On the upper levels the roadway cut in the hillside stretches for a mile or more, looking very much like a long brownish-yellow streak gashed, with an upward slant, into the mountain side.

Blasting was necessary along most of the length of the new highway to the 6,000-foot level to obtain sufficient road width and a stable foundation.

The Department of Highways divided the work into two separate units of construction. The northern unit extends from Brown's Station, about ten miles south of Reno on State Route 3, to a point five miles southeastward, branching away from the highway just a little north of Steamboat Hot Springs.

A contract for this unit of construction was awarded on October 30, 1935, and completed about the middle of May, costing \$116,700.80. Work began on November 12 with 50 employees, which number was shortly afterward greatly increased.

Consisting of a stretch of approximately three miles, the south unit of this scenic route was contracted for \$141,419.47. Work on this unit also started in November of last year, and was officially completed on May 8 of the current year.

During the course of construction the two units together employed between 300 and 400 workmen, taken from the labor relief rolls in Reno.

The south unit was commenced at the top of the main grade at the Washoe County line and worked downwards, while the north unit started from the floor of the Truckee Meadows and worked upward.

The new alignment parallels the old road along the same series of hills in the Virginia Range and at most places overlooks the old

Interesting Facts on This Historic

What are now known as the "Bonanza Mines" are in great part made up of small mines that were located to the southward of the Ophir soon after the discovery of silver. The Big Bonanza lies in the Consolidated Virginia and California Mines, and its northern extremity extends into the Ophir, as is supposed; it is also thought that it will be found to extend into the Best and Belcher, which is the first mine south of the Con-Virginia.

St. Mary's of the Mts. the majestic Catholic Church in Virginia City was first built in 1868, it was the victim of the big fire of '75 and it was rebuilt in 1876. It was at one time considered the finest Church in all of America and today it is one of the most interesting cathedrals in the whole world. Mr. Fair and Mr. Mackey, two of the Bonanza Kings, used to contribute ten thousand dollars a month to the upkeep of the Church.

"Bonanza" and "Borrasca" are of Spanish origin. Bonanza means prosperity, success—that all is well. Among miners it means they are working in a rich body of ore. Borrasca means just the opposite of Bonanza. Along the Comstock Lode the mining companies are sometimes in Bonanza and sometimes in Borrasca.

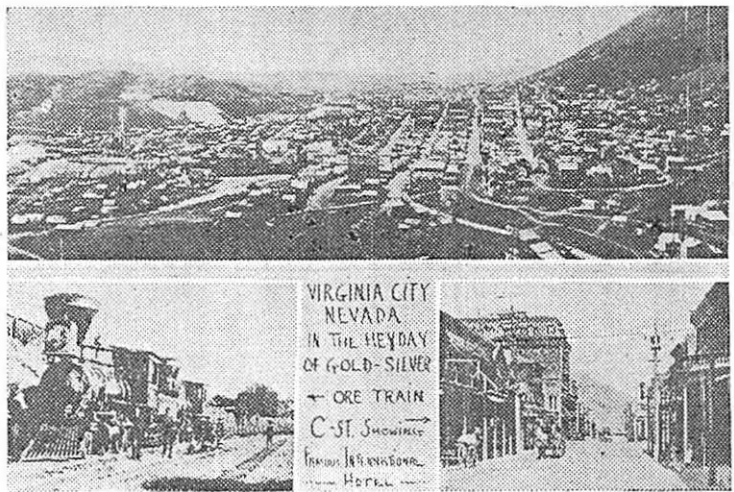
The first house erected in Virginia City was built by Lyman Jones. It was a canvas affair eighteen by forty feet and stood on the present site of B. St. and Sutton Avenue, close to the Ophir Mine. It was a boarding house and saloon. Mr. Jones opened his house with two barrels of straight whiskey.

The first Governor of Washoe or Nevada Territory was James W. Nye of New York and he was appointed by President Lincoln. Orion Clemens came with Gov. Nye to be Secretary of the Territory and Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) came too, to be his brother's secretary.

During the Civil War a sack of flour was carried across the country and auctioned at various places. It was auctioned on the Comstock for forty thousand dollars.

The International Hotel was built in the Fall of 1860. Every single item that went into its construction as well as the plate glass mirrors and dishes that furnished the hotel were all brought over the Sierras in large freight wagons drawn by mules. The big hotel was burned to the ground in 1914.

Speaking of the crash in stocks Mr. Mackey said: "It is no affair of mine. I am not speculating in stocks. My business is mining—legitimate mining. I see that my men do their work properly in the mines, and that all goes on as it should in the mills. I make my money here out of the ore.



In Point of Geological Time

The system of fissures which constitute the Comstock Lode are subsequent to the Prophyllite outflow, and belong, in all probability, to the dynamical disturbance connected with the eruptions of andesite. It is considered certain that the whole series of volcanic outbursts are since the Miocene epoch, and we may safely call the Comstock a Tertiary lode. It is by no means a single crack which has been subsequently filled with mineral material, but forms a connected group of fissures whose structural outlines are quite simple, but whose details produce a complexity almost unknown in metal veins.

In March of 1860, hay sold for 50 cents a pound, and lumber brought \$150.00 a thousand feet.

There were most of the orders and societies found in other large towns; as, Knights of Pythias, Ancient Order of Druids, Imp. Order of Red Men, Knights of the Red Cross, Crescents, Irish Confederation, Hibernians, Caledonia Society, Pacific Coast Pioneers, two Turn Vereins, Miners Union, Printers Union, and several other societies. There were many benevolent societies. Five military companies—the National Guard, Emmet Guard, Washington Guard, Montgomery Guard, and the Nevada Artillery.

Lucky Baldwin was dispossessed from the International Hotel for an unpaid board bill: the next day he was a millionaire and the landlord was mighty glad to get him as a star boarder.



Mail a Copy of "THE DRAMA" To Your Friends -- They

Old Town

Ore was first found in the Con-Virginia in March 1873, at the time when Capt. S. T. Curtis (in 1875 supt. of the Ophir) was in charge. The ore then found was a body about twelve feet in width which was encountered at the depth of 1167 feet below the surface in a drift run from the corresponding level of the Gould & Curry mine. At the same time two other bodies of ore—the largest seven feet in width—were found, which yielded assays averaging \$60 per ton. At this time their present main shaft was down 710 feet, and was being sunk at the rate of three feet per day.

If mining men knew the exact spot in which the rich deposits are located, it would be an easy matter to sink a shaft or run a drift to tap them. Thus it happened that it was fourteen years after the discovery of silver, and the Comstock Lode before what is now known as the "Big Bonanza",—the chief of all the bonanzas—was found. For fourteen years men daily and hourly walked over the ground under which lay the greatest mass of wealth that the world has ever seen in the shape of silver ore, yet nobody suspected its presence. The ground on the surface presented the same appearance as the soil in other places in the same neighborhood and roads were dug in it, houses were built upon it, and all kinds of things were done on, in, and about it without anybody thinking any more of, or about it, than of any other ground in the town.

The Territorial Enterprise, the leading newspaper, was founded in Genoa, Nevada, in 1858. It was moved to Virginia City and was located at the corner of A Street and Sutton Avenue. It was here that Mark Twain came to work for Joe Goodman.

The first white child born in Virginia City was a daughter of J. H. Tilton, one of the pioneer wagon-road builders of the country. She was born on the 1st of April, 1860, and was named Virginia.

At one time there were 2000 men on the payroll of the Gould and Curry mine and mill.

Will Appreciate It