



Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass

Charlie Chaplin's Gold Rush ●

History

Love – Excitement – Pathos – Humor. It's all in "The Gold Rush" which was filmed at Sugar Bowl (and Truckee).

"The Gold Rush," written, produced, directed, and starring Charlie Chaplin was one of Chaplin's most famous movies and was the film he is quoted as saying for which he most wanted to be remembered. The 1925 silent was the highest grossing silent comedy.

Charlie Chaplin had read about the Donner Party and the Klondike gold prospectors. He combined elements of hardship and the search for gold in "The Gold Rush." Charlie, the Little Tramp, headed for Alaska where he found himself in a cabin with a criminal, Big Jim. There was not enough food and they were reduced to eating one of Charlie's boots. The cabin teetered precariously on a cliff edge. Charlie fell in love with a dance hall girl and danced the dance of the "dinner rolls." Charlie, the character, later became a multi-millionaire and met his dance hall girl again. The film is wonderful and still available.

A Good Story



As Paul Harvey would say, "the rest of the story:" During the winter filming, many of the cast caught colds and Charlie caught the flu. The movie was finished on the sound stages in Hollywood and much of the Sierra footage ended up on the cutting room floor. For the Klondike scene over the Chilcoot Pass, the Truckee Ski Club cleared a path in the snow up the mountain at what would become Sugar Bowl. Six hundred extras were brought by train from Sacramento to appear as miners going up the pass. The boot Charlie ate to stave off hunger was made of licorice. There were so many retakes requiring so much licorice eating, that Chaplin became sick and had to have his stomach pumped.

Things to do right here

From here you can hike to see some great scenery. You can hike up directly from here to "conquer" Mt. Lincoln. The Mt. Judah Loop Trail takes you across the top of Mt. Judah and down to the pass between Judah and Donner Peak. Scramble up the granite slabs of Donner Peak to the top and see straight down 1000 feet to Donner Lake. A really ambition person can go from here all the way to Squaw Valley or just go to Mt. Anderson or Tinker Knob on the Pacific Crest Trail.

This sign sponsored by Sugar Bowl



photograph of the filming above from the Sugar Bowl Archives.
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