

The Donner Summit

Heirloom



History and stories of the Donner Summit Historical Society and the most historically significant square mile in California.

December, 2023 issue #184

What's in Your Closet? Again

Last month you will remember that our [Heirloom](#) editorial staff met Jeanette Duff at the State Park's annual Legacy Day in June. That led to our acquisition of two albums of Donner Summit pictures originally owned by Jim Sherritt whose grandparents owned the Summit Hotel.

That leads to two requests to our readers. One, what's in Your Closet that you'd like to share with readers (that has to do with Donner Summit history) and two, please label the pictures in your family archives so that future historical society editorial staffs will have some idea of the pictures' subjects and background stories.

In this month's [Heirloom](#) we have some of the rest of Jeanette's albums. Young Jim Sherritt took or collected a lot of the same, for example, lots of Summit Hotel pictures so we'll leave out a lot of those. We now have quite a collection of Summit Hotel pictures. Next month we'll have another album of old pictures so don't let your subscription lapse.



Here we have the east side of the Summit Hotel, second version (the first burned in 1895 and this one would burn in 1925) The structure to the right is the snowshed that connected the hotel to the train tracks. Note the young lady hanging out of the window at the back corner.

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DONNER SUMMIT



Finding Your Way Through Donner Summit History

We're closing in on two hundred issues of the Heirloom: thousands of pages, thousands of pictures, and hundreds of subjects. You've probably begun to realize that you cannot keep all the history in your head. Even if you remember it all, retrieval is difficult.

Fortunately one of the choices we made back at the birth of the DSHS was to index all our Heirloom articles and pictures. We've diligently kept up the indices so that they are many pages long, full of alphabetized titles and subjects. Go to our website and to any of the Heirloom pages (one for each year) and you'll find links to the Heirloom indices.

One of the strengths of the DSHS is the incomparable historical photograph collection. The collection is thousands of pictures and again the sheer number makes finding anything in particular, difficult. Avoid the long URL by going to our website and clicking on the "photographs" link and then to the "historic photo collection link." A third link, to the Flickr URL will take you to those thousands of searchable historical photographs of Donner Summit. Have fun.

Find us on the the DSHS YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJenAxPCb47Y14agmVGI-zA>
Find us on FaceBook where we place a new historical picture daily.

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Find us on 

 YouTube



This is a beautiful picture of the back of the round house that used to sit on Donner Summit. This is where helper locomotives would be housed and from where they would be sent out to help trains get over the summit. Sometimes the remains of the turn table can still be seen across the street from Donner Ski Ranch. Note all the other building in the railroad complex that led to Tunnel 6. Note too, the chimney at the top of the snowshed just to the right of the roundhouse.

Today nothing remains and even the track was removed with Tunnel 6 no longer being in operation.

Right is a beautiful picture of the railroad bridge at Cisco Buttes. This version is steel. The railroad had apparently gotten tired of replacing the wooden predecessors following fires.



The Summit Hotel

JOSEPH GOWLING, Proprietor

A Good Place to Eat, and a Comfortable Bed

Leading Brands of Wines and Liquors

GASOLINE AND LUBRICATING OILS

Elevation 7,015 Feet

P. O. Address: DONNER, PLACER COUNTY, CAL.

1915 ad to go with the Summit Hotel pictures. The ad comes from the Automobile-Blue Book*.



The Summit Hotel attached to the snowsheds. Note on the right of the hotel is an elevated passageway that leads to the two story outhouse. According to Jim Sherritt, whose album is the source of the pictures here and in last month's Heirloom, " In 1894 there were no patent toilets, no electricity for lights - at least none up here in the Sierras. There was only one bath tub in the entire hotel. The toilet facilities were unique! It was a red painted two storied building, just an elaborate everyday "outhouse". Ladies accommodations on the second deck, please. Gents appointments first floor, thank you. As I remember, the bathroom was almost in continuous use. Its popularity was exceeded only by the former mentioned unique building [the Summit Hotel]."

* The Automobile Blue Book was a guide for early automobilists. It came in multiple volumes and hundreds of pages in each. It contained maps, instructions, and many ads. Unfortunately for some it did not cover the whole country until 1915 which is when Donner Summit and Truckee appeared.



Guests enjoying deep snows.

Below, Summit Hotel with connection to snowsheds.



Summit Hotel in the background, snowsheds to the left and the Dutch Flat Road, soon to be the Lincoln Highway in the foreground right.,



Before delivery trucks and semis there were pack horses. Here they are in front of a snowshed.



Summit Hotel in the background. Skiers are still using just one pole.



We can assume that the picture above was taken at the same time as the others in the album. That's one clue. Another is that the Dutch Flat Rd. is going to the snowsheds rather than the underpass as it would in 1914. Note the wood thrown down on the left side apparently from reconstruction of snowsheds.



Right, Lake Angela

What Did People Wear circa 1910?

We have no idea who these people are - see lesson 2 on page 1. They are nice pictures, though, of Donner Summit about 1910. It must have taken quite awhile to get dressed up even to just go out to the lake in the old days. Today one needs just flip flops, shorts and a t-shirt.

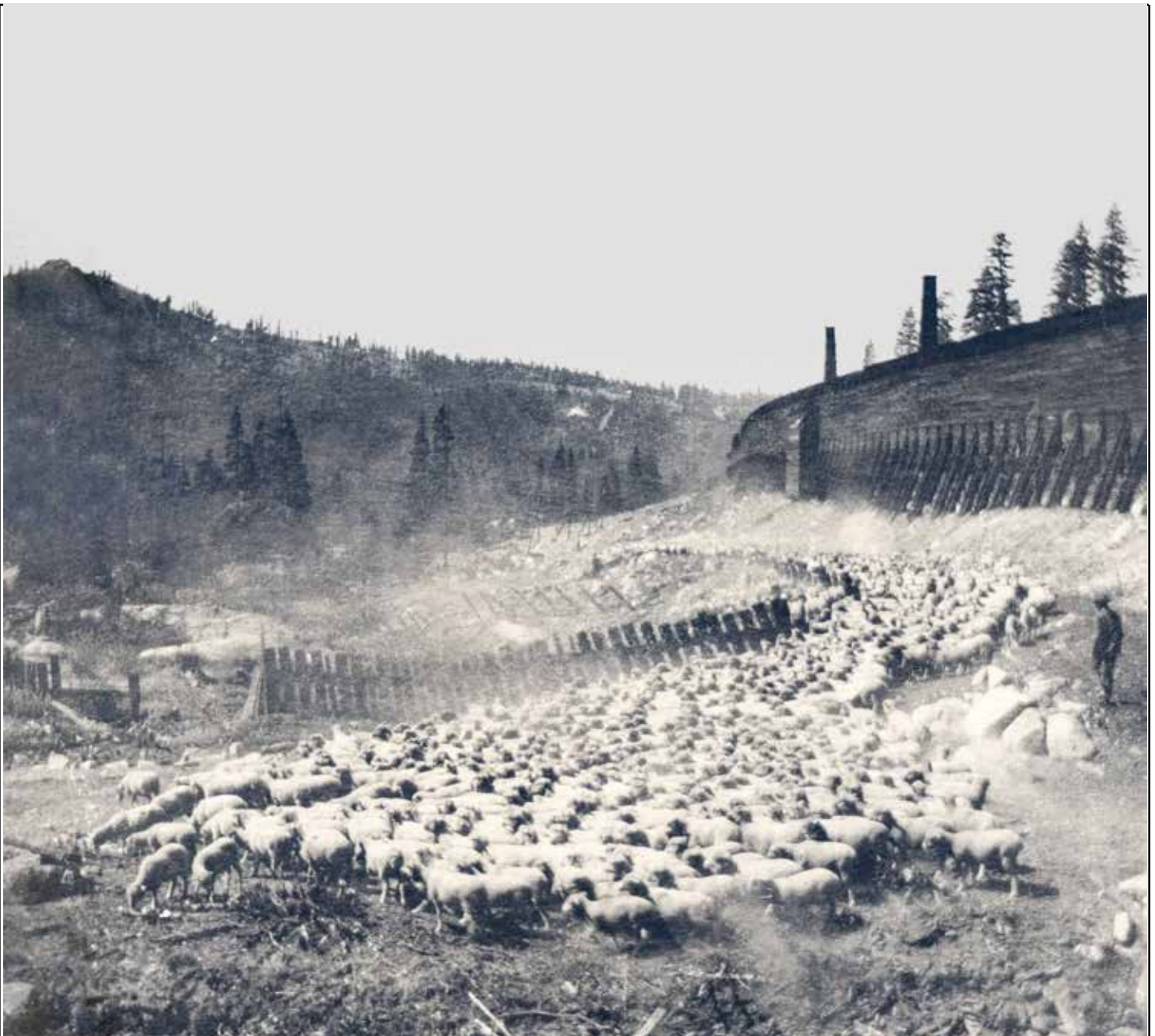


That's an interesting contraption for sitting the lady is on above. Did they bring it with them? Is that lunch in the box - a box lunch?



What is she contemplating?





Sheep were a big business on Donner Summit at one time. Leaving the foothills each spring the sheep would be herded up to the high Sierra meadows like Van Norden or under Castle Peak. They'd gorge on fresh grass pending their departure by train for their next destination. High meadow grazing meant more multiple births, more live births, healthier sheep, and better wool. Note the snowsheds on the right with their chimneys that expelled smoke from steam engines. Note the enclosed sides of the sheds which meant for a dark journey for travelers over the Sierra. They missed the gorgeous scenery. This appears to be about where Norden is. Crows Nest is at the left edge of the picture.

Apparently in front of the Whitney House in Truckee.
Who was it? See request #2 on page 1



Truckee July 4 Parade?



Above appears to be the fire department in Truckee interacting with a clown just behind the large-wheeled vehicle.



From the DSHS Archives

In last month's [Heirloom](#) and this month's we showed pictures from Jeanette Duff's albums of Donner Summit pictures. Jeanette had some other things as well, one of which was a speech given by Jim Sherritt in the winter of 1950 to the Truckee Rotary and Truckee Lions clubs. Titled "Plan Realignment of 'Sierra Hump' it reports on an interesting idea from the Southern Pacific Railroad (now Union Pacific).

The "Sierra Hump" is an endearing term for the Sierra used to describe the effort to get over the Sierra by autos, railroads, and airplanes. It's not a big deal today. Auto travelers cross the Sierra daily by the thousands. Airplanes fly over most of the Sierra without ill effects. Railroads have marvelous snow removal machinery and a few remaining snowsheds. Conquering the "hump" is no big deal.

But once it was a big deal to cross the Sierra Hump and we've covered the big deals in previous [Heirloom](#) issues.

The speech Mr. Sherritt gave publicized an idea that was at least a few years old which we know because the sleuths in our editorial department went looking for corroborating evidence (as all good journalists do) after reading Sherritt's speech. They came up with the articles on the next page from 1945, highlighting the same proposal with the same numbers. Who knows why Mr. Sherritt waited five years but perhaps the clubs had had another speaker in mind who canceled at the last minute and Sherritt pulled the proposal off the shelf.

The idea "made my eyes bulge with amazement" because the proposal would affect Donner Summit and Truckee immeasurably, said Mr. Sherritt.

The idea was to build a tunnel beginning outside of Roseville which would go to Verdi under "The Hump." Transcontinental trains would use the tunnel instead of current route. It was estimated that the idea, which would have cost \$122,000,000 (or more than \$2 billion in today's money) would have saved Southern Pacific \$7.5 million dollars a year in reduced fuel and track maintenance costs and would have paid off the investment in 27 years.

The current route of the railroad, which is the busiest transcontinental route in the nation (that was in 1945), has a 2.55% average grade and 33,000 degrees of curvature. That may mean a lot to the railroad buffs. In addition, helper engines were needed to get the trains over the Sierra, snowsheds needed maintenance, tracks needed clearing of snow, etc. All of that raised the cost of transportation. For example, track curvature was estimated to increase track maintenance costs by 300% over straight track, 200% for locomotives, and 100% for cars (that would be the railroad variety of cars.) Another way of looking at it, the route from Council Bluffs to San Francisco was/is 1830 miles. It cost the same for Southern Pacific to move trains along that track as it would cost S.P. to move trains over 2988 miles of straight track. Trip time using the new tunnel would be reduced from 4.25 hours (Roseville to Sparks) to 2 hours.

With California growing and doubling every twenty years railroad traffic could only increase and so the expense. Soon traffic would "exceed capacity." Something had to be done.

The solution of the tunnel from Roseville to Verdi would solve many of the difficulties Southern Pacific operated under. The new tunnel would save 31,400 degrees of curve. The average grade would be reduced to 1.9% (Verdi is at a higher altitude than Roseville). The length of the track would drop from 138 miles to 108 miles by eliminating curves.

Some more discerning readers might be thinking about some of the problems such as asphyxiation as traditional trains transited the new tunnels. The answer was "cheap and plentiful" power from the Army Corps of engineers' Central Valley Project. The trains would be electric. Electric engines saved money compared to steam engines too.

"If ever built, the new line over the 'Sierra Hump' will be beneficial to its backers, beneficial to the railroad, beneficial to the general public and would be a great item in the defense program of the Pacific Coast. In this manner, the Southern Pacific Railroad which played so important a part in the founding of great Western Empire will again become an instrument of it [sic] future development and future perpetuation."

The idea was simply too expensive and so the trains still roll over Donner Summit.

From the DSHS Archives

ROSEVILLE PRESS-TRIBUNE



YEAR—No. 45

ROSEVILLE, PLACER COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1945

Issued Wednesday

Believes Might Be Savior

General Hospital, now of a political football, State Senator Jerrald line this week, and the factor came through with the state government to the Auburn Chamber of Commerce, Seawell has this to

Having followed the made to retain DeWitt (ital as a useful Govern g, I have taken the libbing the possibility of ng over this unit for imon.

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newback I can see from le is that the building of frame and brick might not come up to state specifications for lines.

is greatly interested the hospital for state till advise you when the the state for his van of Auburn and vicinity the program with the the he is in year com-

War Vets WRA

mand to fly this week use situation buzz saw ty, with Donner Post, resign, Warr, Auburn, arence Simpkins, act- r, to question reports of the Cosmo Saka- ear Lincoln resident Sakamoto is a Japan war veteran. to Charles F. Miller, e of the War Reloc- Simpkins said in part to sneak night riding burned the Sakamoto proud. If you would if to learn something ights of American law up and retain the fact arraigned in court is cent until he is proven that the attorney gen- and the state for-

GETS SERVICE PIN



EARL DRAPER

Capital Dairy Manager With Borden Company More Than 25 Years

Earl Draper, manager of Borden's Capital Dairy, this city, went to San Francisco the other day and received a diamond-studded gold service pin for having been with Borden for 25 years.

Had the truth been told at the big state-wide banquet meeting in the Fairmont Hotel, G. S. Perham, company president, who made the presentation, would have known that Draper has been with the company 28 years—that's three more than 25.

However, they just got around to giving the Roseville man his 25-year pin, and it was okeh with Earl, for he and his wife and some 230 other Borden employes had a grand time at the meeting.

Twenty-five year pins were awarded to 80 Borden dairy managers thru- out the state, Draper reported. He has been with the company in Roseville for 18 years, and worked for Borden elsewhere for ten years prior to his coming here.

More People Driving Autos in Roseville Now Than in '44

One of the best barrels to draw conclusions from, the license bureau, shows that more people are driving automobiles in the Roseville area now than there were a year ago.

The information comes from H. A. Schudens of Sacramento, examiner for the state highway patrol, who said yesterday there is approximately a 100 per cent increase in the number of driver licenses issued in the Roseville office over 1944.

He also said part of the increase is due to a large number of out of state servicemen who are settling in this area and also to local residents discharged from military service. Schudens is at the highway patrol office on Vernon street each Monday and Tuesday for the convenience of

Mayor Johnson Is The Head Man on Safety Council

Over the protests of Councilman Chas. Cope, who asserted that funds credited to the Civilian Defense Council, now a memory, should be credited to the municipal account, the city fathers Wednesday night approved an ordinance disbursing the C.D.C. and establishing a substitute organization to be known as the Roseville Community Council.

Mayor Harold T. Johnson, head of the now defunct civilian defense council, was named head man of the new group.

Cope vs. Spark: Cope contended that any organization, movement or project created by city ordinance was a municipal affair and that its finances should be controlled by the city, but City Attorney L. DeWitt Spark, stated that the civilian defense council was "something else," a kite with a different tail, and therefore was entitled to keep and handle its own money.

Just what the functions of the Roseville Community Council will be was not explained at the Wednesday night session.

One Bid on New Prowl Car Gets Council Okeh

Necessity for speedy action in buying a new automobile for the local constabulary to prowl around in was evidenced Wednesday night when the city fathers accepted the bid of O. K. Seastedt, lone offer in the bid-

ding. It was explained that several other automobile dealers had informed the council they were unable to quote a figure when the bid was opened and know the price. Seastedt's bid was \$1104.52, and delivery was promised within 30 days.

Engineer Reports: Frank Packard, civil engineer en- gaged by the council to make a pre- liminary survey in the Elm Court district for a proposed sewer system, reported field work virtually is com- plete but that it will require from four to six weeks to determine cost of the project.

The bid of \$1187 submitted by the Westinghouse company for electrical equipment for a city electric light plant was accepted, it being the low- est at hand.

No Pay Job: To make certain the nonretarded part of fire alarm and communication consultant recently bestowed on Walter Hamisch, ex-fire chief, would stick, the council adopted an ordi- nance creating such an office.

Students to Aid

Electrification and Realignment Of Southern Pacific Lines Over 'The Hill' May Be Considered

A \$125,000,000 plan for realignment and electrification of the Southern Pacific "Sierra Hump," drawn up by L. H. Nishkian, consulting engineer for Henry J. Kelso, and published in the current issue of Western Construction News, has been submitted to Southern Pacific officials. It was announced yesterday. The proposed route would replace the 130-mile run from Roseville to Sparks, with 108 miles of track, including 87 miles of railway tun- nels. An annual reduction of \$7,000,000 in operating costs would accom- pany the project in 27 years, Nishkian reported.

In the route selected under Nishkian's plan, it is proposed to elimi- nate all steep grades as far as pos- sible by constructing a series of tun- nels and taking advantage of any of the present easy grades.

Cut Out 30 Miles: By maintaining a maximum grade of 1.9 per cent and by construction of the new line would be practi- cally a straight run. There would be a reduction of 30 miles and a saving of several hours in making the trip.

Nishkian said although the route "over the hump" was at its greatest accomplishment in the history of engineering, this combination of grades, curves and snow sheds now constitutes one of the greatest in- steadies on the entire system.

"The great amount of freight car- ried over this branch," he said, "re- quires the services of some of the largest steam engines ever built."

CVP Power: Nishkian suggests the power for the operation of the proposed electrified route would be "identified and cheap" from the Central Valley Project. "Cheap power," the report states, "is a tremendous advantage in an age of rising fuel costs. It also eliminates the problem of transporting fuel."

The engineer said that due to re- duction of mileage, grades and curves savings in time would be limited only to the speed with which man can op- erate trains.

Would Save Time: The streamliner, City of San Fran- cisco, for example, now operating over the line in approximately four hours and 15 minutes, should trans- erse the new route in about two hours. Freight trains, which now take 16 hours to make the run, should save about five hours, Nishkian said.

The proposed new line is laid al- most entirely apart from the existing line and would not interfere insur- ally with the present traffic while under construction.

It would pass through or be im- mediately adjacent to all important centers of population on the pres- ent line and would not isolate any major towns. Because of the elec- trification it would not be neces- sary to ventilate the tunnels, there- by saving vast installations and maintenance costs.

Southern Pacific officials declined to state whether the company is tak- ing the plan under consideration for possible construction.

The Tigers, coached by Rolf Moe- ler, went through a tough season with

Deaths in Placer Crash Mount Eight, 16 Hur

The death list in the C-47 transport plane in the six miles northwest of Au- burn night mounted to eight when three of the aboard the 25-fatal plane 4 Will General Hospital.

Five passengers, all American combat veterans from Italy for demobilized killed outright at the Au- burn crash.

The plane was en route- son, Arizona, to McClift From there the Hawaiian had veterans were to be to Camp Beale for demobil return to their homes. That had stopped at Palm Spri field.

Ran Into Storm: The crash occurred at app- roximately 7:30 p. m., at the height which blanketed the foothill by areas and damaged tr- lines.

Auburn and vicinity were ad in darkness. This cir- cumstance is believed partly to have been responsible for the crash, a pilot was unable to main- tain location through illumi- nated cities and towns below.

Among the first civilians the wreck was Joseph S rancher, and his employe Hubbard. The Seider ran approximately one-half mile scene.

Struck Millside: Snyder said the plane ha into a small hill, spreading over a 200 yard area. It burned only after it crashed.

First report of the crash phoned to Sheriff Chas. Hill about 8:40 by Robert Arn- old of the Mount Vernon dis-

trict station. The plane was found by a search party led by Sheriff Hill and his deputies. The wreckage was located in a field about 1/2 mile from the millside. The plane was found in a field about 1/2 mile from the millside. The plane was found in a field about 1/2 mile from the millside.

SUBMITS PLANS FOR REALIGNMENT OF SP OVER HUMP

The Roseville Press-Tribune covered the proposed elimination of the Sierra Hump in its November 30, 1945 issue and the Placer Herald followed in its December 1, 1945 issue.

Book Review

Eliza's Story

Eileen M. Hook 2022 95 pages

Eliza Gregson and her family came to America from England in 1839. In 1845 the family was headed west to California, having been steered from going to Oregon by Caleb Greenwood who had guided the Stephens Murphy Townsend Party the year before. Greenwood convinced the party to change their destination with his description saying, "The road to Oregon was dangerous on account of Indians, and the road to California had an easy grade and crossing the mountains would not be difficult." Of course later evidence said something else, "When the train arrived at the Sierra though, it was another story, When we looked for the trail, all we could see ahead was a wall of rock as high as the sky. We knew California was on the other side, but the rocks looked insurmountable."

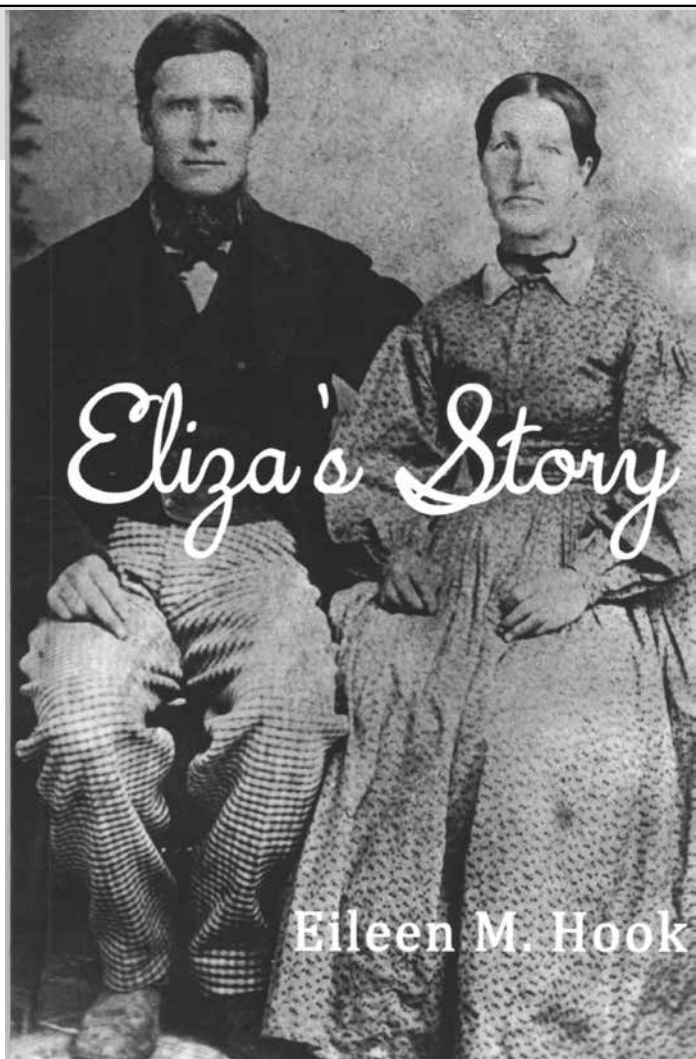
This book is Eliza's Story, written later in life, with additions from her husband's "statement" which he'd made to historians, also told later in life. It includes lots of pictures and maps. It should be noted here that Eliza and family went over Donner Summit which gives her an eligibility for inclusion in the Heirloom.

Eliza's Story is an interesting one as we learn a lot about 19th Century life both in England, going across America, and in California.

In England we hear about debtors, collection, and travel. Crossing the continent there are a lot of details: daily activities, crossing streams and rivers, the disadvantages of being at the rear of a wagon train and looking for wood and grass, lack of firewood and using buffalo chips instead, how to go steeply downhill, landmarks (e.g. Chimney Rock), Indians, and of course crossing Donner Summit.

Eliza described wagon train life as,

"We had as good traveling as could be expected. A good deal of the trip west was routine, much like life on a farm. At daylight cows were milked, stock was checked, and breakfast was prepared. After breakfast we packed up the wagons, hitched the oxen and started out. Around noon we'd stop and rest for an hour or so and eat the midday meal that we had set aside when breakfast was made. Then we moved on until around 5 PM, or when a suitable camping place was found. The wagons were circled for protection and the oxen unhitched and watered. After supper the cows were milked, and the stock



herded either within the circle of the wagons or nearby with guards. The guard was set for the night and changed every two hours until sunrise. Then we'd do it all over again. Day after day, after day, after day."

On getting to the Sierra crossing:

"There was nothing for it, we had to climb over the Sierra Nevada to reach the valley of California. We all helped empty the wagons and the men took them apart. The pieces were dragged up and the loads carried around the hard stretches. Where the oxen could not climb up, they were dragged up with bleeding shins. After we reached the summit, we were glad to rest a couple of days. Another day of walking and dragging things over rocks got us to a beautiful lake where we camped again."

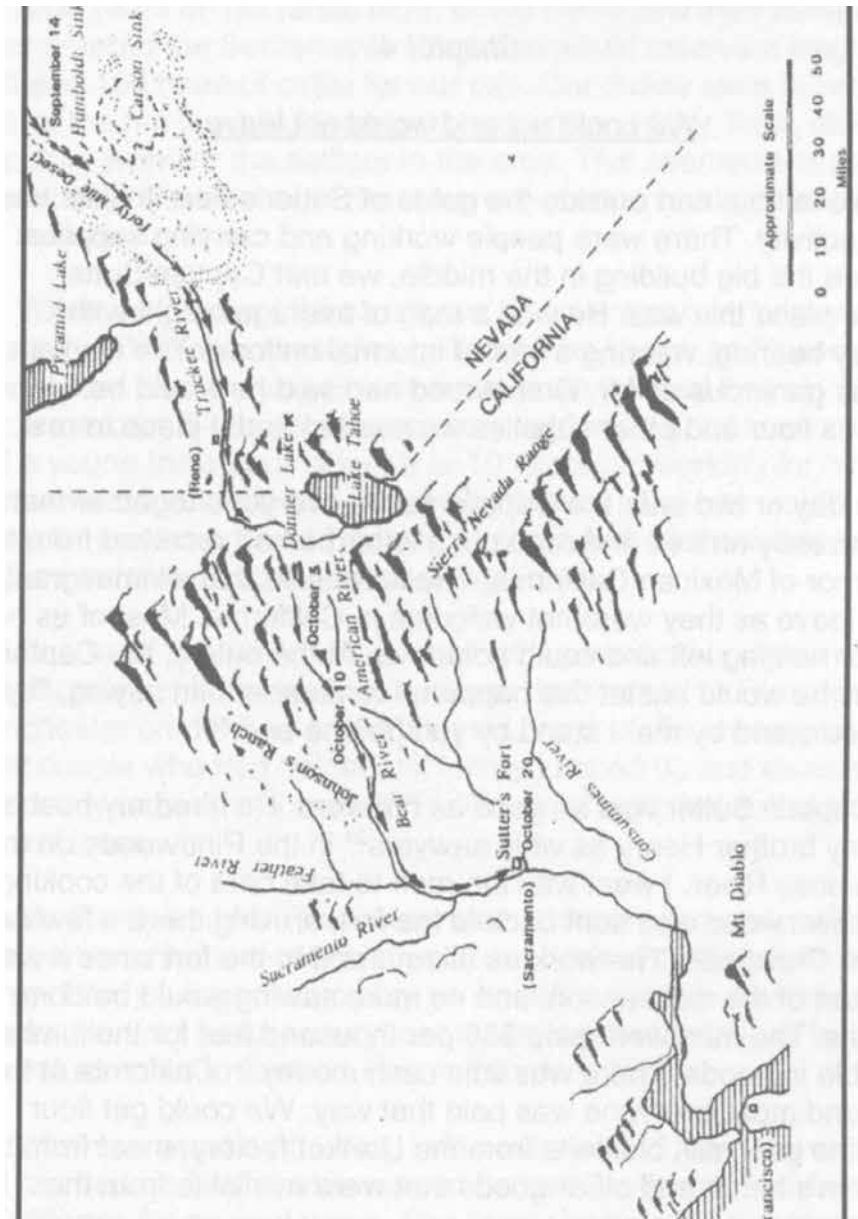
Upon arrival in California we hear about daily life and Eliza's experiences. We also learn about the larger events: Fremont's arrival, the Bear Flat Revolt, war with Mexico, the capture of General Vallejo, and even the Donner Party with a slightly different perspective from the one we ordinarily see (see the

Donner Party sidebar

“Small parties of survivors staggered into the fort, barely more than skeletons. Of the 18 that came out in the first party there were five women and girls amongst them, and we did all in our power for them. I will never forget the looks of those people. Most of them looked crazy and their eyes danced and sparkled in their heads like stars. One woman, Mrs. Fosdick, was truly courageous. She told how the women took the lead over the snow and made a track for the men to walk in. The women took the men by the hand, made the campfires, and doled out the little food they had left. One morning Mrs. Fosdick knew her husband was dying and stayed with him while the rest went ahead. After he passed, she put his black silk neckerchief around her neck and left him in the snow. When she reached the rest of the people, she told them her husband was dead. One of the men asked if they would have him to eat. She said, ‘You cannot hurt him now.’ Some of them went back and brought some of his flesh and cooked and ate it. Some people say women are weak and ought to have no rights. I would not call Mrs. Fosdick weak.”

sidebar here). Eliza’s emphasis and especially the last sentence give us an insight, perhaps, into her character in addition to that which we obtained reading of the different episodes of her California life. Life was hard for emigrants.

There is one interesting little event that says something about California life and Eliza’s personality. Her husband got very sick with Sacramento Fever. The doctor said Eliza’s husband would die but Eliza didn’t take his word for it. She consulted a friend who had knowledge of herbs but she “didn’t know what to do any more than I did.” So Eliza went out looking for “anything that might help” in the field. Unfortunately the cattle had eaten everything. Eliza reasoned that the cattle must have eaten anything useful and some of what was useful must have gone into cattle manure. “why shouldn’t the manure make a good medicine?” So she wrapped some manure in cloth and boiled it. Eliza’s husband was leery of the stuff but tried it, fell asleep, and woke up weak but cured.



Making History Colorful



169. Valley North Fork of Yuba,
above Emigrant Gap, Old Man Mountain.

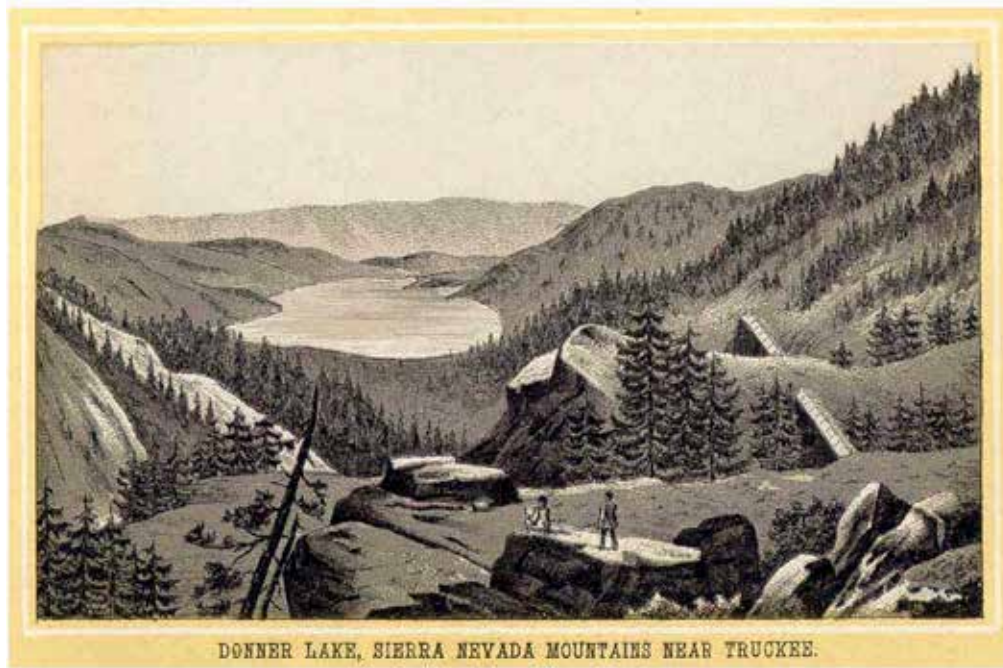


169. Valley North Fork of Yuba,
above Emigrant Gap, Old Man Mountain.

Today, due to advances in computer graphics technology, there may be a solution to the color limitations of our historical black & white images. Computers are remarkably adept at manipulating photographic images. Algorithms developed for Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning have been adapted to image technology to give almost magical results such as the colorization of black & white images. Algorithms are “trained” by looking at millions of color and black & white versions of photos to “learn” how to add back colors to a black & white image. The algorithms learn how to find a sky and make it blue, find a face and make it flesh colored, find a tree and make the leaves green. They develop highly sophisticated models that can do amazing transformations. Amazingly this technology is now available on desktop computers.

George Lamson

Through to the Pacific



We haven't done anything in the Heirloom about the railroad in many issues. Here is a quote from Through to the Pacific , (1871) by Albert Richardson. Our research staff found a reference to the book while in Los Angeles researching for "Summit Camp Revisited" (in our October, '23 issue).

Albert Richardson was a correspondent. As soon as the transcontinental railroad was finished in 1869 he decided on a train trip to California and back about which he wrote a series of letters. Richardson's wife published the letters that made up Through to the Pacific in 1871, after Richardson was assassinated.

"For the last night (the fifth since leaving Omaha) we go to bed in the sleeping-car. At dark the air is sultry; but we begin to ascend; before midnight we call for blankets. At daylight we wake among noble forests, and grand snow-drifts, with Donner Lake, cool, blue, and sparkling, on our left. Adieu to the desert! Hail to the Sierras! Were ever these pines, and spruces, and furs, so darkly green before, or the mosses upon their trunks so brightly yellow, or the tumbling waters of such foamy whiteness? Were ever the rocks overhead so vast and threatening, or the chasms below so deep to our straining eyes?"

"Over the summit we go, and down the western slope—through sixteen tunnels, through twenty miles of snow-sheds [eventually there would be 40 miles of snowsheds]. At the most exposed points the roofs are of four-inch planks, firmly bolted into granite. They have worked so well that nearly twenty miles more are to be added. In nothing have the Central Pacific people shown greater energy than in dealing with the snow, which falls here during an average winter, to the depth of nearly fifty feet. A year ago to-day, there were eighteen feet of snow upon this track; hundreds of Chinamen with shovels were helping a snow-plow (three times as high as a tall man, and driven by ten heavy locomotives) to fight its slow way through it.

"Avalanches here never sweep the ground clean as among the Alps. The first snow falls, and a few sunny days and freezing nights incrust it with ice. Later snows, melting, begin to slide and roll down upon it. A ball will gather as large as a load of hay, then break into fifty other balls, each one of which grows and breaks in turn. They carry an incredible depth of bank into the

Schuyler Colfax, for whom Colfax is named and who became U.S. vice president under Grant and Albert Richardson.



deep, narrow valleys. Economically, the sheds are a great success. Esthetically they are a great nuisance. Again and again, as one is enjoying the grandest scenery upon the continent, the train plunges into a long, dark chamber, and the view is broken. By direction of Governor Stanford, President of the Company, some of the boards are being removed for the summer. They should all be knocked off every spring.

"Down, down, down—mountains on one side, nothing on the other! From one window we look up a thousand feet, to a snowy summit; from the opposite one down a thousand or two thousand feet, into a green valley, with its swift-running stream thickened and muddied by the miners. The foliage grows warmer. The evergreens are interspersed with white dogwood flowers as large as the palm of one's hand; white strawberry blossoms, blue larkspurs, blue and white lupines, and the curling, blood-red leaves of the low, conical snow-cactus.

"The woods open into the broader fields of the foothills. Tall pines and firs give way to spreading live oaks with glossy leaves. We pass mining towns, scattered farm-houses, and grazing horses, sheep, and spotted cattle. Thicker and taller grows the grass, but always dull and faded; for the vivid green of the East is never seen in this dry climate. Late in the season the landscape is straw-colored."

And then a few days later coming back to the east coast: "Soon after noon, the American River 2,000 feet beneath us and yellow from mining, the dizzy trestles, the endless snow sheds, the dark tunnels, the granite cliffs and deep snow banks of the crest, and Donner Lake, calm and blue in its perennial beauty, were all left behind; and we came spinning down the eastern slope into hot, thick alkali dust, which is irritation to the eyes, relaxation to the nerves, and weariness to the flesh in general."



GOING TO CALIFORNIA IN 1867.



GOING TO CALIFORNIA IN 1869

"Going to California" from Through to the Pacific.

An illustrative quote from the text that fits the above illustration "One lady, comfortably settled in an arm-chair on the platform, with her parasol shading her face, and a bouquet in her lap, studied alternately a new novel and the exquisite scenery of Weber River. The picture she presented was in striking contrast to the woe-begone looks of her sisters who crossed the plains years ago in the old way."

Odds & Ends on Donner Summit



Crystal Lake is private property today but in the old days it had a hotel and served as a railroad and stage stop and a stop along the Lincoln Highway. Near Crystal Lake is another small lake which was used to impound water for the steam engines on the railroad. Here we have a date on the dam. There are lots of other lakes on Donner Summit or in the environs and most of them have dams to serve the railroad or the So. Yuba Canal Company to provide water for cities, irrigation, mining, or electricity generation. Keep your eyes open.



The Crystal Lake House on Crystal Lake in 1873. Below an ad for the Crystal Lake House in the Meadow Lake Morning Sun in 1866

This is part of a series of miscellaneous history, "Odds & Ends" of Donner Summit. There are a lot of big stories on Donner Summit making it the most important historical square mile in California. All of those episodes left behind obvious traces. As one explores Donner Summit, though, one comes across a lot of other things related to the rich history. All of those things have stories too and we've been collecting them. Now they're making appearances in the Heirloom.

If you find any "Odds & Ends" you'd like to share pass them on to the editor - see page 2

MEADOW LAKE TOWNSHIP DIRECTORY. 327

CRYSTAL LAKE HOUSE,

Crystal Lake, Nevada County, California,
E. G. FOGG, Proprietor.

 The Proprietor would respectfully inform the Public that this House, having been recently rebuilt and now furnished, now affords as fine accommodations for Travelers and Pleasure Seekers as any in the mountains.

The TABLE is always supplied with the Best the Market affords.

PRICES MODERATE.

A Livery Stable in Connection with the House.

This House, being situated immediately on the Lake, also on the Central Pacific Rail Road, and Dutch Flat and Donner Lake wagon roads, affords an accessible and convenient, as well as pleasant place of resort for Pleasure Seekers.

BOATS AND OTHER FACILITIES, HORSES AND CARRIAGES,
 Furnished to Parties.

5,988 FEET ABOVE THE SEA.

From Crystal Lake House to

Cisco..... 2 miles	Donner Lake..... 20 miles
Alta..... 18 miles	Nevada City..... 34 miles
Sacramento..... 99 miles	Lake Tahoe..... 85 miles
	Meadow Lake..... 13 miles.

Virtual Reality Tour of Donner Summit Train Tunnels

Howard Goldbaum is an emeritus professor of journalism at the University of Nevada at Reno. He has just completed a project, developing a virtual reality tour of Donner Summit. You can access the tour and (virtually play around on Donner Summit:

<https://allaroundnevada.com/donner-summit/>

Dr. Goldbaum became interested in the documentation of the Donner Summit tunnels and snowshed after he and Wendell Huffman (Nevada State Railroad Museum) explored the area as part of the research for their book featuring the 3D CPRR photographs of Alfred A. Hart (<https://waitingforthecars.com/>). We recommend this book highly; you can find a review of it on the book review page of our DSHS website or the March, '13 issue of the Heirloom. Back then (2010), you could drive through the Summit Tunnel. Goldbaum and Huffman used a million-candlepower light to illuminate the vertical shaft area of the tunnel interior. Wendell's captions from the book are used extensively in the info panels of the virtual reality (VR) project and in the captions on the 3D gallery of Hart's images which is linked from the project page (the first URL above)

Howard Goldbaum is an Emeritus Professor at the Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada, Reno. He taught courses in media (photography, audio, video, web design, and virtual-reality imaging) there for 17 years. He also served as director of the School's graduate program. Prior to that he was professor and director of the Multimedia Program at Bradley University (Illinois). His long career in media included years as working as a photojournalist and multimedia producer.

One of his long-term research projects explores the ancient monuments of Ireland and their traditions of folklore and mythology. This project uses virtual-reality environments to document the monuments and their landscapes.

<https://voicesfromthedawn.com>

A pioneer in the development of virtual-reality photograph, he was the first to create an underwater VR environment, in 1997.

<https://allaroundnevada.com/tropical-paradise/>

He has worked as a consultant in multimedia and digital imaging, and has won numerous awards for his work. He is the creator of the All Around Nevada website [<https://www.allaroundnevada.com>], and the co-author of a book of historic railroad 3D photographs. <https://waitingforthecars.com>

Donner Summit Historical Society

www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org

Membership

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

- new membership
- Renewing membership
- Individual Membership \$40
- Family Membership \$60
- Friend \$100
- Sponsor \$250
- Patron \$500
- Patron \$500
- Benefactor \$1000

The Donner Summit Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit

Date _____

Name(s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

You can also go to our website and use PayPal or a credit card.

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



Take the Scenic Route: Donner Summit's Old Highway 40



Pick up the brochure at the DSHS or download it at:
<http://www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org/pages/brochures.html>

50 interpretive signs along Old 40

<http://www.donnersummithistoricalsociety.org/pages/20MileMuseum.html>