

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



12 0143740518

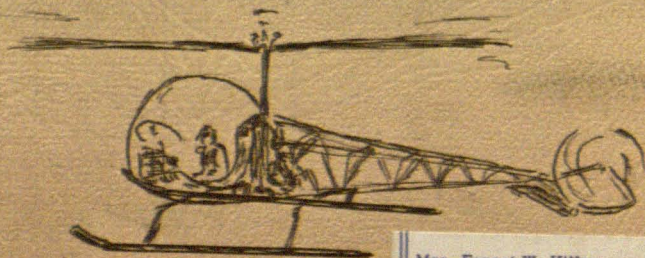
F  
869  
.E86  
C26  
1965



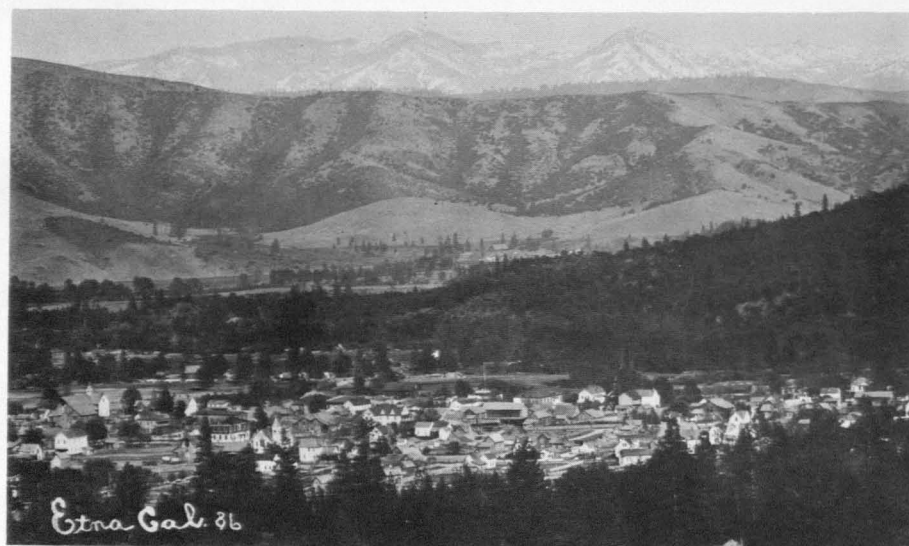
ETNA—

*from Mule Train  
to 'Copter*

*Published by*  
ESCHSCHOLTZIA PARLOR No. 112  
NATIVE DAUGHTERS OF THE GOLDEN WEST  
ETNA, CALIFORNIA



Mrs. Ernest W. Hiller  
Wilderville  
Oregon 97543



## E t n a

Cradled in the midst of verdant mountains,  
With farm lands creeping close with grain and hay  
Lies Etna, home of pioneering people,  
Enriched by all the folks who passed this way—  
From those who used the grain to make their flour  
To those who mined and logged with might and power.

Pack trains early crawled the mountain passes  
Taking food stuffs and supplies to Sawyer's Bar,  
Later many changes came to our Scott Valley  
Brought about by 'lectric lines and motor car.  
Still Etna sits serene in all her beauty  
Devoted to a love of life and duty.

Sturdy churches, filled with faith and armed with wisdom,  
Give this town the moral quality it needs;  
Strangers passing through this little valley  
Find people 'busy doing kindly deeds;  
Completing many tasks they have begun,  
Happy in the work that they have done.

—Mrs. Winfred Wolford



—Photo Courtesy Bill Smith

# E t n a :

## From Mule Train to 'Copter

### *A Pictorial History of Etna*

EDITOR  
LOREITA M. CAMPBELL

ASSOCIATE EDITOR  
DORICE E. YOUNG

#### E D I T O R S '   N O T E

It has been our aim to preserve the many old pictures which describe Etna's past and to portray its growth in the present. Our book, of course, can depict only a small portion of this past—or even the present; but it is our hope that it will stimulate others to collect and preserve these treasures of the past which are so rapidly disappearing.

Our sources of information include: Wells' *History of Siskiyou County*, various issues of the *Siskiyou County Historical Society Yearbook*, clippings from county and local newspapers, and information gained by conversations with older residents of Etna.

We wish to thank everyone who helped us in the preparation of this book. Especially, we wish to thank Mrs. Bernita Tickner for the many hours she spent in typing the major part of the book, and also we thank Mrs. Beverly Berryhill and Mrs. Gloria Snapp for typing assistance. Our special thanks to Mrs. Stell Fisher for the cover.

*Published by*

ESCHSCHOLTZIA PARLOR No. 112  
NATIVE DAUGHTERS OF THE GOLDEN WEST

AUGUST 1, 1965



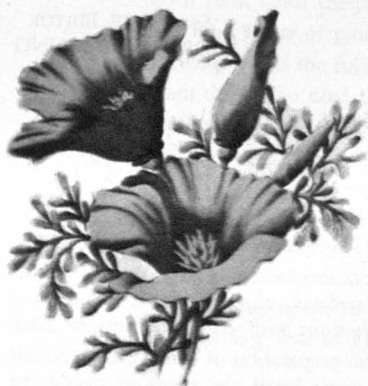
# Dedication

The members of Eschscholtzia Parlor  
No. 112, Native Daughters of the  
Golden West affectionately dedicate this  
book to the two living Charter Members  
of our Parlor:

MRS. MARY DENNY PARKER

and

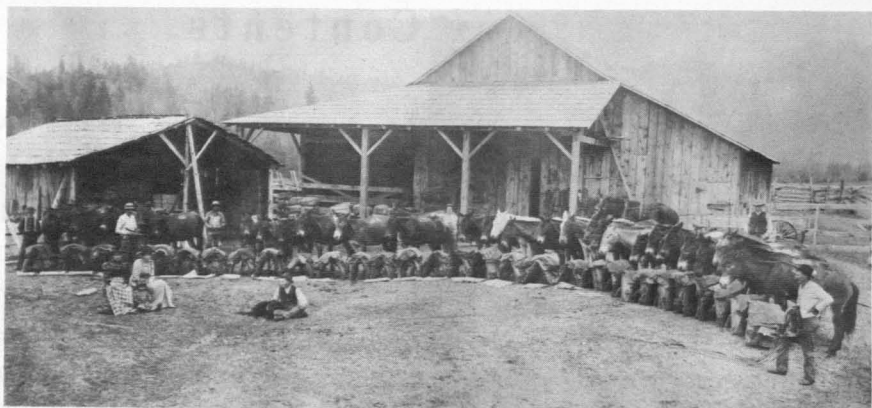
MRS. EMMA WAGNER HERZOG





# Table of Contents

	<i>page</i>
"ETNA" (Poem)—by Mrs. Winfred Wolford.....	Front Fly Leaf
TITLE PAGE.....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
FROM THE MULE TRAIN TO 'COPTER.....	1
SCOTT VALLEY .....	7
STEPHEN MEEK (Poem).....	8
BRIEF HISTORY OF EARLY SCOTT VALLEY.....	9
THE CRYSTAL CREEK METHODIST CHURCH AND COMMUNITY.....	11
INDEPENDENCE ROCK, AN OLD LANDMARK— Mrs. Fred Smith for Etna Woman's Club, 1921.....	13
AETNA MILLS (OLD ETNA).....	14
ETNA—BEFORE THE WHITE MAN—Based on an Interview with "Old Man Ruffy" by Lawrence Buchner.....	16
HISTORY OF ETNA.....	18
THE FIRE OF 1896—From Contemporary Newspapers Owned by Clifford Stephens.....	26
ETNA'S CHINATOWN .....	27
PICTURES—OLD AND NEW.....	28
ETNA UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.....	34
ETNA UNION HIGH SCHOOL.....	38
THE CHURCHES OF ETNA.....	42
ETNA FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS.....	47
MAPLESDEN HALL—by Miss Jean Maplesden.....	49
MUSIC AND CELEBRATIONS OF THE PAST.....	51
BASEBALL IN ETNA—by Mrs. Bernita Tickner.....	58
HORSE RACING—by Mrs. Grace Balfrey.....	61
FARMING NEAR ETNA—by Miss Dorice Young.....	62
THE STORM OF STORMS.....	65
THE ETNA FREE LIBRARY.....	68
ETNA—AROUND TURN OF THE CENTURY (Picture).....	Pull-Out Sheet
FINIS (Poem) .....	Inside Back Cover



### **MULE TRAIN AT ELLERS' CORRAL**

Ladies Maria Eller, Essie Eller; Girl: Amy Eller Derham; Hubert Eller and dog. Left to right: Elza Eller, Indian Mac, Bert Bradley, Aaron Eller, Bob Neilon.

—Picture Courtesy Eller Family



### **MULES ON SNOWSHOES**

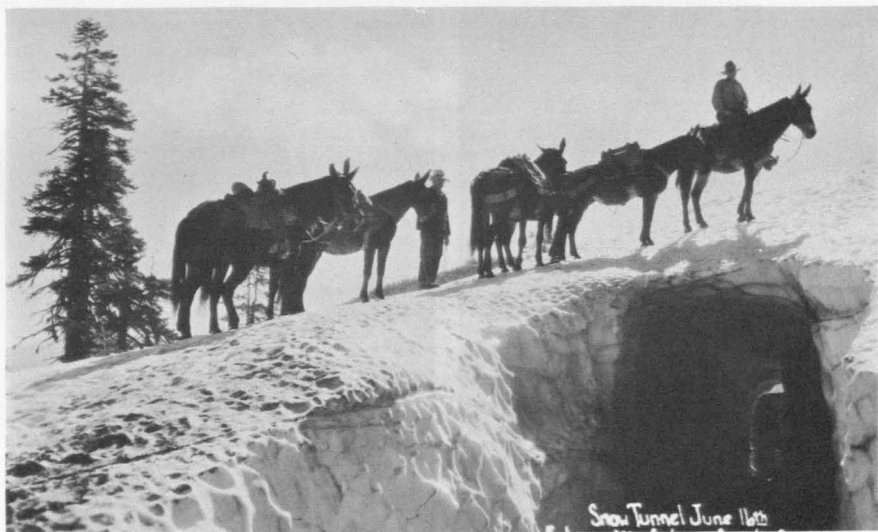
John Ahlgren, Bill Smith

—Photo Courtesy W. Smith



### **MULES ON TRAIL UNDER ROCKY POINT**

—Photo Courtesy W. Smith



MULES ON TOP OF TUNNEL ON SALMON MOUNTAIN

—Photo Courtesy W. Smith

## From the Mule Train to 'Copter

Instead of wagon trains, the mode of transportation in the mountainous area to the south and west of Etna was by walking or by mule train. The trade with the Salmon mining country had to be carried over many mountain ranges and deep ravines. The trails were narrow and often steep, requiring sure-footedness by both man and beast.

When the profitable trade which had been built up by the citizens of Aetna Mills was shifted to Rough and Ready in 1862, the mill there supplied the flour and the stores assumed the task of supplying other needed commodities.

A new road, which crossed Scott River through Horn Lane, connected Etna directly with the Callahan sources of supplies. As a result the number of mule trains increased.

Among those who had large pack trains were the following: Charles Baird, James Abel, Henry Peters, Elza and Aaron Eller, Marcus Isaacs, John and Harry Grant, Herbert Finley, Mrs. Martha Smith, Mrs. Neilon and the Bennett and Miller train with 50

animals was the largest. All of these trains had their headquarters in Rough and Ready. More than 200 mules were used to carry 600,000 pounds of all types of merchandise annually.

The mail was also carried over the mountains by pack trains. In winter snowshoes were used on the animals while the mail carriers used skis. When the pack trains were unable to cross the mountains, men carried the mail packs, weighing eighty pounds, on their backs.

In 1877 a mail carrier named Charles Hooker died from exposure and exhaustion while he was carrying the mail down the southern side of the mountain.

Shortly after 1900, Mr. Ed Harris was engaged in carrying the mail. On a return trip to Etna he and his two helpers, John Peters and a man named Jenkins, approached the dangerous Rocky Point on Salmon Mountain. Mr. Harris warned the others that the snow pack looked about ready to slide. He suggested that they take a longer, safer route around the Point; however,

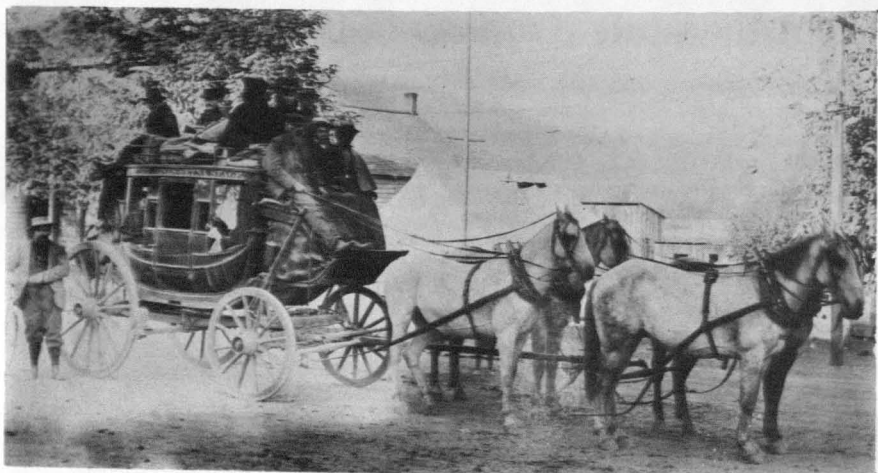




—Photo Courtesy W. Smith  
**CARRYING MAIL IN WINTER OVER SALMON MT.**



—Photo Courtesy W. Smith  
**DAD NAYLOR AND SAWYERS BAR STAGE**



**YREKA STAGE—JAMES WALKER DRIVING**

Peters and Jenkins decided to cross the Point but Mr. Harris took the longer route. The other two had just started to cross when an avalanche of snow covered them. One man was found later wrapped around a tree and the other at the bottom of the canyon.

Many brave men have risked their lives carrying the mail including Jim McNeil,

Bill and Ralph Smith, John Ahlgren, and Charles Snapp.

Gradually roads were built to Callahan and over Scott Mountain. An added advantage was the completion of a road from Callahan to Gazelle when the railroad was extended northward to Oregon. A road had also been built to Yreka in the sixties.



—Photo Courtesy E. Young  
**SHOE TROUBLE?**

Mail and passengers now traveled on stages to connect with the newly completed railroad. Travel was now much more convenient and faster. In addition to the stages, were the long freight trains, especially to Gazelle. Many an Etnanite can remember the pleasant jingle-jangle of the freight train bells as the trains traveled slowly over the country side. Some of the stores had their own freight teams which made trips once or twice a week.

Horse and buggy hitching posts became a customary sight along the streets of Etna. In fact, one of these posts is still standing in front of the John Campbell home in Etna, which was once a bakery and millinery store.

It was not until 1891 that a road was completed over Salmon Mountain. Even then the mule trains were still used because it was cheaper to convey merchandise by mule train than by stage and freight trains.

About 1910 a new mode of travel appeared in Etna—the automobile! Gradually the motor driven vehicles replaced the horse and buggy, the horse drawn stages, and even the freight trains.

In 1918 the Bennett Company bought two "Republic" trucks and later five "White" trucks to carry mail, freight, and passengers. The mule trains were sold to regions which were still remote; some even as far away as Alaska.

With the advent of motor driven vehicles, demand was strong for better roads. Since then the County and State have constantly strived to improve the roads in spite of the severe winter weather which is common in this country.

The latest road improvements have been the modern federal road which extends from Cecilville to Etna where it connects with the new state highway from Yreka to Etna. For this fine road the community owes thanks to Senator Randolph Collier through whose efforts the new state highway was made possible. As a special gesture



**GAZELLE STAGE**



—Photo Courtesy E. W. Herzog  
**FREIGHT TRAIN LEAVING ETNA TO GO OVER SALMON MOUNTAIN**

Main Street - Wilsey Saloon - Miller Hardware (Later Eller) - Diggles Drug (Later Balfrey) - Hadcock Hotel

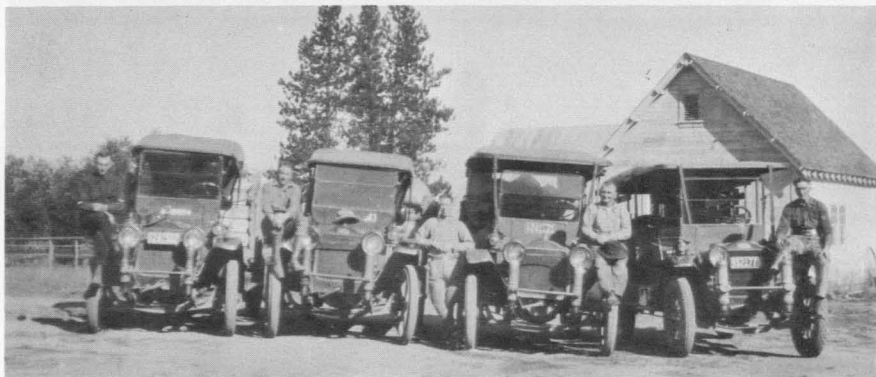


—Photo Courtesy W. Smith  
**BENNETT MULE TEAM AND STAGE ON TOP OF SALMON MOUNTAIN**



**HAULING HAY OVER SALMON MOUNTAIN**





#### BENNETT STAGES, 1918

Left to right: Ralph Smith, George Samon, Clarence Barlet, Carl Lewis, Bill Smith, Bill Quigley



—Photo Courtesy L. Dexter

#### STAGES LEAVING ETINA MILLS POST OFFICE AT 6:00 A.M.

of gratitude the highway entrance to Etna has been named Collier Way.

Another advance in modern transportation and travel is the recently constructed Aetna Helicopters base which was built on the Bill Mathews' farm about one mile out of Etna near the new highway to Yreka.

About ten years ago, a young helicopter pilot named Robert Trimble came to this

valley. This young man persuaded Mr. Mathews and Mr. Erling Hjertager to establish this helicopter base.

With the experience of Bob Trimble the helicopters quickly assumed an important role in patrolling the mountains for signs of fire, for rescuing people who were injured in the mountains, and even flying critically ill people to the city for medical care.



**HELICOPTER HANGAR**

—Photo Courtesy J. Trimble

The progress of this new business was interrupted by the death of Bob Trimble which was caused by an accident while he was flying over the Kidder Creek area.

Following the tragic death of Mr. Trimble, Mr. Erling Hjertager's son, Harold, has carried on and expanded the helicopter activities. Today the helicopters are used to install steel towers for power lines in dangerous mountain terrain and even to string power lines and telephone lines across canyons. Seeding crops and spraying are aids to the farmers. In addition, during the last summer when forest fires were so destructive in Southern California, Aetna Helicopters

spent several months in that area fighting fires.

During the flood of 1964 a helicopter base was set up on Mathews Creek near the Forks of Salmon. With their four 'copters, they distributed 10,000 pounds of food and supplies to the flood damaged area and hungry people from the Forks of Salmon to Sawyers Bar. In addition to this they flew more than 230 hours over Siskiyou and parts of Humboldt counties, bringing relief to those stricken areas.

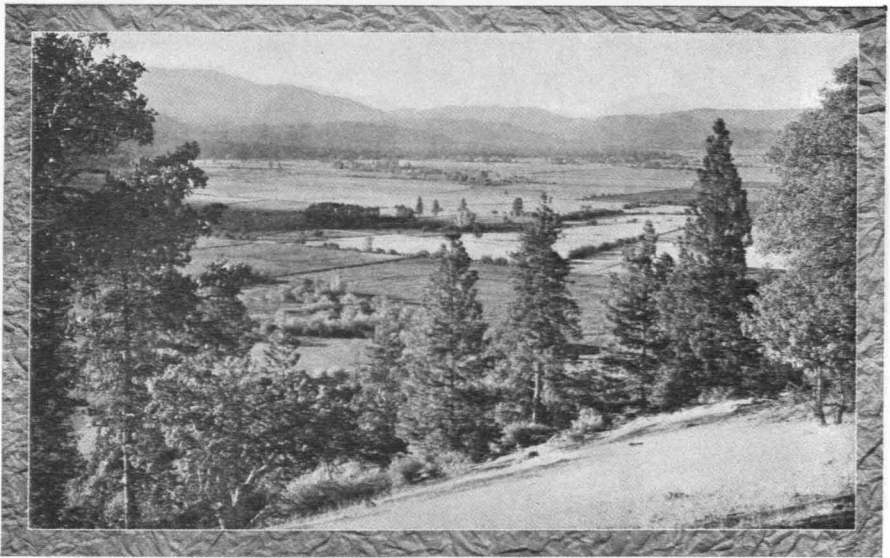
From this account it is easy to understand why transportation has played such a vital role in Etna's history.



—Photo Courtesy J. Trimble  
**HELICOPTER**



—Photo Courtesy J. Trimble  
**HELICOPTER ON FIRE DUTY**



—Reproduced from Siskiyou County Panama-Pacific International Exposition Souvenir  
**SCOTT VALLEY, SHOWN HERE FROM A POINT NEAR ETNA, HAS 150,000 ACRES LIKE THIS.**  
**IT IS DRAINED AND IRRIGATED BY SCOTT RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES.**

## Scott Valley

When Captain Bradford R. Alden arrived at Fort Jones in 1852 to take command, he was deeply impressed with the beauty of Scott Valley. He wrote: "It is a shut-in valley surrounded by mountains of snow... Scott Valley is as... beautiful, healthy valley as there is in the world. You cannot imagine a purer air. The valley is about three or four miles wide, tho' south of us it widens in one beautiful place to eight or ten. The solid mountains rise like a rim with indented lines, two to four thousand feet above us and are yet tipped with snow. It is all natural-looking, healthy and beautiful."<sup>(1)</sup>

Another description of Scott Valley was written by Harold French in a brochure on Siskiyou County, which was written for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915:

"It would be an exaggeration to proclaim Scott Valley on a parity with the mountain paradise of Yosemite and Switzerland. But

the truth is that its scenic beauty and grandeur bears a striking similarity to both of these world-renowned regions. Situated at an average elevation of half-a-mile above the Pacific, extending forty miles in a northerly direction and spreading to a dozen miles in width, its five thousand residents look up to lofty ranges a mile and more in the air. The walls of the Salmon Mountains on the west and the Scott Mountains on the south and east are scarcely less abrupt and striking in their profiles than the portals of Yosemite and the craggy horns of the Alps. Magnificent forests half conceal their contours, and in the shadowy canyons cascading torrents bound joyously to serve the needs of the miner and rancher.

"Geologic forces fashioned this valley for the delight of man. Glaciers deepened a giant groove, dammed up the lower outlet of Scott River with debris, then receded, leaving a long Alpine lake. Ground sluicing streams spread the sediments in deep layers until the prehistoric lake became a





## Stephen Meek

Oh, where are you going, old  
Stephen Meek?

Now what do you see as the landscape  
you scan:

Oh tell us, Stephen, what is it you seek  
As slowly through the marshes you span?

Now hear the slush - slush of the oar  
And see the flight of marsh birds as  
they gleam

And o'er the horizon quickly soar,  
Leaving silence to reign supreme.

Then shaking his head, the old man  
exclaimed,

"My work in this valley at last is done;  
The beaver have gone from these marshes  
drained.

The trapper must go, for the farmer  
has come."

For many a year old Stephen has lain  
In the beautiful cemetery beyond our town—  
Still, the wandering marsh birds  
search in vain,  
For reedy nests, now fields of ripening grain.

—L.M.C.

beautiful meadow carpeted with nutritious  
grasses.

After the miner came the fattening herds  
of stock that made this valley more valuable  
each year. Grain fields flourished in broad,  
billowing waves, miles in length. Fabulous  
crops of the cereals and alfalfa are produced  
from its cultivated areas.

"There are 150,000 acres of arable land  
in Scott Valley, of which only ten per cent  
are under irrigation."<sup>(2)</sup>

<sup>(1)</sup>Fort Jones issue the *The Siskiyou Pioneer*  
—1959, pp. 17-18.

<sup>(2)</sup>Harold French, *Siskiyou County Sou-  
venir* Edition 1915, page 31.

## Brief History of Early Scott Valley

So far as is known today, the first white men to visit Scott Valley were the Hudson Bay trappers who were making inroads into Northern California by following the Sacramento and Klamath Rivers. One of these trappers was Thomas McKay who won the friendship of the Indians by always being fair in his dealings with them. Later when the miners arrived the Indians asked if they were Maki men. If they said they were, the Indians treated them in a friendly manner—until the miners demonstrated by their actions that they possessed few of the virtues of the early trappers.

In 1836 Stephen Meek joined a McKay trapping party which crossed the Klamath River and traveled through the mountains to Yreka Creek. Then the party followed the Greenhorn and McAdams Creeks to Scott Valley. Scott River, which they called Beaver River and the valley Beaver Valley, proved to be very rich in beaver and other fur-bearing animals. They remained many weeks trapping both forks of the river and left the valley with 1800 pelts.

Stephen Meek remarked afterwards, "It is the richest place for beaver I have ever seen. The whole valley was all one great swamp caused by beaver dams." Stephen Meek returned many times to trap in the valley and eventually established his headquarters at the Josiah Doll ranch.

One of the main trails to Oregon began at Fort Reading and wormed its way through the mountains, crossed Scott Mountain, continued north along Scott River on the east side to Wheelock's Post (Fort Jones); it then followed Cherry Creek or McAdams Creek northward to Deadwood, and thence to Thompson's Dry Diggings (Yreka). This trail was favored by the miners because it was shorter than the Sacramento River trail; also it connected with the Scott Bar trail.

Another trail which was important to the Etna area branched off the main trail near the Ohio House, the stopping place for those headed for the Salmon Mountains. This

trail crossed Scott River near where Young's dam is today, and then continued westward through the foothills to Aetna Mills (Old Etna). From Aetna Mills it crossed the Salmon Mountains to the many mines in that area. Incidentally, the Ohio House became the McBride home from 1853 to 1959.

With the discovery of gold (1851-1852) at Scott Bar and Thompson's Dry Diggings, travel through Scott Valley was greatly increased by the miners who drifted restlessly from one gold discovery to another.

Trouble with the Indians in Northern California and Southern Oregon led the government to establish a number of military posts along the main routes of travel. One other was Fort Jones which was established in 1852 in northeastern Scott Valley because the location was favorable for the pasturing of horses near the fort. The Scott Valley Indians caused little trouble after a treaty was signed by Chief John and the commander of the fort. However, the presence of the military unit probably aided the early settlers in the valley. In 1858 the fort was discontinued by the government.

Many of the would-be miners were really farmers at heart. The excellent soil of the valley proved more attractive to them than the scattered gold mines. Word was sent to relatives and friends in the East and soon whole families were arriving in the valley. In 1854 a road was completed to Yreka and a toll road was built over Scott Mountain (1854-59).

Since this book deals mainly with Etna and the surrounding area, only a few of those who settled here in the 1850's and 1860's can be mentioned.

In 1851 Pool and Wicks settled on the land where Augustus Meamber lived later. On this land horses and mules were pastured for the miners at Scott Bar for a handsome price.

On the east side of the valley in 1851, Rich and Holt settled on land which was

later purchased by P. A. Hartstrand and Asa White. According to some records, Erwin and Sarah Elmore settled in 1845 on 320 acres of land not far from the White and Heartstrand holdings. Elmore sold part of his land to James Biernbaum (now the Young ranch) and the balance to Edmund and Elizabeth Bagby. Three years later this land was purchased by Frank J. Horn, Sr., and has been the home of the Horn family since then. The land bought by Biernbaum changed hands several times before it was purchased by Enos Young in 1893; this farm still belongs to the Young family.

The John Smith and Felty farms near Etna were also settled at an early date.

In the center of the valley George F. Smith settled on a farm about two miles from Etna in partnership with George Corn and James Stevens. Before long the partnership was ended when George Smith bought the interests of the others; since then the property has remained in the Smith family.

Another early settler in this area was A. B. Swain who homesteaded the land north of the Smith farm. This place was operated from 1858 to 1874 by Ignace Wagner who purchased the present Wagner farm from Morgan, another early settler in the

area. The Wagner farm was settled first by Colonel Charles Drew and his brother.

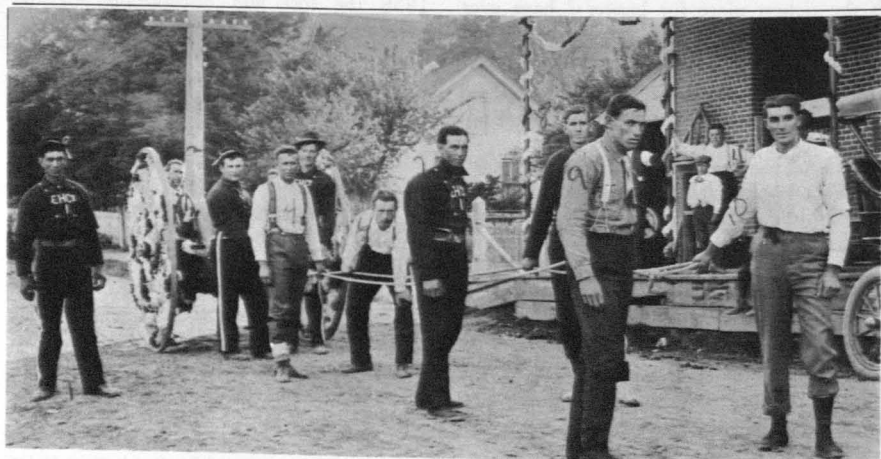
Charles Hovenden in 1858 settled on what is now the Bryan farm. Later Hovenden bought land from Jeremiah Davidson which is now the Hovenden home.

In 1854 Frederick Holzhauser and his family arrived at the Nantzell-Baxter farm where they spent their first winter in a log cabin. The following year the Holzhausers homesteaded the farm which remained the family home until it was sold recently.

In 1852 a large tract of land was homesteaded by John McKee. This holding was later subdivided into several farms including those of Peter Smith, Rev. D. H. Lowry, O. V. Green, and John and Stafford Wilson. After several ventures in the valley, Jeremiah Davidson and his family settled on a farm near the Lowry farm.

These early settlers paved the way for the establishment of the Crystal Creek Community, and Aetna Mills, and Rough and Ready whose development will be discussed in subsequent accounts.

Note: Information taken from Wells *History of Siskiyou County*, Siskiyou County Historical Yearbook, Fort Jones Edition.



—Photo Courtesy Isaac Sovey

#### FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION IN ETNA 1905

Fire Department—Picture taken in front of Denny Bar Store. Left to right: Isaac Sovey, Harry Stephens, John Grant, Silas Kastoff, Boyd Naylor, Martin Messner, Bill Sovey, Jim Allison, Jim Moxley, Ed Harris. Abe Bar on porch.





—Photo Courtesy E. Wendell  
**CRYSTAL CREEK CHURCH**



—Newspaper Clipping Courtesy E. Wendell  
**INTERIOR OF CHURCH**

## The Crystal Creek Methodist Church and Community

In the spring of 1854 the Rev. Ebenezer Arnold, newly appointed Superintendent of the Northern California Methodist Churches, filed on a homestead of 160 acres at Pine Grove (later called Crystal Creek) and decided to make Scott Valley his headquarters. As soon as he had settled his family in a tent house on his property, he began holding services in seventeen Scott Valley communities including: Fort Jones Military Post, Deadwood, Indian Creek, South Fork, Penny Diggings, Johnson's Mills, Etna Mills, Rough and Ready Mills, Quigleys, Star Ranch, Godfreys, Oro Fino, and French Creek.

On one of his rounds he was thrown from his mule and nearly frozen in the icy waters of a swamp before he could reach shelter. He slept that night in the thriving town of Deadwood in a hotel room with a murderer!

The Crystal Creek Methodist Church was organized by Rev. Arnold in July 1854, with eleven members. A small log church which was built at the end of Holzhauser Lane, as it is now called, became the first Protestant church in Scott Valley with Rev. D. H. Lowry as the first minister.

The little church grew rapidly for people came from miles around to attend church services, weddings, funerals, and other spe-

cial events. It was always filled to capacity and, it is said, that each family had a special tree in the grove where the horses were tied during services.

The camp meetings, which were held in the church, drew large crowds of people who brought their tents along so that they would not miss any of the meetings which were held three times a day and often lasted for weeks.

In 1867 a new church was built on property donated by L. S. Wilson and the old church was used by the Good Templars Lodge until it burned a year later.

When other churches were organized in nearby communities, the Crystal Creek Church lost membership rapidly and in 1905 the remaining members decided to join the Greenview Methodist Church.

Another center of interest in the Crystal Creek Community was the school which was organized in 1859. The following description of the school is taken from the Yreka Journal in 1879: "Crystal Creek can boast of having one of the best country schools of the county, being beautiful without and neat within. It has a commodious hall on the second story which is used for public gatherings. Mrs. Oman, recently a graduate of San Jose Normal School, has fifty pupils."

Many social events took place in the upper story of the school and people came from great distances to attend these events. In 1881 a Lyceum was organized which offered a variety of literary and cultural entertainment including plays, lectures, debates and literary readings. Musical talent was not lacking for the community had a band and an orchestra which were conducted by J. Milton Smith Sr., who served as post-master and operated a blacksmith shop for the convenience of the local people.

Another early resident was Henry Cory who had a general store to supply local needs. Mr. Cory's eldest daughter married James Walker; the Walker family was especially active in promoting the church and cultural life of the community.

One of the principal occupations was dairy farming; this in turn led to the production of butter and cheese for which the community became well known. The nearby towns and the mining areas provided a ready market for the Crystal Creek farmers.

Space does not permit the listing of all the residents of Crystal Creek, but the Wilson families, the Smiths, the Walkers, the Shelleys, the O. V. Greens, and the Wetmores not only contributed to the local community life but eventually spread their influence to the nearby town of Etna Mills.



—Photo Courtesy E. Wendell

#### **WALKER SISTERS**

**Etta, Elizabeth, Clara, Bertha**

Like many other early communities, Crystal Creek began to decline around the turn of the century. As the younger generation reached adulthood, they moved to nearby towns or to the more distant cities. The parents also moved to towns where their needs could be served more conveniently. As a result, the community faded away and little remains today to remind one of the happy, busy people who once lived there.

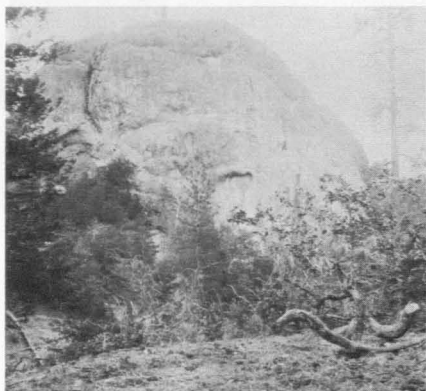


—Photo Courtesy Susie Smith

#### **THE SECOND STORY OF THE CRYSTAL CREEK SCHOOL**

This served as a community center and social hall for the people of western Scott Valley.

# Independence Rock, an Old Landmark



—Photo Courtesy Mrs. C. C. Wendell

## INDEPENDENCE ROCK

"The Key to Scott Valley" was the name given by the early settlers to Independence Rock, sometimes called Crystal Creek Rock. This rock, which is between one hundred and one hundred fifty feet high, is almost perpendicular with small caves breaking the surface here and there. Independence Rock is situated about two and a half miles from Etna near the home of Mrs. Margaret Bigham.

An interesting story is told concerning the name of the rock: An enterprising genius, as the story goes, built a flight of steps from the upper side to the top. Here he erected a flag pole, raised the Stars and Stripes, and named the rock Independence Rock. He planned to hold a Fourth of July celebration at the base and charge a small fee to those who wished to see the splendid view of the valley from the summit; however, the idea did not seem to create much enthusiasm and therefore was abandoned. Since the flag pole had been fastened firmly to the solitary tree which grew in a crevice on the top, it stood there for many years with the flag floating proudly until it was worn to threads by the wind.

The flag was visible for many miles and served as inspiration to the passersby.

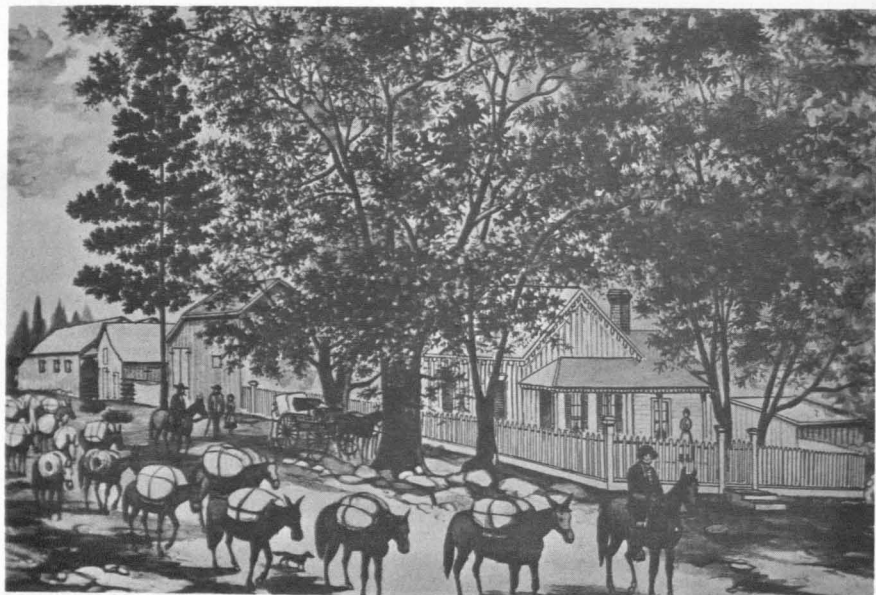
There was another interesting story concerning the Rock: A man by the name of Wright made his home in one of the large caves on the west side of the rock. During the day he worked at splitting logs or making shingles. At night he returned to his home in the cave. In one corner the man had built a fireplace, which furnished light and warmth and also cooked his food. The difficulty with his improvised fireplace was that there was no flue. Consequently his face and clothing were so saturated with smoke that he resembled a side of bacon.

Independence Rock became a favorite site for community picnics as early as June 1864 when a noted lawyer, the Honorable A. P. Van Dizer, was the speaker of the day. The picnic became an annual event for forty-nine years with the exception of three years when the desire for a change of setting shifted the picnic elsewhere. People came from all over the county to renew old friendships.

Large baskets of delicious food covered the long picnic table. The women re-arranged the food while the rest of the crowd enjoyed games or listened to patriotic programs. It was the custom to leave the left-over food on the table to be consumed by Indians who had gathered for their part in the festivities.

The popularity of these gatherings diminished with advent of the automobile which made it possible for people to travel farther for entertainment. The last of these picnics was held in June 1913.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above story was taken from a newspaper clipping written by Mr. Fred Smith for the Etna Woman's Club, May 4, 1921. The clipping was found by Mrs. Elizabeth Wendell in the back pages of her grandmother's journal.



—Photo Courtesy E. H. Herzog

**"THE OLD SLEEPER PLACE"**

The residence of Charles Baird since 1862, "Old" Etna Mills, Siskiyou Co., California.

## Aetna Mills (Old Etna)

While the eager miners were searching for gold at Thompson's Dry Diggings and Scott Bar, many others came by ship to Humboldt Bay and then made the long trip inland following the Klamath River to the mouth of Salmon River. They continued the long, dangerous journey following the Salmon River to Bestville and Sawyers Bar where gold had been found in many places.

Other miners came through the mountains from Trinity Center to the headwaters of the Salmon River while others made a longer trek over Scott Mountain to the headwaters of the Scott River and then followed the early trails to the Ohio House. From there they crossed Scott River near what is now Young's dam and traveled west through the hills to Salmon Mountain which they crossed to Sawyers Bar or Bestville.

Supplies for the miners came mainly

from Humboldt Bay. This route was long and dangerous and, in winter, often impassable. As a result prices were extremely high. A closer source of supplies was badly needed.

In response to this need, Captain Charles McDermit, Charles Moore, William and Dr. Davidson built a flour mill in 1854 on Etna Creek near the foot of Salmon Mountain. This mill, which is said to be the first in Northern California, was named Aetna Mill by Mrs. D. H. Lowry, the wife of the minister of the Crystal Creek Church. Grain for the mill was produced on the Davidson Brothers' farm and as the demand increased, by other valley farmers.

The mill owners were able to sell their flour at a profit for \$10.00 per cwt., whereas, the flour which was brought in from the coast was \$34.00 per cwt. As soon as the trail was improved over Salmon Mountain, several pack trains made regular trips to



Sawyers Bar, carrying flour and other necessities.

In 1854 Jeremiah Davidson and William Miller built a distillery on what is still known as Whiskey Creek. The distillery was operated by Ensign Smith who was subsequently called "Whiskey Smith". Often the mules going to the Salmon country were loaded with a sack of flour on one side and a keg of whiskey on the other.

The little town, which bore the name of the mill, grew very rapidly. A road was built connecting the town with the Ohio House thus making it possible to supply other needs of the miners. A hotel was built by the Davidson brothers which was later operated by Fitzsimmons and Neilon. Other buildings included a sawmill, a blacksmith shop, a machine shop, two stores—one owned by Davidson and the other by Sleeper and Green—a furniture shop owned by McDermit, and the saloons. The new community even had a post office which was operated by Sleeper and later by James H. Taylor.

Among the early families who lived in Aetna Mills were the Lanyons, the Morgans,

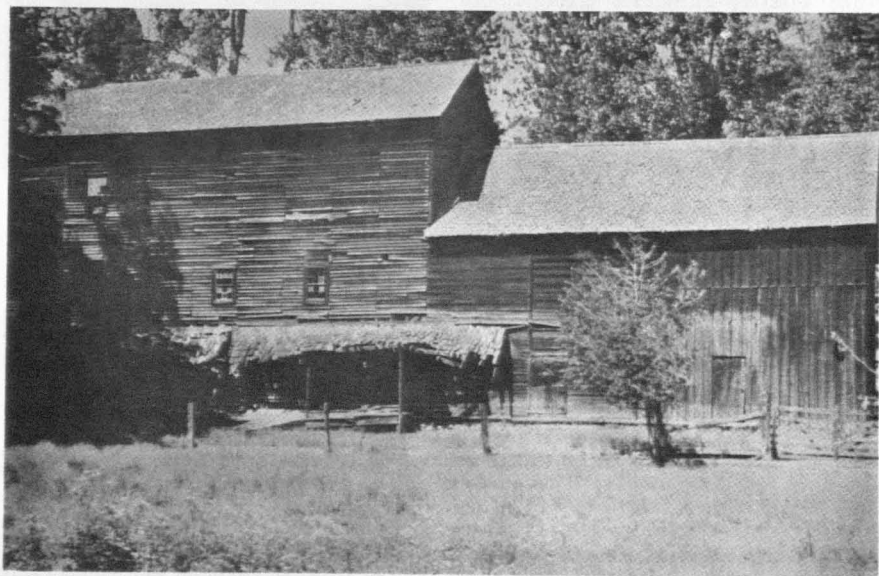
the Harry Dawsons, the Davis family, and Ensign Smith whose family consisted of a daughter, Hattie, and a son, Harry.

The prosperity of this little town was cut short by a flood during the winter of 1861-2. Whiskey Creek became a raging torrent which washed away the distillery and the home of the Davis family. The house, which contained Mrs. Davis and her four small children, was carried down the creek until its progress was blocked by a huge boulder. Much damage was done to homes and property that lay in the course of the flood.

After this disastrous flood most of the residents moved to the nearby town of Rough and Ready. The post office, which retained the name of Etna Mills, was moved to Rough and Ready and the early town faded away.

Although little remains today of this early town, people still refer to it as "Old Etna".

NOTE: Material for this account was taken from the Etna Edition of the *Siskiyou Pioneer*, 1962.



THE ORIGINAL ETNA MILLS

# Etna--Before the White Man

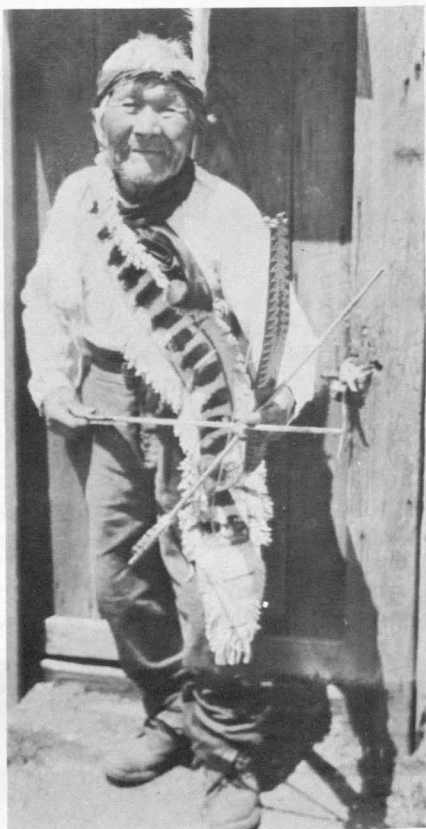
Have you ever wondered what the area which is now Etna was like before the advent of the white man? If so, you will find this eye-witness account very interesting.

More than forty years ago, Mr. Lawrence Buchner, a lifetime resident of Etna, had an interview with an old Indian who will be remembered by many as "Old Man Ruffy," although his christian name is thought to have been Frank. At the time of the interview Mr. Buchner estimated his age to have been between 110-115 years, but Ruffy himself said, "Can't tell by white man's year—Indian moon year different."

Ruffy said that he was a Karok Indian from the area of Somes Bar. He had come to this area when he was a small boy with his parents and other Indians by way of the Salmon Mountains.

Mr. Buchner had learned from other sources that two severe floods, 1805 - 1827, along the Klamath River had caused the death of many Indians. In the year 1828 a severe earthquake occurred. Although Ruffy did not know what the word earthquake meant, when Mr. Buchner asked him if the ground shook, he nodded emphatically and said, "You bet. The ground went this way and that way. Mountains fell down. Trees fell down, and many big ponds of water (lakes) were formed high up in the mountains. Many Indians were killed at that time, because Indians in those days lived in holes in the ground (caves and tunnels) and the mountains fell down and buried them."

According to the account given by Ruffy, a large part of Scott Valley was covered by water. Beaver dams—caused the water to spread out over the valley floor. Along one bank of the old lake, part of which is now Etna, tall grasses and many kinds of wildflowers grew in profusion from early spring to late autumn. On the higher ground were many trees, especially several kinds of oaks. The foothills and nearby mountains were covered by thick evergreen forests.



RUFFY IN COSTUME

In this section of the valley of virgin beauty were many kinds of animals including, in Ruffy's words: "small deer; lots of big dogs (wolves), lots of small dogs (coyotes); lots of big bears with white faces; and small bears, both brown and black. The creeks and river were full of many kinds of fish, and there were beaver and many small animals."

Food was plentiful and there was sufficient variety to satisfy the simple taste of the Indians—meat, fish, nuts, acorns, berries, wild cherries and plums—all within easy range.

Problems of clothing and shelter were easily solved for there were hides, skins,

and furs in abundance. Willows which grew along the banks of streams were useful in making tent frames as well as baskets.

The favorable environment probably accounted for the fact that the Indians of the Etna region were, as Ruffy said, "good Indians and did not fight much."

Unfortunately, this ideal homeland was not to be theirs for very long. An Indian legend of the Klamath tribes had predicted long ago that after the great floods, men of white skin would appear, and that some day these white men would kill the Indians or drive them away after they had taken the best lands.

Ruffy said he was a grown man when he saw his first white man. This man and others trapped the beaver and other small fur-bearing animals, unmolested by the Indians until they attempted to build cabins. This angered the Indians so much that they drove the white man away and burned the cabins.

"Later a number of white men returned and built a long log house (Fort Jones) with many round holes on each side of the building. The white men put guns through the holes and killed the Indians, but they did not come out of their house until they were sure the Indians had gone.

"Then one day," Ruffy continued, "a Big Man came to the log house. He wore nice clothes and had ribbons on coat and each side of pants. Big Man took lots of men with him on horses and go all over the valley killing Indians. Lots of Indians ran away and never came back. After the Big Man left the Indians did not fight any more because they were afraid Big Man come back. Big Man no good; he kill lots of Indians."

Ruffy concluded his story by saying, "White Man no good; he take everything—Indian no got nothing and he (white man) never paid Indians for land."

#### (1) NOTE ON RUFFY:

On the morning of March 19, 1930 Ruffy was found unconscious on the floor of his cabin by his son. There was a large gash on his forehead but the old Indian

died before it could be determined whether he had been murdered. He was buried near the grave of his wife at the foot of Salmon Mountain.

Draped across his coffin was an American flag. According to reports Ruffy was very close to his Chief who wished to have his people adopt some of the customs of the white man and asked that Ruffy raise the American flag. He was at once surrounded by 200 Indians who tore down the flag and threatened Ruffy's life. The old Chief came to his rescue, warning that the other Indians would be punished by death if any harm came to Ruffy. It was this flag that was so cherished by the old Indian that was draped across his coffin.

It was also recalled at the time of his death that Ruffy had often expressed his concern that the stories and songs of his tribe were being lost. When the phonograph came into use, Ruffy realized that this might offer a means to preserve the songs of his people.

In order to help Ruffy fulfill his dream, Mr. W. J. Balfrey provided the wax cylinders for recording the songs. When he asked Ruffy to sing he was surprised at the quick response. Although the old Indian had passed the century mark, he stood up and sang, so putting his soul into the song, that when he had finished he was almost exhausted. He was overjoyed when he heard his own voice, for then he knew he had found a way to preserve his native songs and stories.

—*Siskiyou Times*, March 25, 1930

(2) NOTE: Mrs. Grace Balfrey, a daughter of the pioneer A. M. Johnson who bought a section of the Pete Smith ranch just out of Etna, recalls that when she was a child she remembers playing in an old fort near Johnson Creek. Inside the fort was a block house, the upper story of which was larger than the first story. In the upper section were many small round holes large enough to put a gun through. Later it was called the "tramp house" because so many itinerants took lodging there.

In the rear of the old fort was a large mound. Here, Mrs. Balfrey said, she and her brothers and sisters found hundreds of Indian artifacts and arrow heads.

# History of Etna

As the Indians sought safety along the foothills near the present town of Etna, white men began to invade the land along the old lake bed. In 1853 a Mr. Bauer and others built a sawmill on the high bank of land, extending in a northerly-southerly direction, which later became Etna's main



—Photo Courtesy E. W. Herzog  
**ROUGH AND READY FLOUR MILL**  
 Elizabeth Taylor McCune, Fannie Hanson,  
 Fred Herzog, Emma Wagner Herzog

street. The mill owners dug a ditch from what is now Etna Creek to furnish water for their mill. One of the owners built a home nearby which was the first house to be built in what is now Etna.

Two years later (1855) a group of nearly farmers, including Abisha Swain, H. C. Swain, Obediah Baer, George Smith, P. A. Hartstrand, and James Stevens commenced the erection of a flour mill not far from the sawmill. James Stevens christened the new mill the Rough and Ready Mill; therefore, the little settlement which grew up around the mill was given the same name.

Since the mill owners were mainly farmers who lived nearby, E. F. Herby and Abisha Swain were the first ones to build homes near the mill in 1856. The first white child to be born here was John H. Swain, Oct. 5, 1857.

The same year the Swain brothers built a store on the site near where E. B. Parker's store now stands. A hotel was built by H. B. Bixby in 1858. A stable and corral for the convenience of the patrons of the hotel occupied the space next to it. Gradually the little town began to compete with the earlier town of Aetna Mills.



**ORIGINAL HOTEL IN ETNA—BUILT IN 1857**

—Photo Courtesy T. Baker



In 1861-62 a severe flood damaged the rival town to such an extent that its residences and businesses were moved to Rough and Ready. Even the post office was moved in 1863, but it retained the name of Aetna Mills. The swampy region west of the main street was drained and mapped out in conventional blocks and narrow streets. This provided home sites for the growing population.

The northern part of the present town was part of the old sawmill grant. This was purchased by Martin Pitman who combined the old home building with an old school house to make a home for his family. The old home is now owned by one of Mr. Pitman's daughters and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Cummins.

In addition to the sawmill Mr. Pitman built a marble mill in 1874 which was operated by A. C. Adams who owned a ledge of marble about a mile from town. The marble mill supplied many of the early tombstones in the local cemetery.

Next to the Pitman home, Dr. George Furber erected a long, rambling frame building in 1869 which was later known as the "Beehive". The lower floor was used for the doctor's office, a drugstore, and a manufacturing establishment where the doctor produced his famous "Mountain Balm" tonic which was made from tar weed. The second story was first used as a Tem-

perance Hall and later as a dance hall. The Furber family lived in a section of the building which was recessed from the main building.

When the center of business shifted from Aetna Mills to Rough and Ready following the floods of 1861-2, the road to Callahan was changed so that entry into Rough and Ready was made by China Hill (now Callahan Street). The importance of this connection with Callahan was greatly diminished when a road was built from Yreka to Etna in 1854.

Perhaps the most prosperous business to be established in Rough and Ready was the Kappler Brewery. In 1868 Mr. Charles



—Photo Courtesy A. Hammond  
**REAR OF KAPPLER BREWERY—1875**



**"THE BEE HIVE," AN OLD LANDMARK, BUILT 1869** —Photo Courtesy L. Ball

Kappler bought a brewery from P. A. Heartstrand on the east side of Scott Valley about three miles from Rough and Ready. In 1872 Mr. Kappler moved the business to the thriving town of Rough and Ready. Although a fire destroyed the original building in 1875, Mr. Kappler built a larger brewery and greatly expanded his business. An electric plant, built on Johnson Creek Falls west of town, provided electricity to operate a large refrigerating plant. This supplied power for the town until water shortage caused Kapplers to obtain electric power from the California Oregon Power Company. Mr. Kappler had four wagons transporting beer far and near. It is said that his business netted a quarter of a millions dollars annually.

In 1865 Joseph Young and Brother, the Swain Brothers, and George Smith purchased the machinery of the flour mill in Yreka. With this machinery the old flour mill was operated by steam power; however, when the mill was sold to Kist and French in 1872, water power was used again. Later the old mill became a warehouse. Eventually several enterprises were carried on including a Chinese restaurant, a meat market, a newspaper printing office, and even the town's first library.

In 1867 Abisha Swain built the Masonic Hall. The lower floor was used as the post office with Mr. Swain as postmaster. The old flume for the mill ran in front of this building. One year the flume overflowed ruining several sacks of mail. Consequently, the post office had to be moved to another location.

A telegraph office was established in 1869, and an express office in 1878.

Mr. James A. Diggles erected a frame store building across the street from the Etna Hotel. This street has since been known as Diggles Street. In 1880 Alexander Parker and Remembrance Campbell replaced the Diggles store with a large brick building which is now operated by Mr. Parker's grandson, E. B. Parker. For many years, however, this store was known as the Denney Bar Store.

The Etna Hotel changed hands many times until it was purchased by Henry Truett and Isaac Baker in 1876. The hotel was enlarged several times until it eventually had 25 rooms; a dining room, a bar, and several small shops. When Mr. Baker died, Mrs. Baker continued to operate the hotel for several years. The bar was under the management of Fred Herzog during this time. As the years passed by, the old



ETNA MAIN STREET IN 1890

—Photo Courtesy E. W. Herzog



JOSEPH STEPHENS' STORE—BUILT 1881

hotel deteriorated until in 1935 it finally burned. Today the modern, concrete store building owned by Mr. and Mrs. Russell Farrington houses the corner grocery of Minor Cross, the Balfrey Drug Store and the Etna Fountain and Lunch.

Among other early buildings and businesses on Main Street were the George Buchner variety store built in 1878, the Otis Wilsey saloon built in the late 70's; the Emil Miller Hardware store, the James Diggles Drug Store, the Messner Hotel and

bar, the Bryant Building which housed the post office for which Mr. Bryant was postmaster, Bryant's variety store, Martin Marx's law office and saddle shop, and Dave Hyde's barber shop. On the corner of the block, Main and School Sts., was the Nick Schmitt hotel which was a frame building. Across the street was a long one story, frame building which was the Enos Young butcher shop. The rear of this building was the Young home.

Across Main St. were the Davis and Evans blacksmith shop, the Henry Geney Saloon (now Corrigan's), the Robert Wallace blacksmith shop, a cabinet shop started by Louis Fafa and later owned by James Abel (1874). (His shop foreman was Milton Smith, formerly of Crystal Creek.)

In 1881 Joseph Stephens moved to Etna where he bought a general merchandise store from a Mr. Brown. Mr. Stephens' store was a brick structure. For many years Mr. Stephens operated a general merchandise store until his death in 1926; the business was continued by his son Clifford. Recently the store has become the new home of the Scott Valley Bank after considerable remodeling.



—Photo Courtesy A. B. Calloway  
**ENOS YOUNG'S BUTCHER SHOP**  
 Fred Young, Henry Young, Enos Young,  
 and Old Butcher Wagon.

The Etna cemetery is situated a short distance west of town. The site was selected in 1866 and it was laid off into lots and avenues in 1871. Those who selected the site had visions of the beautiful cemetery which is a reality today.

As the town grew, considerable confusion resulted from the fact that the name of the town and the post office differed. The local people began calling the town Etna Mills, the name of the post office. Also, there was a town named Rough and Ready in Nevada County. Consequently, the state legislature changed the name of the town to Etna Mills by the Act of 1874. Four years later, by the Act of 1878, the town was incorporated as a sixth class city. The officers designated by the new city government included five trustees, a recorder and ex-officio clerk of the board, treasurer, assessor, and marshal, to be elected annually the first Monday in May. In the early 1900's the town government was changed to the Mayor-Council form of government. About 1930 the town petitioned the legislature to drop the 'Mills'

from its name.

One of the problems which has been constantly before the town government is that of the water supply. The first water supply was provided by Mr. Charles Kist who had bought the land and water rights to the ditch which came from Etna Creek, in 1865. Mr. Kist built an open ditch which ran through the town to the Rough and Ready Mill and the sawmill.

The fire of 1896 brought home to the people of Etna the need for a better water system. As a result the Etna Development Company was formed. Stock was sold for \$18 a share with a gross capital stock of \$30,000. Mr. Kist was paid \$20,000 for his water right. In May 1896, work was started to improve the ditch and to begin the pipeline installation. Mr. Kist and his brother-in-law, Mr. John Baker, carried on the work of the company.

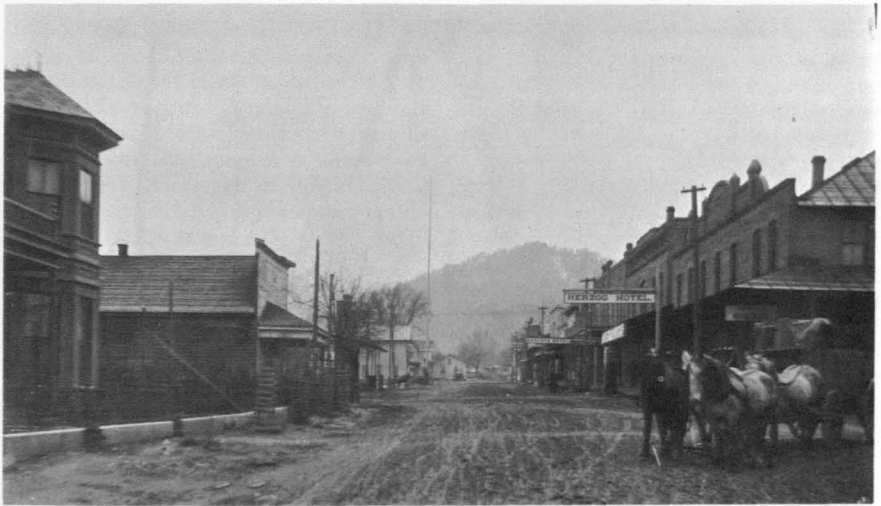
In 1923 the town of Etna purchased the water rights and water supply for \$20,000 in bonds and \$1,000 in cash. One of the hardest problems to solve was that of maintaining an adequate water supply in



ETNA ABOUT 1898

—Photo Courtesy M. Smith Family





—Photo Courtesy E. W. Herzog

#### MAIN STREET IN ETNA ABOUT 1900

summer. This problem has been partially solved by increasing the size of the reservoir.

The creation of a fire department was started in the early part of the 20th century. Two carts with hoses were purchased, one to be installed on the main street and the other in the upper part of town near the high school. A fire bell was purchased with the proceeds acquired by a grand ball in the Odd Fellows Hall in 1896.

A town hall was built in the early part of the century by Eugene Davis who used Independence Hall in Philadelphia as his model. Fire fighting equipment was housed in the lower portion of the building, while the upper story was used for a town council room and library. When more modern equipment was purchased the fire department was moved to the old Evans' garage, its present location.

A weekly newspaper, *The Etna Post*, was started in 1881 by Beers Loos. The paper changed hands many times. Mr. Mike Balfrey moved the printing equipment to the old flour mill and changed the name to *The Scott Valley Advance*. Mr. McCarthy in the 1920's changed the name to *The Western Sentinel*. Mr. Don Avery published the paper later in the basement of

the present town hall. The last editor was Mr. Tony Thomas who moved the printing press to Yreka. Since then Etna has had no local paper.

Money transactions in early Etna were usually carried on among friends with personal notes which had no legal backing. In many cases these notes were never redeemed.

The first bank in Etna was started by A. H. Denny in 1898. This bank was merged with the Fort Jones bank and named the Scott Valley Bank. The Etna bank became a branch with W. T. Young



—Photo Courtesy W. Smith

#### FIRST BANK IN ETNA — W. T. YOUNG



**PARROTT FLOUR MILL—BUILT 1919**

—Photo Courtesy M. Parrott

as manager in 1912. The bank has served the needs of Etna citizens since that time.

The Siskiyou Telephone Company had an unusual beginning. The Dannenbrink brothers, Henry and August, had mining interests on the Salmon River known as

the "Gold Run Mines." After an attempt to establish a line of their own, they quietly bought shares in a telephone company in Fort Jones. Finally, when they had bought enough shares to control the company, they directed that a line be built to Forks of



**GOLD BAR CREAMERY**

Salmon and to the mine. In 1911 the newly created Railroad Commission made exacting demands of all public utilities. It became necessary for August Dannenbrink to establish an office in Etna where he could improve the services of the system. With Frank Boedecker as line man, the telephone system was expanded and improved until the business became a profitable one to which Mr. Dannenbrink devoted the remainder of his life. Today it is known as the Siskiyou Telephone Company.

The peak of prosperity seemed to have been reached about the turn of the century when many fine new homes were built.

The decline of mining in the Salmon area was a severe blow to Etna business life. The trade with the mines dwindled to ghostly proportions and finally faded away almost completely. The town was now dependent upon the nearby farms for its trade. With the improvements in transportation and modern machinery even this market was affected.

New industries were attempted with little success. Among these enterprises was the Gold Bar Creamery which was built in Etna but eventually discontinued. The Parrott flour mill was built in 1919 by Charles B. Parrott and John Johnson. The mill was operated until Mr. Parrott's death in 1927 producing 'Flavo Flour' and grinding feed for farmers. The mill was closed by his son Albert in 1931.

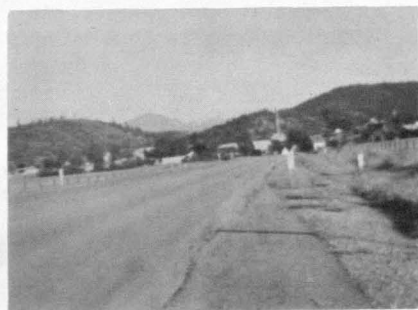
The most successful industry was the sawmill business which was by no means a new industry in Etna. A sawmill was built on the outskirts of town which was later purchased by W. D. Miller. This mill stimulated the business interests of the town. Unfortunately, this mill was destroyed by fire and never rebuilt.

Even the social structure has changed: the Lyceum, the community celebrations on the Fourth of July, Decoration Day, the Christmas programs, the masquerade balls, the traveling shows, and the Chautauquas have given way to more modern amusements.

One of the occupations which has helped to stabilize the economy is logging. Many logging trucks travel great distances into the mountains to transport huge logs to mills in Yreka and other sawmill centers.

Another stabilizing influence is the rich agricultural area and cattle raising industry of central Scott Valley.

In spite of economic set-backs and social changes, Etna is by no means a ghost town today. The fine new highway to Yreka, which enters Etna by Collier Way, offers a beautiful panorama of Etna and the surrounding mountains. Many tourists visit the town each year on their way to the scenic Salmon and Scott Mountains. Another sign of progress is the ever-increasing number of new homes and the modernizing of many of the business locations.



—Photo Courtesy B. Tickner

#### ENTERING ETNA VIA COLLIER WAY

#### THE TENT "PLAYHOUSE"

For many years from 1880 to 1890, a troupe of actors pitched their tents at the rear of the old Baker Hotel and gave nightly performances of highly sensational stage plays.

During the early nineteen hundreds the Chautauqua made annual visits to Etna bringing a variety of entertainment including plays, concerts and lectures. The Chautauqua tents were pitched on the lot next to the library.

In addition, traveling shows played at Maplesden Hall, often for a week at a time.

—Mrs. Grace J. Balfrey



—Photo Courtesy A. Calloway

**THIS PORTION OF ETNA WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE—1896**  
**Barber Shop, Post Office, Bryant's Variety Store, Mick Smitt Hotel**

## The Fire of 1896

The most disastrous fire that the town of Etna has ever experienced occurred March 16, 1896. The cry of fire awoke the citizens about 1:30 a.m. when every able-bodied person rushed to the business section of Main Street where the fire already was consuming the Mani hotel in the center of town. It was believed that the fire had started in one of the old buildings in the rear of the hotel.

After the fire had burned the Mani hotel it spread to Frank Bradley's barber shop and the law office of Martin Marx; it also burned his harness and tool shop in the rear of the building. The James Bryan building including the post office and Mr. Bryan's variety store were next in line. An attempt was made to remove a large safe from the building but the fire fighters were forced by the heat to give up at the door.

The safe contained \$400 in stamps but they could not be saved.

The Schmitt saloon and hotel were a complete loss. David Jones' house next to the hotel on School Street, which was rented to L. A. Moxley as a candy store also burned. Mr. Moxley did get some of his goods out, but he suffered a heavy loss with no insurance.

A great effort was made by the fire fighters to keep the fire from crossing the street. Enos Young's butcher shop was saved by the bucket brigade. The new Kappler home was protected by wet carpets, blankets, and comforters which were kept wet with a hose from the Kappler's water tank which in turn was supplied by a power pump in the brewery.

The porch of Stephens' Store was torn

(Continued on Page 50)



# Etna's Chinatown

China Hill was so called because of the Chinese settlement which was located at its base. At one time there were at least six houses and a store, all huddled very close together.

In the period following the mining excitement, many Chinese were employed on the ranches of Scott Valley as cooks because each ranch hired a number of men to carry on the farm work. By hiring Chinese cooks the work of the housewives was lightened, for these women not only had large families to care for, but also large houses to maintain.

At one time the Federal government required that all Chinese in this country be registered. As a result, about a hundred Chinese came to Etna to be registered.

One evening while the Chinese were absorbed in playing fantan, several mischievous boys slipped into the room unnoticed. One boy went along the row of Chinamen and tied a loose loop in their

ques while another boy followed along with a sharp knife and cut the ques in the loop. Great was the consternation and clamor when the boys were discovered. Perhaps a more rapid retreat has never been made by escaping small boys.

Boys of the town who seemed to have nothing better to do, often amused themselves by stoning the roofs of the Chinese houses. It was great sport to see the inhabitants rush from their homes uttering loud invectives. Yet, at Chinese New Year's time the Chinamen would distribute large quantities of Chinese candy, nuts, lilies, and best of all, fire crackers!

One of the most interesting denizens of Chinatown was "Chinee Mary" as she was commonly called. She and her mother "Old Susie" were the only Chinese women in the community, hence they aroused much curiosity. These women dressed in the oriental fashion, perhaps causing many women to

(Continued on Page 31)



CHINESE NEW YEAR—1898  
Boy on right, Albert Bradley.

—Photo Courtesy L. A. Ball



—Photo Courtesy Isaac Sovey

**PICTURE TAKEN IN FRONT OF BLAKE HOTEL**

Left to right: George Morgan, Peter Blake, Isaac Sovey, Rose Quigley, Lettie Lewis, Polly Blake, (next three unknown), Mike Blake.



—Photo Courtesy Isaac Sovey

**DINING ROOM AND LOBBY OF HOTEL BLAKE**

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Holzhauser, Proprietors, about 1940.



(Above) DENNY BAR STORE — 1902  
Left, Groceries and Hardware; Right, Dry Goods.

Left to right: John Adams, next two drummers,  
Abe Bar, Jr., unknown, Flora Pitman Tidball,  
Abe Bar, Sr.

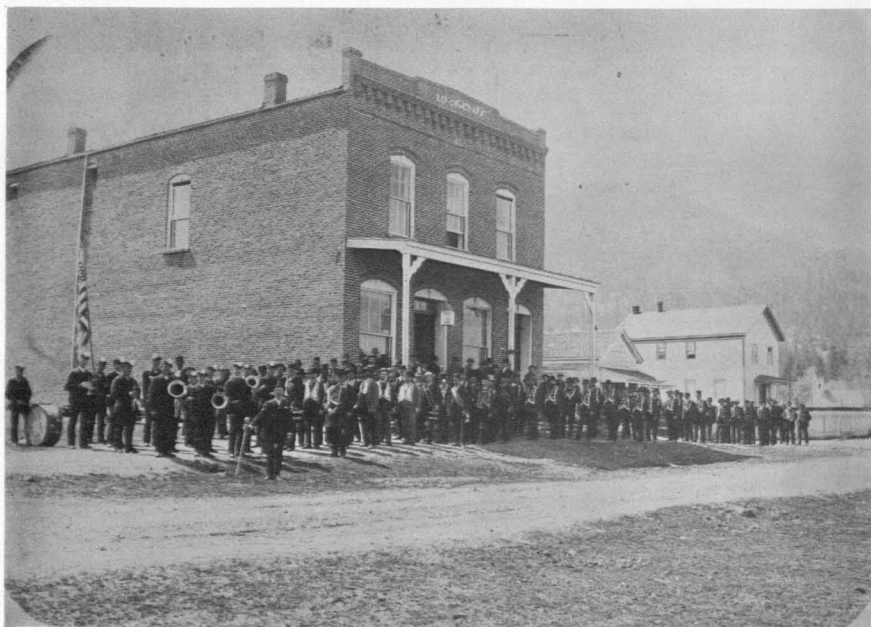
Second Floor—First High School (1892) and  
Lyceum.



(Right) THE INTERIOR OF DRY GOODS SECTION  
OF DENNY BAR STORE

Clerks: Abe Bar, Jr., Rose Crandall, Marguerite  
Geney.

—Photos Courtesy Lois Cummins



—Photo Courtesy Eller Family

The three buildings are the I.O.O.F. Hall, Senator Collier's birthplace and the first school building in Etna.



—Photo Courtesy Isaac Sovey

#### **SPUD BEING TAKEN TO DREDGER NEAR CALLAHAN**

Six horses required to pull it. The buildings are Young's Butcher Shop, Shoe Repair Shop, Geney Home, Bakery and Millinery Shop (now Campbells), and Pitman Stable. Left to right: Melvin Naylor, R. P. Strassburg, Isaac Sovey, Charley Wilcox, Valley Sweet, Marcus Isaac.



**NATIVE SONS AND DAUGHTERS ENTERTAINING OLD TIMERS, JUNE 26, 1907 AT OLD SCHOOL HOUSE IN ETNA.** Left to right, back row: Mrs. Irene France, Mike Slater, Tom Taylor, Mrs. Hellmuth, Mrs. James Diggles, Mrs. Short, Mrs. Dobinson, Mrs. Hayes, O. V. Green, Mrs. O. V. Green, Mrs. Nancy Potter, Mrs. McBride, Mr. Thomas Potter, I. B. Reynolds, L. S. Wilson. Seated on steps: Mrs. Caroline Horn, Mrs. M. B. Pitman, Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Balfrey, Mrs. Taylor, Hiram Wilson, M. F. Barnum. Third row: James O'Connor, Milt Cummings, Ensign Smith, John H. McDaniels, Elias Smith, John Woods, Mrs. Hanson, Mrs. Charles Holzhauser and son August, Mrs. Charles Kappler, Mrs. W. H. Richardson, Mrs. Hiram Wilson, Mrs. Mathewson, Mrs. Hockaday, Mrs. Lincoln, Mrs. Maplesden, Mrs. Payne, Charles Holzhauser, Mrs. Allison, John Messner. Seated in front: Hans Hanson, Mrs. William George, William George, Mrs. Hovendon, Mr. Hovendon, Mr. Meamber, Mrs. Meamber, Mrs. Ficken, Mrs. John Neilon, Mr. John Neilon, Mrs. Griffin.

—Photo Courtesy Mrs. Lottie Ball

## ETNA'S CHINATOWN

(Continued from Page 27)

blush in embarrassment to see a woman wearing trousers.

"Chinee Mary" had a very kind heart and she seemed to know that the loud talking which emanated from the Chinese houses was frightening to small children. She would personally conduct such children safely beyond the houses.

The large sleeves of "Chinee Mary's" blouse were very convenient on many occasions. She had two wire-haired terriers which were very skillful in catching chickens. She would approach the dogs when they had made a "catch," scold them loudly, and bend down presumably to chastise the

dogs, but the chickens seemed to find their way into her large sleeves.

In the early part of this century the Chinese left the valley. Only a few remained as cooks in the hotels, restaurants, and on some of the neighboring ranches.

Thus "Chinee Mary" moved to Yreka where she lived until she received word from China that she had inherited great wealth in her native land. When she departed from Yreka it is said that she was beautifully dressed in rich Chinese garb.

Today nothing remains to remind the passers-by of the Chinese settlement. Even the name China Hill has been supplanted by Callahan Street.