

Coarse gold



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Madera County

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COARSEGOLD

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Recp. 1

DEDICATED
TO ALL
WHO, THROUGH THEIR LOVE,
LABOR AND FAITH, HELPED
TO MAKE COARSEGOLD THE
DELIGHTFUL HAVEN IT IS
TO-DAY.

Lita J. McFarland
1938

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COARSEGOLD AS IT WAS IN 1880

LOCATION

Nestled peacefully in the foothills of the snow capped Sierra Nevada Mountains lies Coarsegold, well named for the fabulous wealth of coarse yellow gold taken from its creek beds and hills. It is approximately thirty-five miles from Madera and forty-five from Fresno, while a matter of about fifty-eight miles separates it from Yosemite Valley and its attractions. Its elevation is around 2250 feet.

An item of interest is the fact that it lies in the very center of our glorious State of California.

It came to life in 1850, a year after the news of the gold discovery in California had been clarioned forth.

The first road to Coarsegold passed through Buchanan and along open country now known as Raymond. Later, Coarsegold was the main connecting

link between the outer world and famed Yosemite Valley.

At first the old six horse stage coaches, obliged to change horses many times a day, pushed their plodding way over the rough, dusty, winding mountain roads, giving the travelers an added thrill of wonderment as to just what might be lurking around the next bend.

When they hove in sight of Coarsegold, a general feeling of well-being was experienced for here awaiting them were lunch, rest and a chance to shed some of the accumulated dust before continuing on their way to Wawona ere night closed in.

Later when the Southern Pacific extended a branch line to the small town of Raymond, tourists came in Pullman Coaches, staging it from there.

To-day luxurious auto buses, many a day, from Fresno, follow the new highway so near completion.

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out { Even with them, the old traditions are followed and the many tourists from all parts of the world are allowed the chance to alight and take in the beauties of our mountain town. }

out { Let us not overlook, due to its location, the many ten and twelve mule teams, their jangling bells announcing their approach to stop overnight at the large corrals on their way to and from the Sugar Pine Belt. } *out*

Picture
missing
(1996)

COARSEGOLD IN 1903 DURING
A FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

HISTORY

About 1850 one Charles Michael, of German descent, found his way to the alluring site where Coarsegold now stands. He deemed it a most desirable spot for a home, so took a squatter's right and later homesteaded.

At this time there were around fifteen hundred miners (white men) placering along the main creeks later named Coarsegold due to its generous offering of coarse golden nuggets.

When California and gold became synonymous, in 1849, many of these gold seekers traveled the Kit Carson trail to Yuma, then followed the Government Posts to El Tejon Pass in the Coast Range Mts. From there the missions pointed a guiding finger for further progress until old Fort Millerton in Fresno Co. ^{with} was reached.

Here the gold seekers separated, some following the San Joaquin and its tributaries to the Fine Gold creeks; others, the Fresno River and Coarsegold Creeks.

Charles Michael, a shrewd business man, saw a golden opportunity along other lines so established a small settlement about a quarter of a mile beyond the present site, referred to today as the "Old Place".

In those days, all merchandise was bought in San Francisco and shipped to Stockton. From there bull teams or horses made the long journey down the hot San Joaquin Valley, branching off ^{on} to the rough mountain roads ^{which lead} to their respective trading posts.

Later when the white miners had taken the pick of the rich deposits, the Chinese followed in hordes, cleaning up what the whites had left or overlooked.

About 1870, John Krohn, head of the Krohn family of to-day, traveled through on his way from San Francisco to Crane Valley, to invest in a large grist

About this time a road from Madera to Coarsegold and Yosemite Valley was completed. It was called the Washburn Stage and Turnpike Road.

To commemorate its completion and also celebrate the opening of the new hotel, a large dance was given.

That night Michael died but unselfish as always regarding anything that pertained to the welfare of Coarsegold, his last words were, "Let the dance go on," so the news was suppressed until the following day.

Among some of the notables whose names may be found in old registers are first of all, General Grant, 1880. Many who were small boys then remember the General's coming, and the generous gifts he gladdened their boyish hearts with.

One incident bears relating as it pertains to our present Clerk of the Coarsegold School Board, G.A. Krohn.

Just as General Grant was taking off on the stage for the Valley, Krohn, then a lad of seven years, already showing indications of his present business

acumen, handed Grant a beautiful cluster of grapes.

The General tasted a few, then immediately exploring in his pocket, produced two and one-half dollars in silver which he gave to the expectant lad.

Other visitors were:

Leyman E. Gates, Holyoke, Mass. 1882.

J. J. Gladden, first maker of barbed wire, DeKalp, Ill.

Frances E. Willard, noted woman educator, Chicago, Ill.

^{C. A.}
A. C. Coolidge, Prof. of English, Harvard, 1883.

Lillian (signed plain Lillie) Langtry, of operatic fame,
London, England.

August 13, 1883, ^{in case of the} the following guests had a real thrill by being held up and robbed close to the Devil's Cave, near Inspiration Point, Yosemite Valley.

Geo. H. Webb & Wife,	Louisville, Ky.
R. M. Johnson,	Fort Smith, Ark.
H. H. Roy,	Buffalo, N. Y.
Miss Jennie Roy,	Buffalo, N. Y.
Wm H. Clayton,	Fort Smith, Ark.
Capt. N. B. Murray,	England.

1880 also marked the advent of another pioneer family to the Coarsegold Hills, the McFarlands. (The writer's husband, Samuel J. McFarland was then a lad of thirteen.)

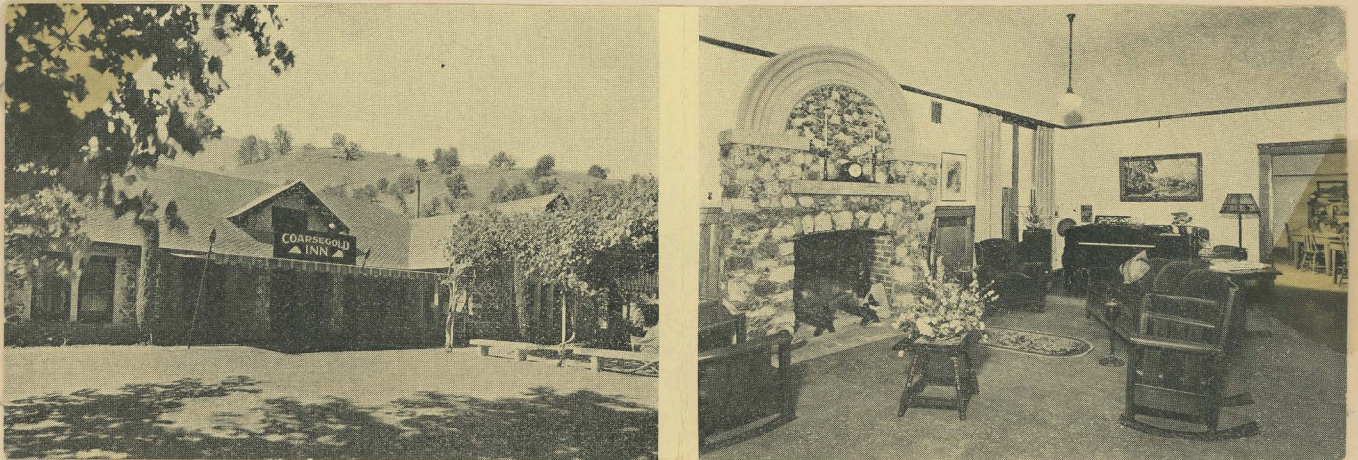
Here again the quest of gold was the great incentive, to be followed later by ranching and stock-raising. A large acreage of the McFarland holdings lies in Coarsegold District adjoining the Krohn Lands.

In 1893, thirteen years later, what is now known as our Madera County seceded from its mother county, Fresno.

In 1895 the name of the Post Office was changed to Goldgulch with Louis E. Krohn as Postmaster, his father, John Krohn, having passed away.

Once again in 1899, Goldgulch was discarded for the present one of Coarsegold, and through the many years since, a member of the Krohn family has been at the helm as Postmaster, (our present one being the able and well-known Wm Krohn.)

The years passed on and Coarsegold enjoyed a peaceful existence until disaster struck in 1927, when the hotel, but recently renovated to meet the needs of the everchanging times, was entirely destroyed by fire. Still holding faith, the Krohn Estate replaced it by the pleasing granite structure of to-day, built to defy all time.



RESOURCES

Coarsegold was given birth through mining activities, first placering which later led to the searching for the veins or lodes which had fed the rich placer grounds and streams. It is now a well recognized fact that these veins are a continuation of the Mother Lode.

The outstanding mine among the many in this vicinity is one known as the Texas Flat. About 1863, The Texas Flat Gold and Silver Mining Co. ^{was} incorporated under a Spiritualistic Organization for \$1,500,000. It was placed under the management of one William (Bill) Henderson. Great wealth was taken from this property alone.

Later it was purchased by George Hearst, father of the present newspaper magnate. After his death, the property passed into other hands. At present it is being operated by Messrs. Hassell and Pell of Los Angeles.

Another mining property of note on the same vein is the Lady Ellen named after the mother of Ed McCardle

well-known abstract man in both Madera and Fresno.

As the mining game began to face a rather chequered career, the old timers saw the necessity of a more dependable resource, and so was ushered in stock-raising, which to-day is the main source of revenue to the many who have flocked to our hills for homes, health, peace, and gain.

The fertile soil is also productive of fine vineyards, gardens, and orchards; the apples being particularly fine in the higher elevations.

Coarsegold District is to be recommended also as a health center.

A FEW EARLY DAY TALES

William Henderson

William Henderson, known as Bill who was manager of the Texas Flat Gold and Silver Mining Co., claimed the distinction of having been the person who actually shot Joaquin Murietta.

Captain Love in his search for Murietta not only not only depended upon his company but wisely called for volunteers from among the citizens. Thus Henderson enrolled and was trailing the bandit with Captain Love when Murietta was shot.

Many years later while swapping yarns at the old saloon, one listener failed to give credence to Henderson's ability with the trigger and in front of a large gathering hinted as much.

Without a word, Bill Henderson walked over to a small cabin he occupied across the creek, and shortly after returned with his gun, a Captain ^{AND} Ball Colt Revolver, which the Krohn family still possess and

cherish as a souvenir of those hectic days. He picked up a small ordinary chip, threw it into the air and fired twice. He then leisurely picked up the chip which bore the undeniable proof of his good marksmanship and silently handed it to the unbeliever who very naturally, had nothing further to say.



WIDOW LEACH AT HOME

May 1

Inset is a picture of an old squaw- known as the Widow Leach. Her buck when a youth was the body servant of one Dr. Louis Leach who followed the trail to the foothills in 1850 or 1851. He accompanied Major Savage as a member and surgeon of the Mariposa Battalion then in pursuit of ^{hostile} Indians. Altho Dr. Leach never actually lived in Coarsegold he was interested in many mining claims here, and was therefore a well known figure.

When later he left altogether, his body servant adopted the name of Dr. Leach and when he took unto himself a mate, true to Indian custom, moved here to live with her people.

The old squaw lived close to a hundred years and some time before her death had grown a third set of teeth, to the truth of which the writer can vouch.

ALAPOLENA, ALIAS SANTA CLAUS

Alapoleno, alias Santa Claus, so called from his long white hair that hung about his shoulders, and his flowing white beard was a Chilean by birth and was known to be an outlaw. Some claimed he belonged to Murietta's gang, others to that of Vasquis.

Legend has it that once when caught in a raid he was tied to a tree to be killed and it was then his hair and beard turned snow white.

When he first arrived in Coarsegold he had with him a beautiful white child. From whence she came or who she was no one could learn for Santa Claus kept his own counsel and his actions were always shrouded in mystery. Later the authorities took the child away from him.

He was supposed to have been the cook of Murietta at one time. Anyway, just so often he would disappear and when he returned he was always well supplied with gold. Where he went, would be

followers could never discover as he was too wise to leave any tell-tale tracks behind him.

After his cache petered out, he spent the remaining years of his life around Coarse-gold busy with either his pan or rocker. He passed away at the County Hospital about 1912.

Inset is a likeness of an Albino child born in these hills to Indian parents. His father, Dick Neal, better known as Chicago Dick still lives although practically blind.

This was the second Albino born to this couple, the first true to Indian belief and custom was promptly disposed of, Evil Spirits being held responsible for such a birth.

This second child might have suffered the same fate had it not been for the great Chicago Fair in 1893, where the Neals were persuaded to exhibit the strange little creature with its white hair and small pink eyes which seemed to contract in daylight.

Those were marvelous days for these Indians, but, alas, when the Fair closed its doors, Chicago Dick and family were stranded, left to shift for themselves as best they could.



FRED NEAL, ALBINO



me
Capt. Lucher. Chief of the Chuck Chana Tribe
and four. ^{and} sons. Subs. Natola Sampatch
and. Pinto.

L.M.K.

SOME OF THE PIONEERS

The Indians of Coarsegold made up a purse
and in due time, they were welcomed home.

The child grew to young manhood, passing
away about 1918.

