

F204-6

ANECDOTE OF "SANDY" BOWERS

(From the History of the State of Nevada, 1881)

In the history of the Comstock Lode a thousand anecdotes could be related—tragic, pathetic, comic. Partaking of the two latter classes is the following of "Sandy" Bowers:

Lemuel S. Bowers, commonly known as "Sandy," was an ignorant, easy-going frontiersman, happening in 1859, to be mining gold in Gold Canyon by the simple process of washing the mineral-bearing earth in a rocker, and as developments continued found that his claim of ten feet covered a portion of the Comstock Lode. Adjoining was a claim of the same dimensions belonging to Mrs. Cowan, who also resided in the canyon and was washing and cooking for the miners. The two married, and the claims became one, proving of extraordinary richness. In a few years they were overwhelmed with wealth. Too ignorant of business, they knew nothing of prudent or cautious investment, and became the tools of harpies. The now-wealthy people were advised—as a good joke—to take a tour through Europe to see the sights and become polished in accordance with the station they were in the future to occupy. They were also advised to build a palace worthy such a party to reside in. Accordingly, in 1861, the Bowers Mansion was commenced in the wilderness of Washoe Valley. Before leaving for Europe Sandy was told that the proper thing to do was to give a banquet. "Banquet goes," said Sandy, and the International Hotel of Virginia City was engaged for the occasion. Every obtainable luxury was ordered which Virginia City or San Francisco could furnish. Champagne was to be as free as water in a spring flood. Everybody was invited. Toasts were drank, and in response to "Our Host," Mr. Bowers was called upon to reply. He arose and delivered the following characteristic speech:

I've been in this yer country amongst the fust that come here. I've had powerful good luck, and I've got money to throw at the birds. Thar ain't no chance for a gentleman to spend his coin in this country, and thar ain't nothin' much to see, so me and Mrs. Bowers is agoin' to Yoorop to take in the sights. One of the great men of this country was in this region a while back. That was Horace Greeley.

I saw him and he didn't look like no great shakes. Outside of him the only great men I've seen in this country is Governor Nye and Old Winnemucca. Now me and Mrs. Bowers is goin' to Yoorop to see the Queen of England and the other great men of them countries, and I hope you'll all jine in and drink Mrs. Bowers' health. Thar's plenty of champagne, and money ain't no object.

Sandy and his wife spent several years abroad, purchased much elegant furniture, laces and pictures for his mansion in Washoe, which was erected at a cost of over \$400,000, and returned, and still "had money to throw at the birds"; the hawks and vultures, and other birds of pray getting the greater portion. Without any good missionary to instruct, or any strong friend to advise and direct he continued to throw his money at the birds with the approval and encouragement of flatterers, sycophants, and robbers, and his princely fortune was wasted. His widow earns a precarious livelihood near the scenes of her former toils and glory by telling fortunes.

L. S. Bowers (Sandy) died in 1868. Persia (the daughter) died in 1876. Mrs. Bowers died at the King's Daughters Home of Oakland in 1903.

Bowers Was Purchased by Henry Riter in 1903, Who Is the Present Owner

MARKING
PROPERTY
OF THE
STATE OF NEVADA
1863
DIVISION OF GEOGRAPHY