

Jessie N. Houser  
Millsbaugh  
Inyo County  
California  
1900-1910



June 1900 God's Country! 1900 HOME!

Jessie N. Fowler on "Pete"



①

MECH 13-1999 262

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Jessie Norris Fowzer on "Pete."  
Millspaugh, Inyo Co, California

This was the early beginning of camp. This was taken by Lou Smith with glass plates and developed by him in "dark room" rigged up in Camp. Tent is where boarding house was later built.

MECH B

1a



Summer, 1900

(1) Miner, (2) Frank Pettipool, (3) Granddad Millspaugh, (4) Dominique Estaborme, (5) "Old Man Davis" (6) Lou Smith, (7) Al Milspaugh, (8) Jessie Fowzer, and "Chap", the dog.

Millspaugh Camp in the making, 1900. For some reason I didn't get in this, probably out climbing hills, nor did the cook, Miss Brice, and her brother from the South. "There's a right smart heap of lath down yonder" he sprung on us one day! Jessie Pettipool of the South Fork took the picture with Lou Smith's camera, glass plates, black cloth and all! "Old Man Davis" owned some of the claims Al bought. The Pettipools were from Onyx on the So. Fork of the Kern River.

MECH 14

2a

the



"In the Beginning" 1900 Millsapaugh, California.  
Inyo County.



2 miners - Granddad Millsapaugh - Dominique Estabarn  
 the Pettipool's were from Onyx. George "old Man" Davis - Lou Smith  
 Jessie Pettipool took picture, she & Mama were friends Al Millsapaugh - Jessie N. Fowler - "Cap"



Mt. Spring Canyon & our place at head of Shepherd's  
Canyon is now in the bombing range of N.O.T.S. Navy  
ordnance Test Station at Inyokern, all our old home country is  
of cloud.

(6)



Guan Andradar's old home, Mt. Spring Canyon 1908  
"Old" George Stiles and Everett York and our teamster.



George Stiles place, Mt. Spring Canyon, 1908

Everett Yokome, teamster. This was originally Juan Andrada's home and his main mine was the Silver Bonanza at the mouth of the canyon. He had an arastra here and used to take the gold flakes after his "run" and made them into round gold balls, pea size on up, called "Chiquaquas". He gave me a marble sized one when I was little. Some one stole it later. I've camped here many times when a kid and later Milo and I did when ever making the trip to Brown and the return trip we made to here, loaded with grub and etc.

MECH 15



The first mill in Millspaugh was built of wood and corrugated iron roof. It had two 1200 pd. stamps and concentrating tables, 3 copper plates for separating, a large ore bin at top of mill and rock crusher, a Fairbanks Morse Steam engine and steam water pumps. A deep well was dug and later a 50' tunnel or drift run from the 50' level, thus assuring a plentiful water supply. Just north of the mill was a well equipped Blacksmith Shop and cupboards for carpenter tools, forge and large bellows, picks and drills, which were sharpened in the stock shed. A large water tank was up oon the hill above the mill. 50 feet in front of the mill to the west was a very large pile of dry yucca wood used for fuel in the fire box under the boiler. I used to fire that boiler when a child and took great pride in keeping the steam up.





yellow metal shot  
↓

K  
P  
C  
→ trail from  
yellow metal  
to K.P.C.  
← wagon to above  
road.

K 1700'  
tunnel where  
road crosses  
draw

assay office   mill   kitchen & dining tent   cook's tent   old men Dave's  
tents   bunk tent

The first Mill Millsbaugh Calz  
1901 burned down 1902

MICH 16-1889-6.5





Bill buried under big  
 rock upon hill

"Gran" & "Bill"

John Carricart in door.

Millsparagh Calif 1901

MICH 17  
 1999.26.18

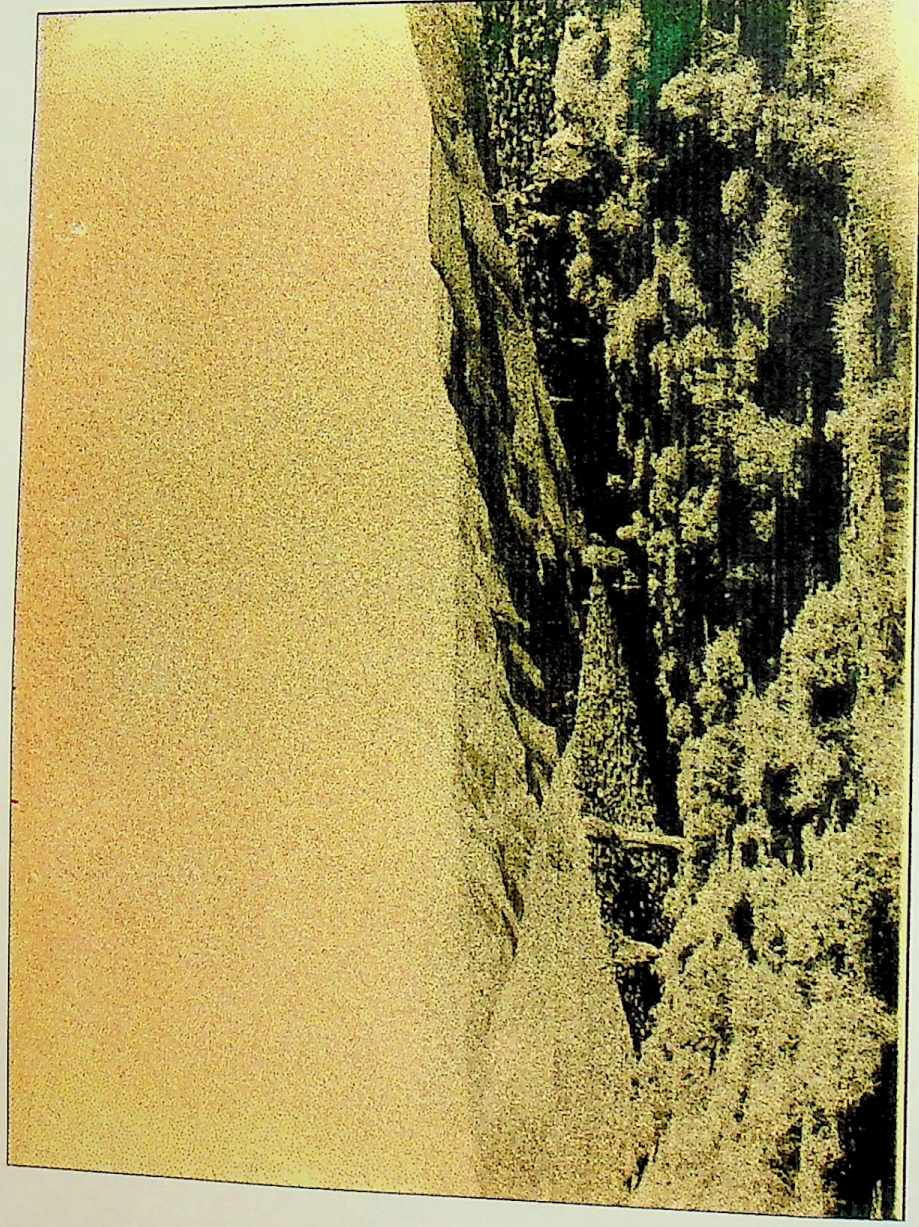
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⑦  
"Recompense Flat" 1905

Taken by Lou Smith with Glass Plate

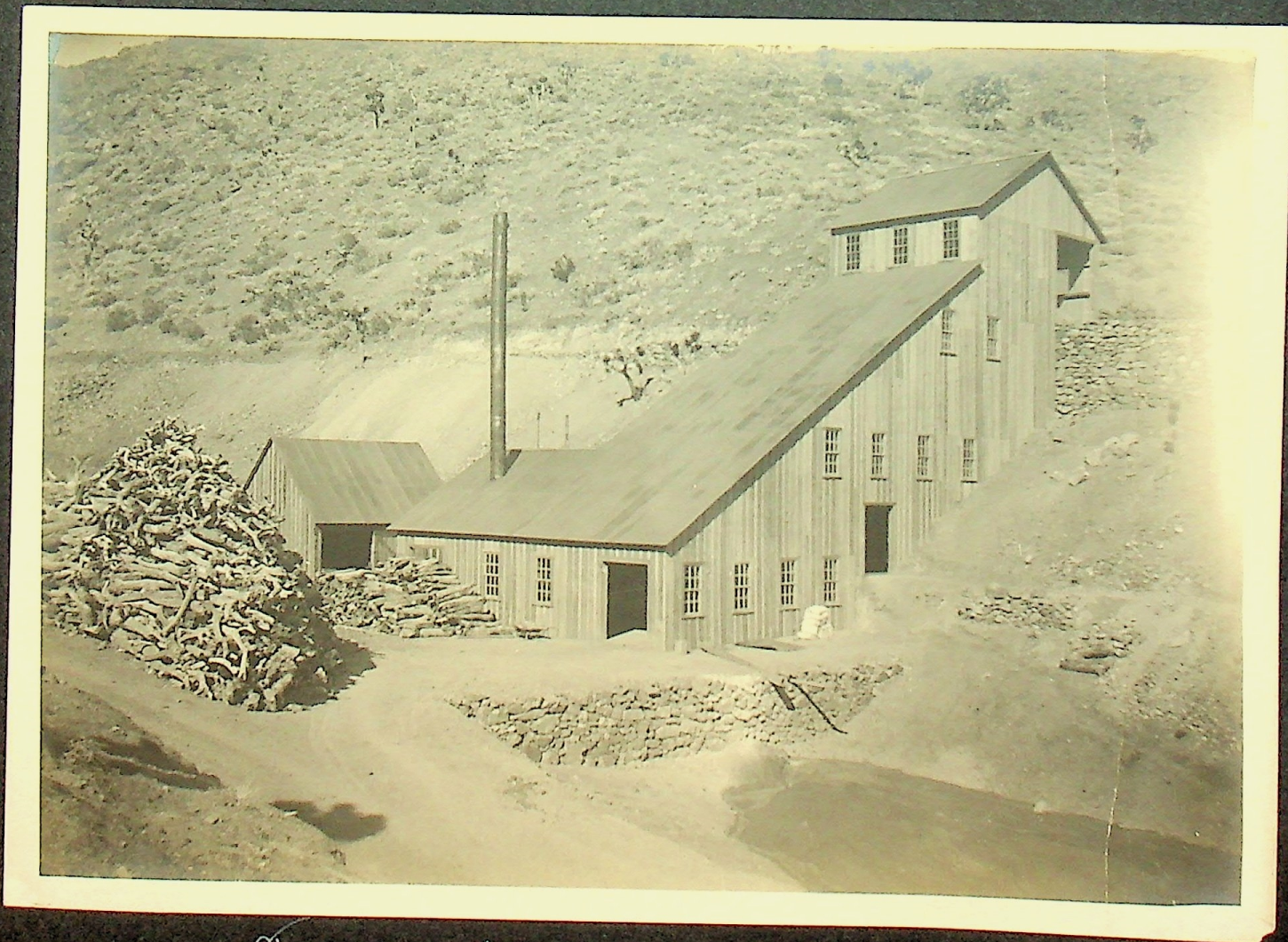
An incline mine shaft sunk 90' in early 1890's — where shade is dark.



Looking across Recompense Flat towards Searles (Trona) south. The canyon in front, deep, is Shepherds — the old road from Millspaugh to Ballarat. This view is taken from top of hill east of camp. Slate Range on extreme left, the highest peak to the right above the flat malapic is Argus Peak and Trona is at the foot where the old Searles Borax Lake Co. used to be — this is a very large dry lake. On the far side of the left is where we found the tin deposit and on the other side of this, not in view, is the Golden Gate Claim — but they all fizzled out. So dreams must come to an end.

⑦





First mill 1901  
+ large yucca wood pile in the center of which fire started

MECH 18  
1999.26.7 (8)



Millsbaugh Caliz and Post Office



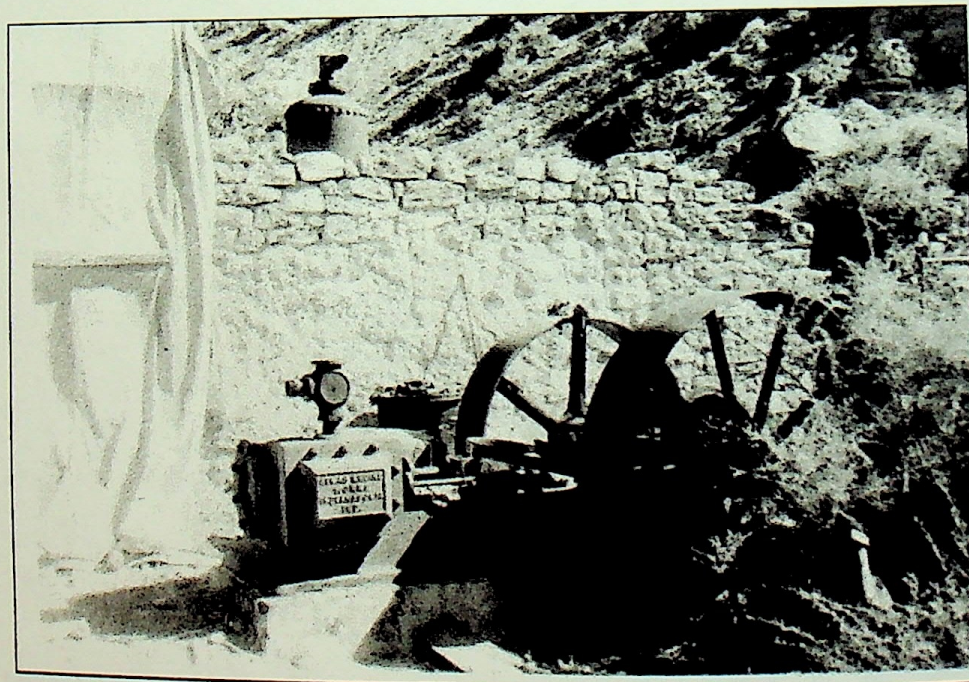
Pat & Mike  
Beck & Jack

"Grandpa" Tapman on driver's seat  
First mill & burned down 1902

1999.26.8  
MECH 19

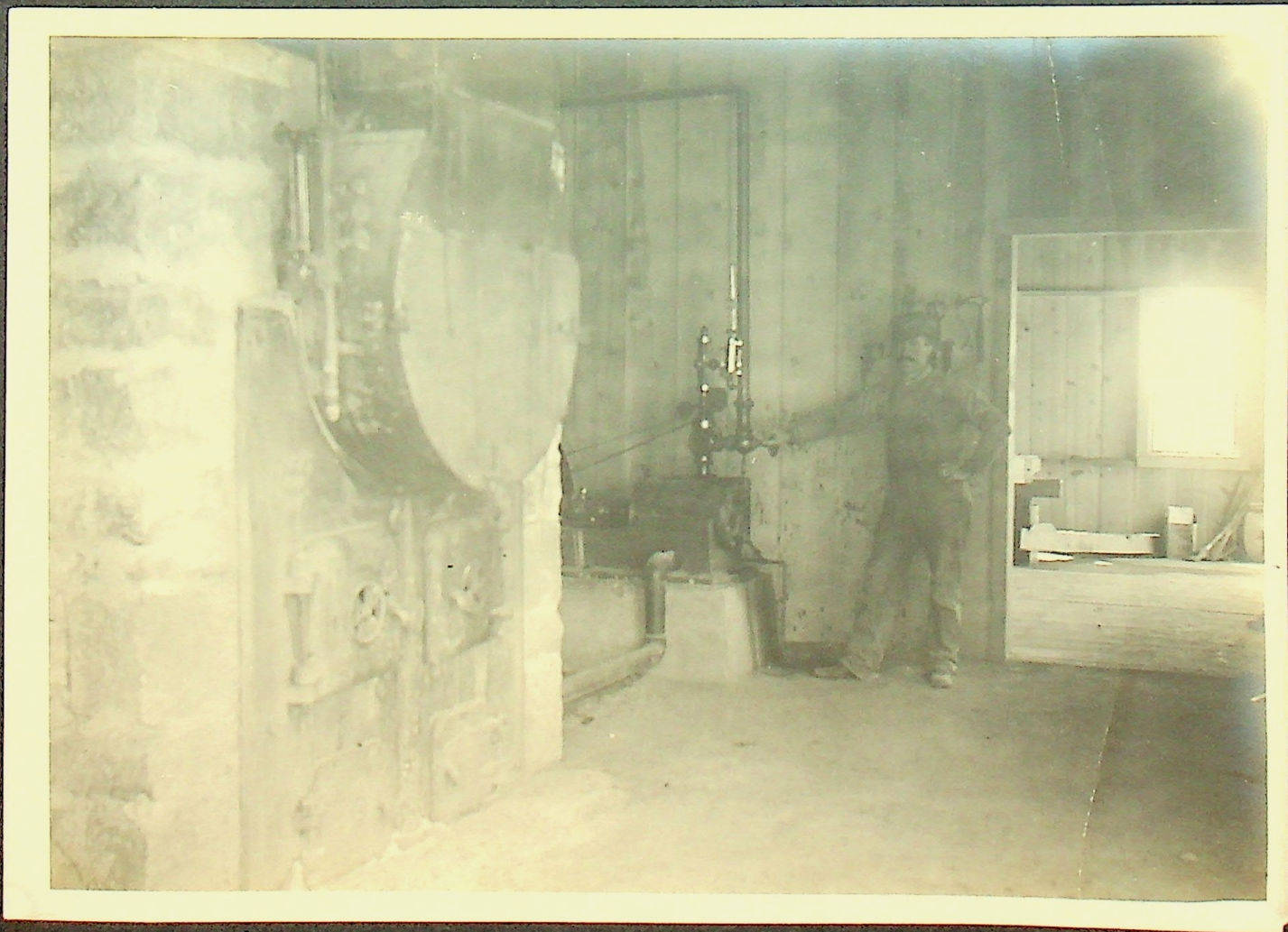


Millspaugh, 1930 Boiler, Pump and Engine



Dick, Bob at our camp there that summer. The junk men could not get the boiler out after working for days. "Grandpa" Millspaugh and Al were expert stone masons and built all our stone walls, etc. in 1901



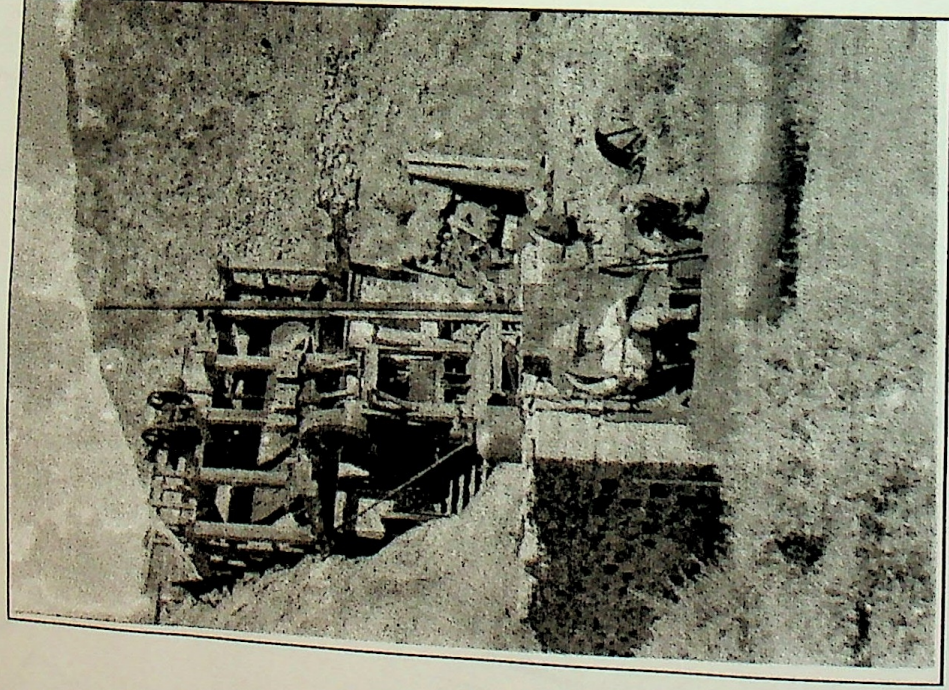


John Carricart - Master of all trades!  
1902                      shortly before fire

1999.26.9  
MECH 20

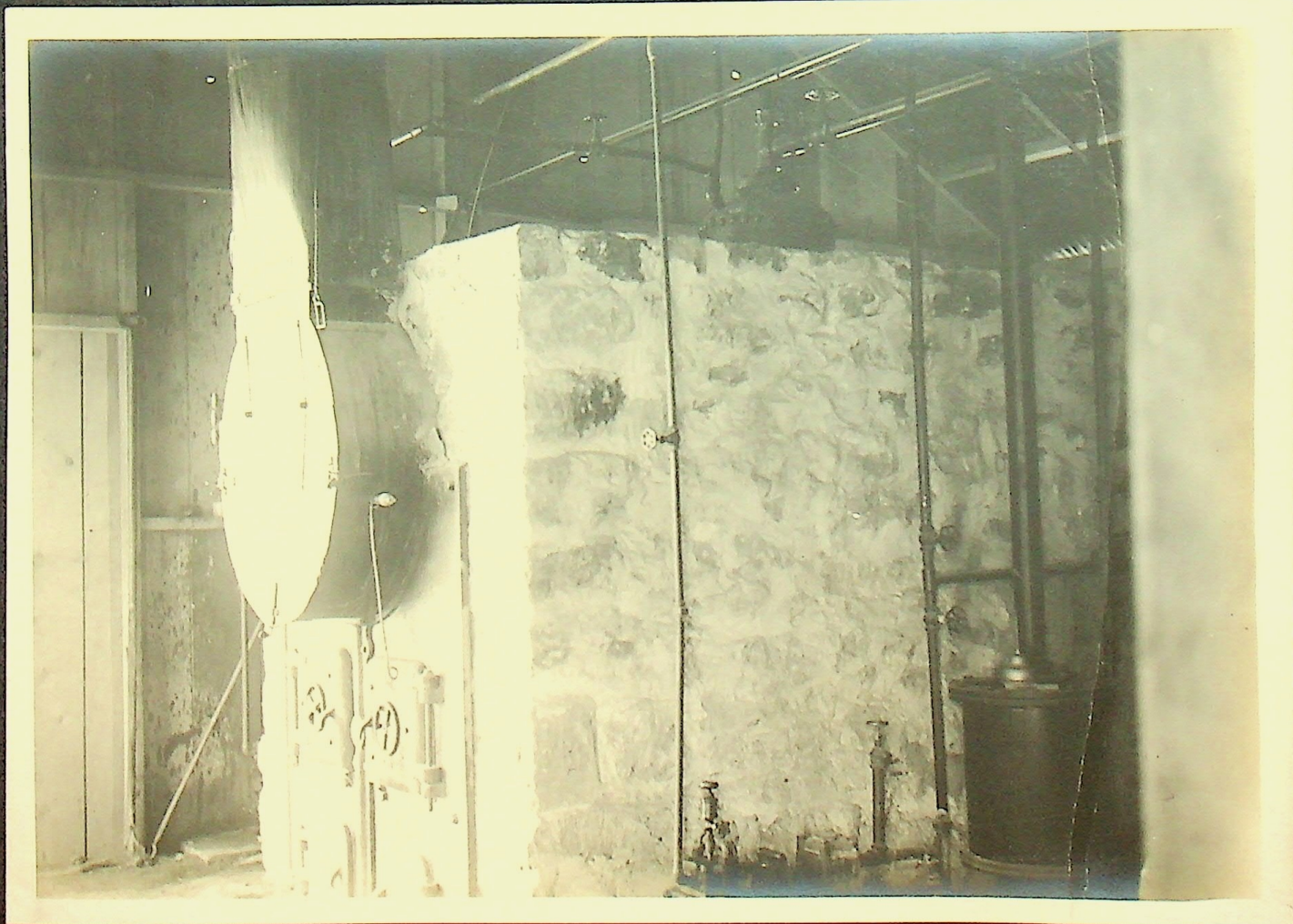


Boiler and Stamps, 1930



Dick and Bob in front of our boiler and "stamps" — 2— 1200 pds each. 2 stamp mill after the cowboys and Milo tore the building down in 1916-17 and we hauled the red corrugated iron to Darwin in our Buick and built our big garage building that Silas Reynolds and Milo were partners in. Gas 35 cents a gal in 50 gal drums and hand pump. Business good and Milo busy making cars run! The tall "stack" in front of boys and the flywheel of the engine in back. I "fired" the boiler when a girl — yucca wood, huge pile in front of mill. 1900's mill built 1901, first one of wood which burned down 1902, and second mill of corrugated red iron siding and roof built 1903. Ore bin at top, road grade, from tunnel in back. Tunnel around the grade half mile to tunnel portal.





1999.26.10  
MECH 21

Boiler room.  
I fired this when we had Mill run & took care of the  
1903-4-5-6. engine & pumps.





2 stamps each 1200 lbs.

Jim Banks - millman  
1902

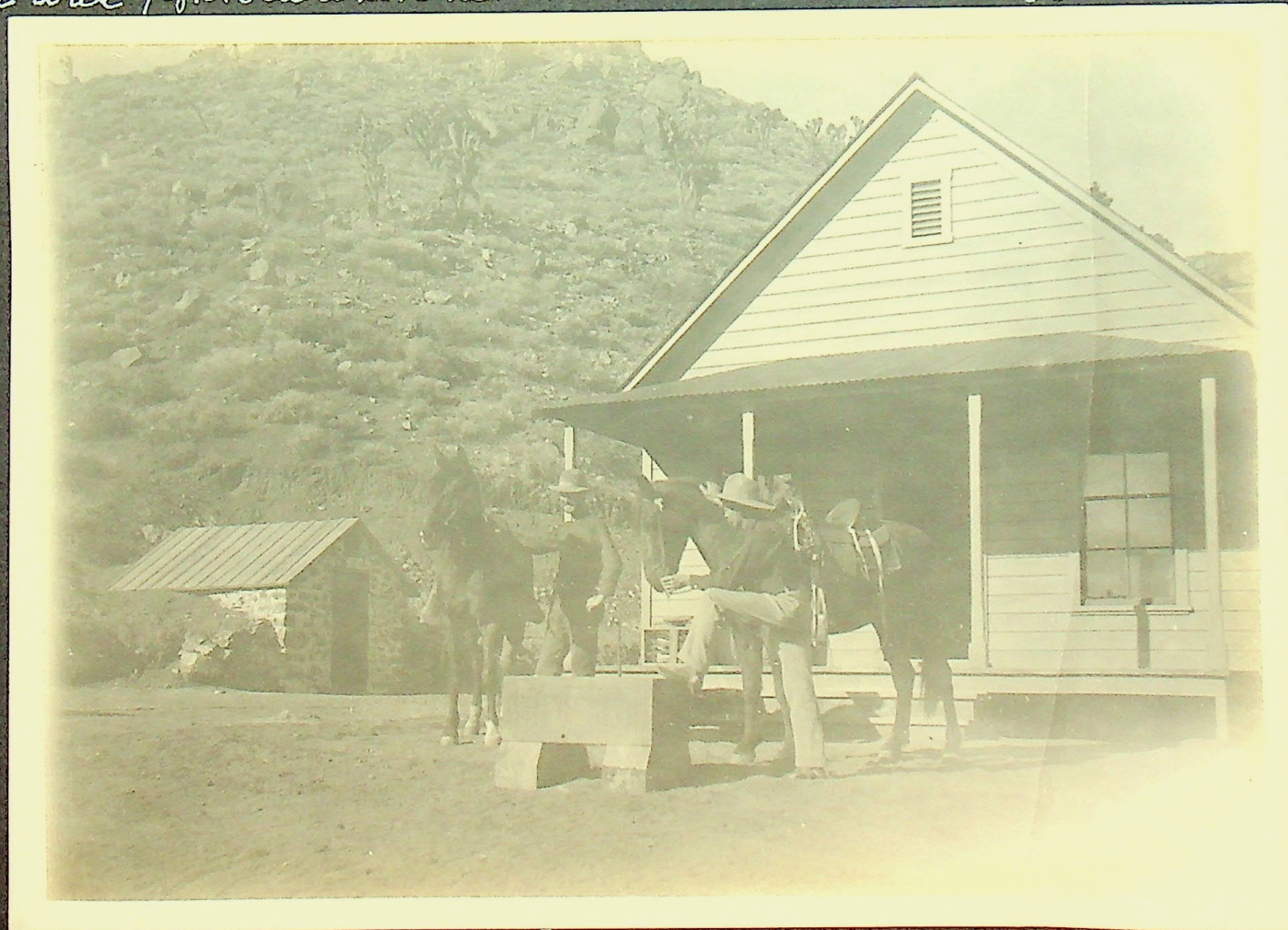
1999.26.11  
MECH22

(16)



"Gerry" was a perfect Spanish broke horse, a rare thing now - was entered in all the Las Flores Fiesta Parades - raised - broken & trained by his owner Andrew Gockine & he was 7 yrs. old when he sold him to us - because of judicial troubles - he

loved me as I did him & would do anything for me. hated Lou Smith, who abused him & one day he could take no more & bucked Lou off, in the corral on to the large rock - hurt his back, no one was sorry and "Gerry" was mine! "Gerry" was short for "Geronimo"



1999.26.12 (18)  
MECH 23

My "Gerry" & Lou Smith. our "Yaqui" & Almon N. Millspaugh  
in front of store & Post Office  
1903





1999.26.13

MECH 24

Al on store porch "Yazui"

"Jerry"  
by assay office 1903 (20)





Jessie N. Fowler  
Postmaster 1901  
Bookkeeper & assayer.

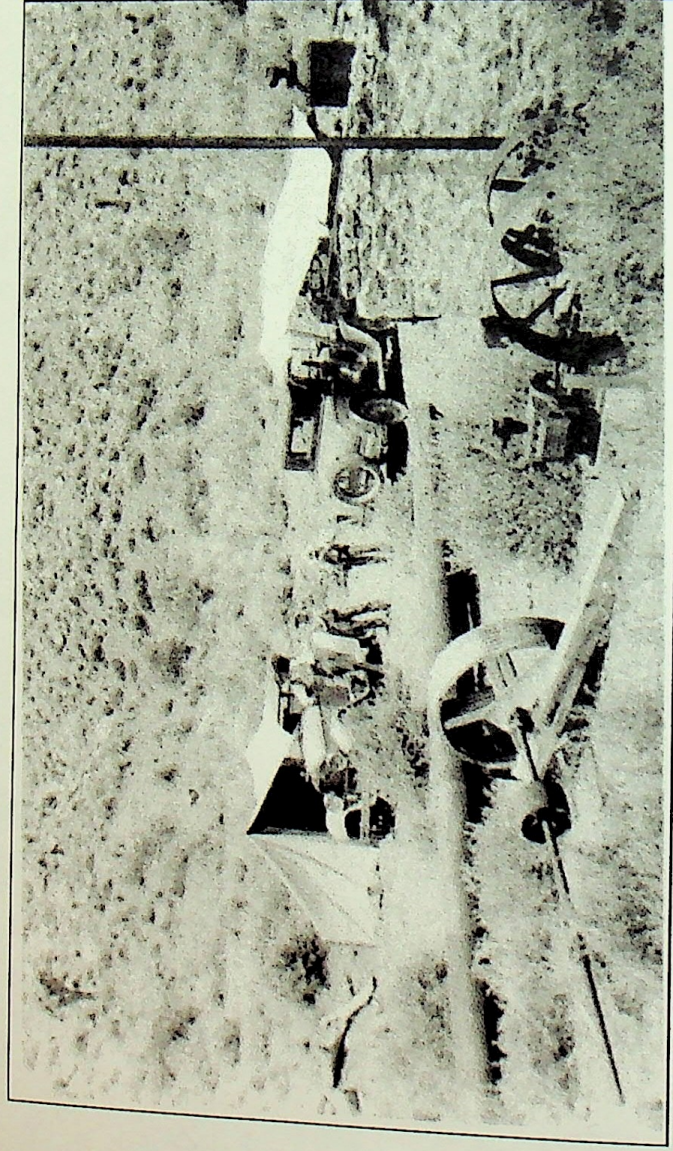
"Bill"

1999.26.14  
MECH 25



23

Camp Millspaugh 1933



Al, Dick, Bob and Me. Relocating Mill Site. We sold the stamps, machinery, etc. to a man in Olancha who rebuilt it as a custom mill. Sage brush is taking over our once beautiful camp 1900 to 1913-14. In the early 1940's Junk men were all over, picking every scrap of iron, even old horse shoes. Worked for days to get our boiler out, but still there — couldn't do anything with the rock walls. We had good masons who built it and all the walls in 1900's. I re-located the Mill Site several times to keep others out, before 1941. After that the Base "NOTS" closed off all our part of the country just out of Darwin — Old Coso, Junction, camp (Millsaugh) and is still closed 1977, a bombing range.





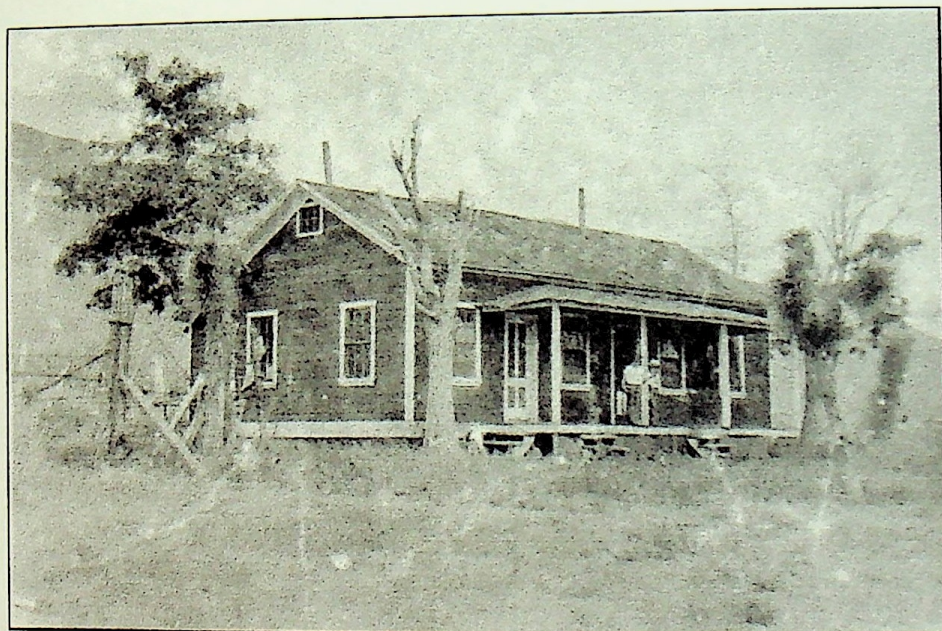
This was called a  
"cozy corner" popular  
in them thar days

Al's room 1902  
my guitar

1999.26.15  
MECH 26



Boarding House Moved to site of Junction House, 1930-32



Dick and Bob on porch. We spent summer here. Jack Byron at Inyo Coso, prospecting. We took water up to him and got his groceries when we went to Darwin. Bev Hunter, old friend from 1900 days, came to round up wild horses. We went along to La Motte springs where his trap corrals were down the flat and to the east — fine springs — on into Water Canyon which empties into Panamint Valley and he took his stock out that way and on to Barstow and shipped east. He didn't care whose horses it was — wild, Indians, and 3 of ours — but could not head them off and they went on down Mt. Spring Canyon and on to Mojave where Mrs. Catlin put them in her corral and wrote us they were there, Jerry, Yaqui and one of Indian George's mules.





1999.26.16  
MECH27

Mama's & my room. 1902





Blacksmith shop

"Bill"

"Bill"

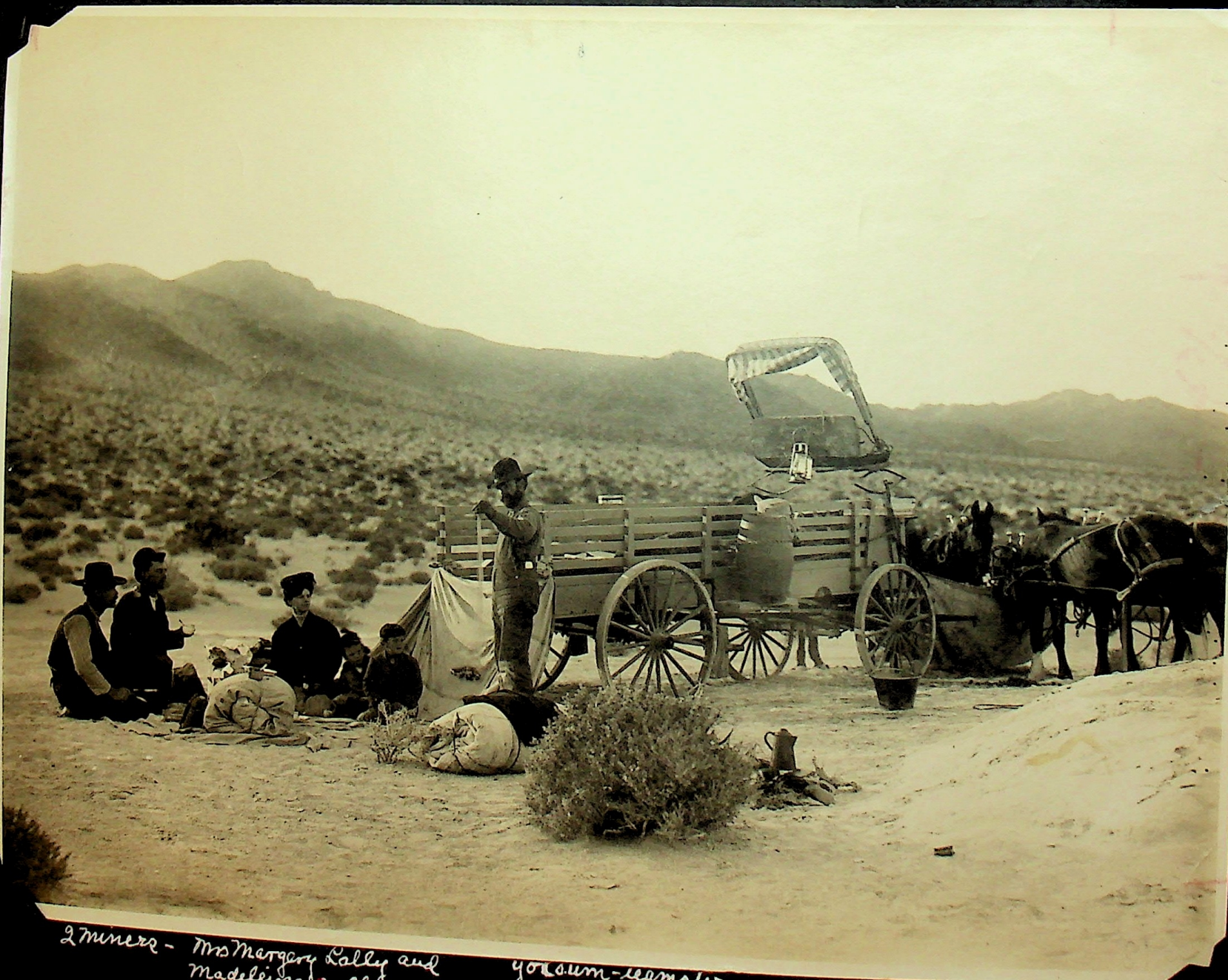
First Mill. John Barricart in door 1901

1999.26.17  
MECH 28



Over night camp at Cow Hells. Indian Wells Valley. 1903

see the  
lizzard  
on the  
canvas  
&  
Yoxoum  
has  
a snake  
he just  
killed  
for the  
kids &  
Mrs. Lally's  
benefit.



2 miners - Mrs. Margery Lally and  
Madeleine - Chauncey?

Yoxoum - teamster  
1903

"Rock & Noway"  
& mules - Pat & Mike



Mrs. Lally and two children, Chauncey and Madeliene, on way to camp to cook. Camped at Cow Wells, Indian Wells valley, January, 1909. Yokoum, a teamster, holding snake, two men on the left are miners.

This picture was selected from the album by Charles Shelton, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 1961 for the "Photo Album of Yesterday's Southwest" published by Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, California and compiled by him. "Camping Memories" — our team and wagon, four animals. Mrs. Lally and the children, Madeliene, 6 yrs., and Chauncey, 8 yrs., were coming up to camp to cook for us, 1909-1910. If you haven't seen Shelton's Album, you should, fine pictures of our glorious days. My history, "Millspaugh, the Beginning and the End", is at Eastern California Museum, Independence, California.

MECH 29



"The Last Chance", 1910

Shepherd's Canyon above camp. Al by the shop, Sweeney dumping bucket.  
"Ida" on whim, "Yaqui" beyond.

MECH 30

30a



"Nearing the End" 1910 This was the "Last Chance" claim -  
 a shaft  
 and it  
 was indeed  
 the last  
 chance  
 the end  
 of camp &  
 12 years  
 of hopes!  
 this was  
 a gold  
 mining  
 privately  
 owned &  
 venture -  
 by Almon  
 N. Millspaugh  
 & brother  
 in-law  
 Oliver G.  
 Bailey of  
 Omaha  
 3 over 100'  
 shafts &  
 one tunnel  
 ran 1700'  
 tapping yellow  
 metal shaft  
 for air shaft



"Yaqui" - "Ida" on whim - 1910 al - Sweeney dumping bucket





1907 Mt. Diablo h. Inyo Co. Calif. 1907-1908  
A good view of camp.  
Summer 1907  
Mama  
Bess  
Al.



A fine view of Millspaugh Camp, 1907. Boarding house on hill to right (now at Junction).  
Mama, "Bess" and Al in front.

Stout and Ervin's team in center of corral. "Mustache" and "Yaqui" in corner. "Dixie"  
and "Chenette" by fence. "Dixie" was "Chenette's" first colt, foaled about March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1907.

Road in center bottom goes down Shepherd's Canyon.

MECH 31



Picture on Left: MECH 32

Bess and "Mona", the dog. Stout and Erwin, miners. Mama (Jessie Fowzer). Millspaugh, California. Assay office to right. Mama brought slips from locust trees from Lone Pine and they grew into large trees. She planted them in 1903.

Picture on Right: MECH 33

Mama going down the road (in shadow, right), "Wolf" scratching; Will Erwin (left) and Bess (right center), and Stout (to right, below Will and Bess). Stout and Erwin were prospectors and miners, awfully nice fellows, far above the average miner or prospector. They drove into camp one evening, went to work next day and were with us for months, both gold miners too. Stout had a fine camera and took many pictures — had an extra horse tied behind the wagon, a well built sorrel with the awful name of "Pearl". I rode her a lot that summer of 1907. This was shortly after Grandma Marshall died, July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1907.

Looking south down Shepherd's Canyon, Argus Peak in far distance. The cloudburst in 1905 filled in the back of the store, etc. Grandma Marshall and I were in Camp alone all that summer.



Store and Post office  
 assay office  
 "Bess & Moma"  
 Stout  
 Thompson  
 1907  
 Quinn  
 Moma



Millersburg L. Inyo Co. Calif 1907

2nd Mill & Curried Plant - mill rebuilt 1907



Millersburg L. Inyo Co. Calif 1907

Millersburg  
 Moma  
 1907  
 Quinn  
 Stout



our Boarding House



"Chenette" + Bess aboard - She belongs to me! 1907



Bess L. Fowzer, Millspaugh, Inyo Co., California  
(Never stand a horse down hill to have picture taken!)

Chenette, my very own horse! Bought and paid for by the sweat of my brow — literally! Packing wood on jacks all summer, September, 1907. I traded my hand made Spanish bit for this fancy coin silver bit — very latest— but did not like it, so traded back to Al for my own.

Grandma Marshall died July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1907 — everyone loved her and how we miss her. Simon Campbell said she made the best apple (dried) pies and cookies he ever ate.

MEC434



Al Millspaugh, , Bess, Will Erwin. 1907 Millspaugh, California

"Rock" and "Rowdy", "Mustache", Yaqui" and "Chenette" and her first colt, "Dixie", (at edge of picture). Me on "Pearl" — what a name for a good sorrel mare!

"Yaqui" and "Mustache" were raised on the Newhall Ranch which branded their stock on the left jaw for the year foaled and "Mustache" had "98" on his jaw. "Yaqui" belonged to Andrew Jockius and carried his brand on left hip, "Chenette" wore a 3 on her left hip, the brand of "Bill Johnson", Indian George's oldest son, Mike Hanson's full brother. They took names then of someone they worked for or who gave them a name. "Mustache" was a perfectly broken saddle cow horse — could do anything on him and to shoot off him he would stand like a statue, and if you missed, would look around you in a disgusted way.

MECH 35

346



AL. BESSON PEARL - WILL ERWIN



1999.20.27  
MECH 35

Sept. 1907

"Rowdy" & "Rock"

"Mustache" - "Yaqui" - "Chenette"  
+ Dixie 6 mo. old.  
1907





Me on "Pearl" and  
my companions  
in the corral!  
Aug. 1907

1907 Aug 15  
H. S. ...



Millspaugh, Inyo Co., California, 1907.

Bess on "Pearl". In the corral, "Chenette" and "Dixie" — "Rock and "Rowdie",  
"Mustache" and "Yaqui" in the middle.

MECH 36



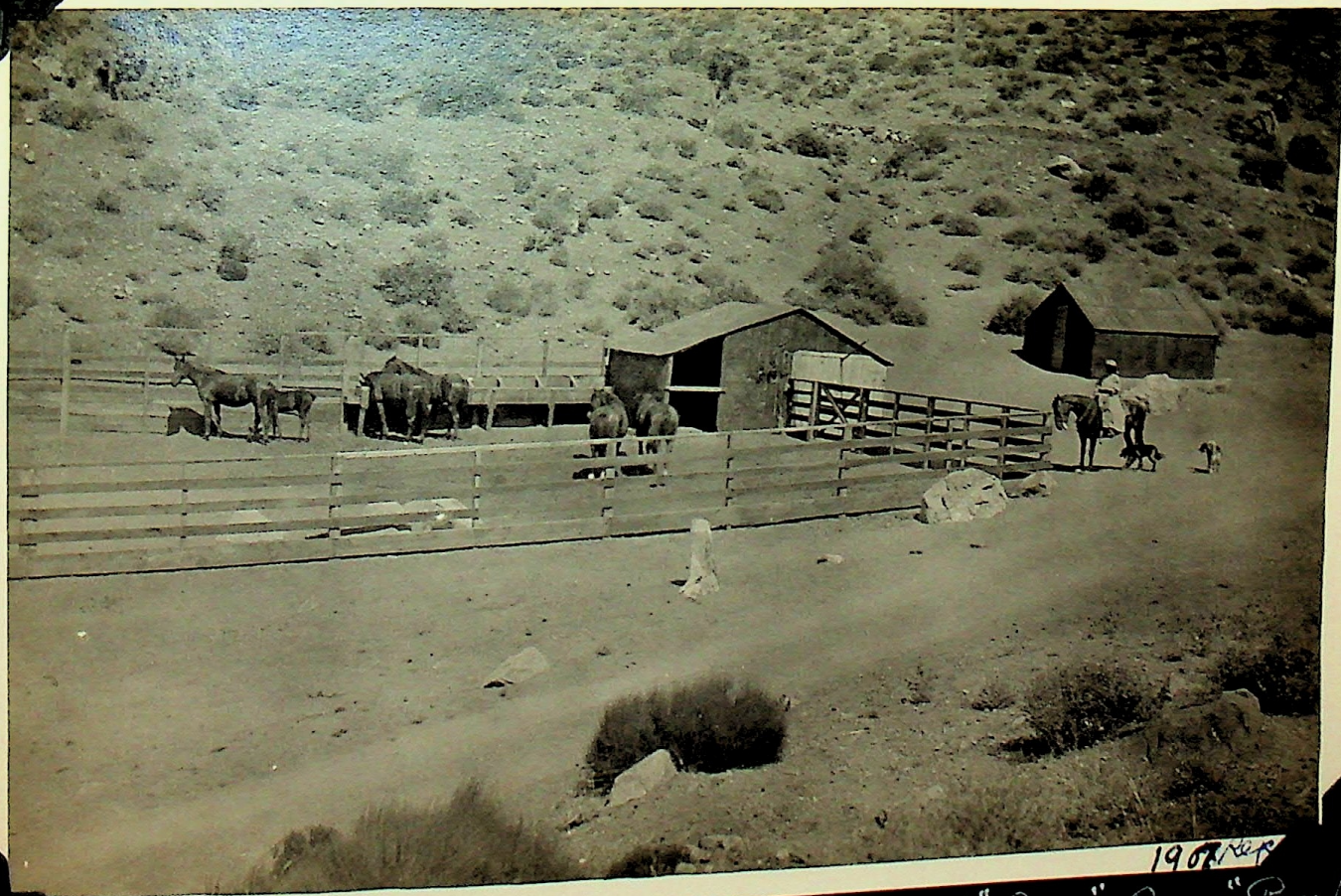
Millspaugh, California, 1907

Chenette and Dixie, Yaqui, Mustache, Rowdy and Rock, the last 2 our new team.

Me on Pearl again. Dogs — Mona and son Wolf. Mona's grandmother was a coyote and we got her when a little pup from Mr. And Mrs. Raymond at Coyote Holes.

MECH 37





1907  
 "Lohennette" - "Dixie" "Yaque" - "Mustache" - "Rowdy" & "Rock" - "Bess" & "Pearl"  
 "Mona" & "Holly" - her son.



• JUL • 59



• JUL • 59



MECH 38  
1999.26.27

MECH 39

1999.26.28

All that is left of my loved home.

Beautiful Millsbaugh  
I am the last one.

July 1959

37



All that is left of Millspaugh, July, 1959.

MECH 38 MECH 39



Mecham's Coso Keyes Gold Mining Co. 1910

Road into Coso Keyes Camp (Dad's) from old Coso Rd. and the one on up the hill was to the mine Dad Mecham and Bill Keyes — former partner of Scotty's — came through here on a prospecting trip in 1908. Bill had these claims, a deal was made and Dad called the property after Keyes. In 1909 camp was set up and shaft sunk. Milo came out to be with his dad and it was the summer of 1909 I first met him at Frank Howard's ranch where I had gone to collect some money and Milo came to get a horse from Frank. He rode home with me to get his mail. I was home for the summer and went back to Los Angeles in September not knowing our "fate was sealed". A year later we started "keeping company". He and Lonnie and Mrs. Lally had good times together and in 1911 Lonnie and Mrs. Lally were married. Lonnie and Margie "stood up" with us when we were married in Independence, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1912.

MECH 40



"Mustang"

mine

cool tent

our tent



Corso Keyes Gold Mining Co. - Inyo Co. Calif. 1910

1999.26.29  
MECH 42

Mecham's Corso Keyes Gold Mining Co. 1910  
note the International car truck in front of tent  
2 cylinder engine under the seat - built like a wagon.  
with out the tongue.





Goes Reyes Mining Camp - 1910

Imperial Co. Cal

1499.26.30  
MECH 41

Looking down on camp. towards Old Gozo Road, 1910  
From "Mustang" shaft.



### Dad Mecham's Camp

Milo and I lived here after we came back from the Mts. on our honeymoon—  
stayed from August to November. Dad and Mother Mecham were with us and Lonnie  
Lee was working, then they went to Oakland and we and Lonnie worked for awhile and  
Theo Petersen came over to work, but no money came, so we shut down and went over  
home, Millspaugh.

Cook tent in the center, and Dad and Mother's tent to the left.

Later we put ours up; floor and walled up under the big yucca tree under the  
arrow. This is looking north and road out to old Coso road goes up and over the flat hill  
in right center.

MECH 41



This was the shaft just above camp. Milo ran the hoist (gas engine) and Lonnie sent up the buckets. Not much paying ore so the folks left for Oakland in September and Milo and I closed camp down in November, 1910, no "dinero" coming through.

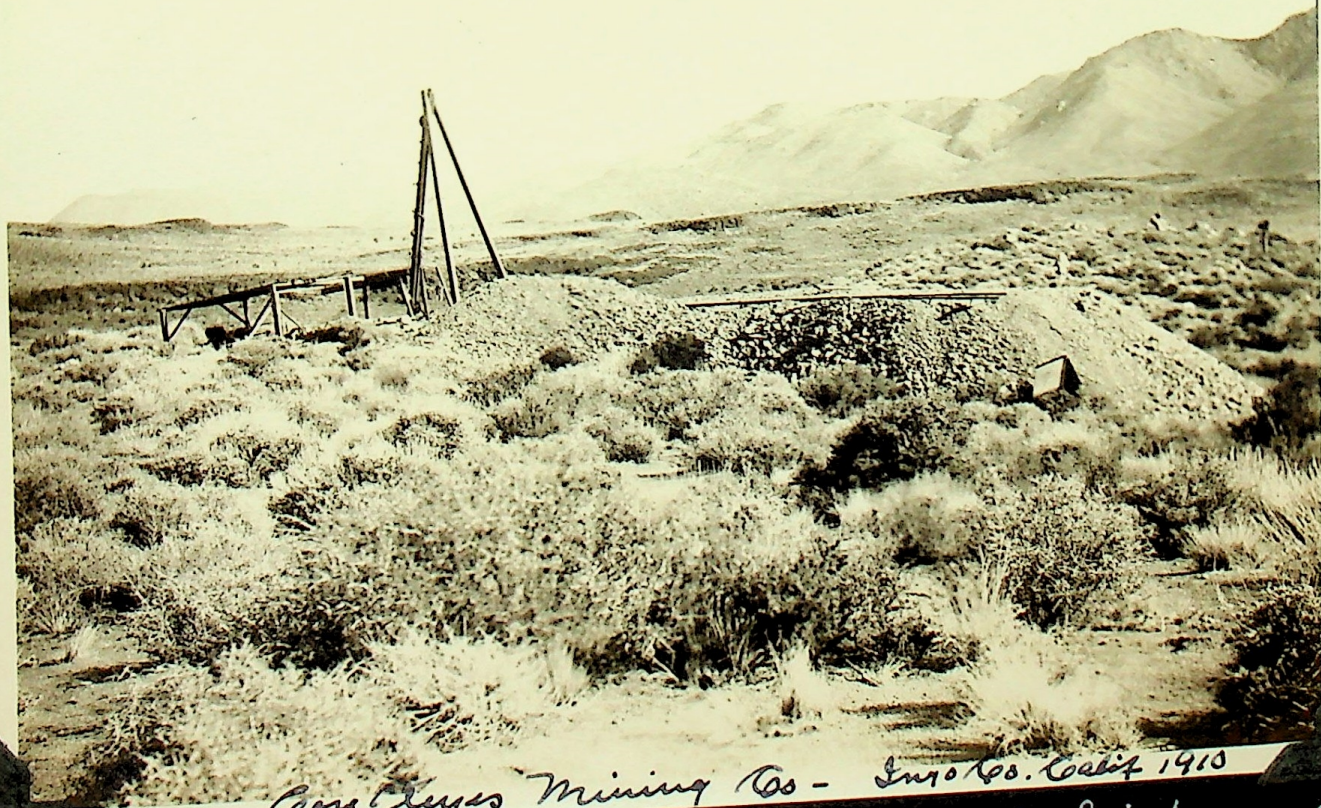
Went over to Millspaugh and stayed with Mama and then we three drove to Los Angeles and Milo and I went by boat to Oakland, 1910, in time to have a grand family Christmas dinner with all the Mecham's except Jessie and her son, Richard, who couldn't make it from Washington.

This is looking south. One noon Mother Mecham was taking Milo's lunch up to him and in front of her a rattle snake was coiled. She yelled and turned back and there was another crossing the road — then she really did yell! But Milo couldn't hear with the engine running — I did and rushed up to "rescue" her. That did it — she wanted to go back to civilization!

About 2 miles right in back of the gallies frame is Sand Canyon and the Indian Writings.

MECH 42





1999.26.31  
MECH 42

Goss Reyes Mining Co - Inyo Co. Calif 1910

"The Mustang". Looking south east. Milo ran the hoist - gas engine  
Lonnie Lee was down in the shaft. Louisiana ~~Box~~ to right.





MECH 48  
1999.10.22



Millspaugh, 1908

Flat rock with Bench Mark, 6,157 ft. altitude just below well in lower center of picture.  
Madeleine Lally, 6 yrs old, by the well, with teamster Yokcum.

Boarding house at right on hill. In front, a miner, "Mona" (dog), Jessie N. Fowzer, Al  
Millspaugh, Chauncey Lally, 8 yrs old (between Al and his mother). And Mrs. Margie Lally.

Store and assay office by big cactus wood pile.

In center, second mill, with two 1200 pd stamps, concentrating tables; first mill of bat and boards  
burned down April, 1902. Second mill with cyanide plant added built with red corrugated iron. Stamps  
and block (battery block) were not damaged in fire and used again in 2<sup>nd</sup> mill.

Lonnie Lee and miner by tents.

Grade from summit on left above tent. Road at right corner of corral down Shepherds Canyon —  
sharp pitch just below corral and joins old original road from summit down sharply into canyon; goes to  
Ballarat.

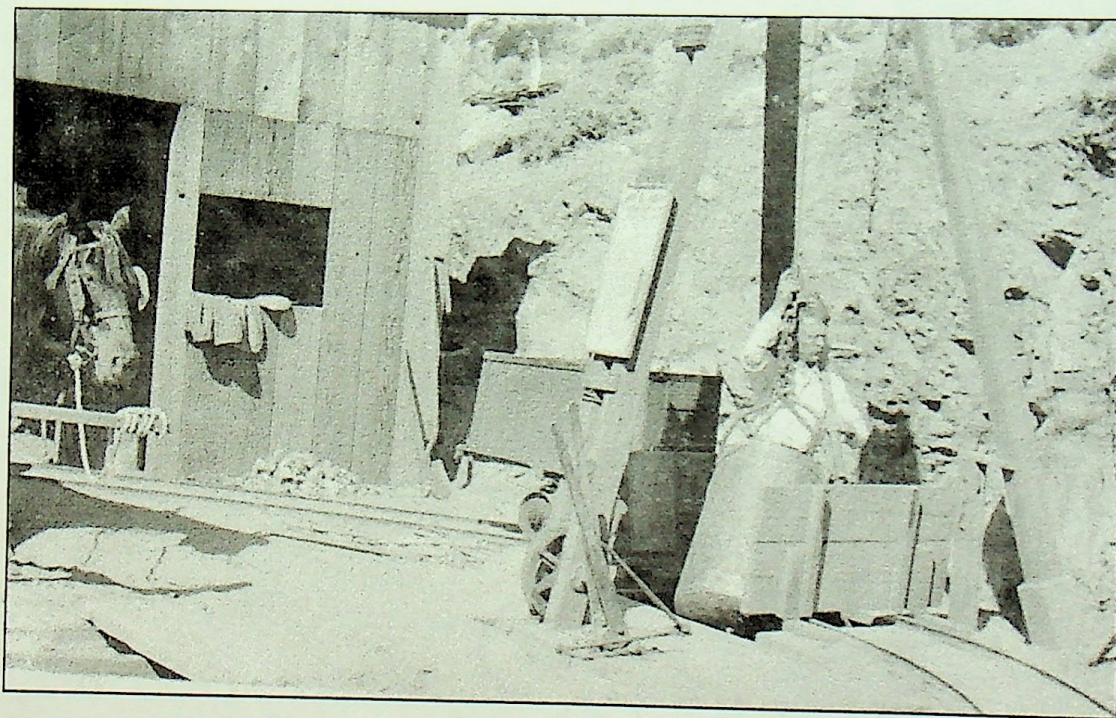
Yellow Metal shaft and dump just below summit of rocks on right corner of picture (red X) and  
shows "sled" road down to our grade which goes on around and up to KPC shaft.

Where canyon forks above store, the one to right leads to Last Chance Mine, and continuing trail  
goes on up to pinons and view down to Panamint Valley. One on left ends a short way up and trail  
continues to pinons 2 miles up.

MECH 43



Last Chance Mine, May 1910



Gus Haelsig in bucket. Ida on the whim. Mr. Haelsig came up to camp one trip with me when I had gone in the buckboard and stayed several days taking pictures and making postcards.

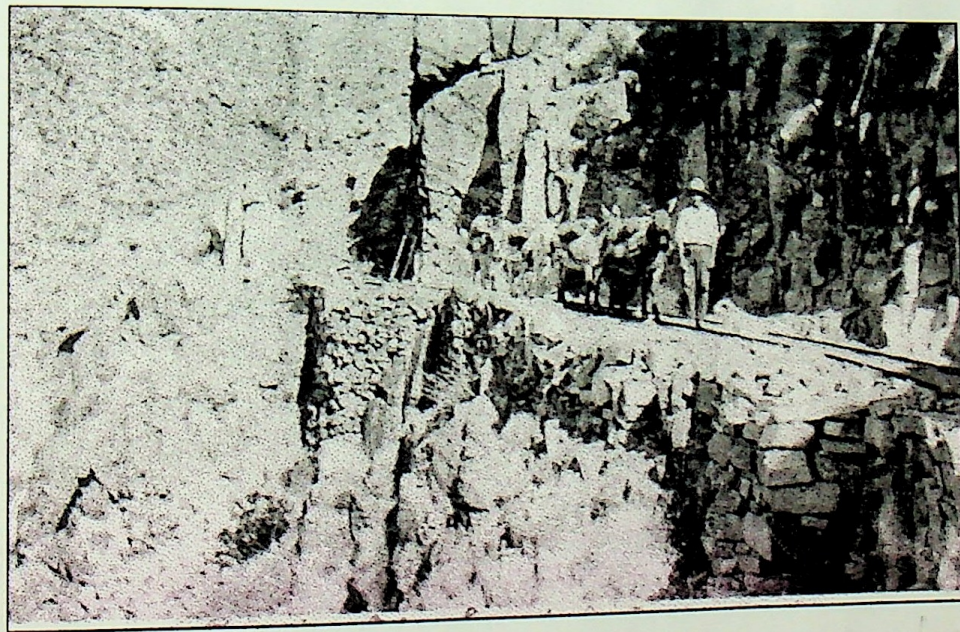
This is a mile up the canyon in back of the store.

43

43



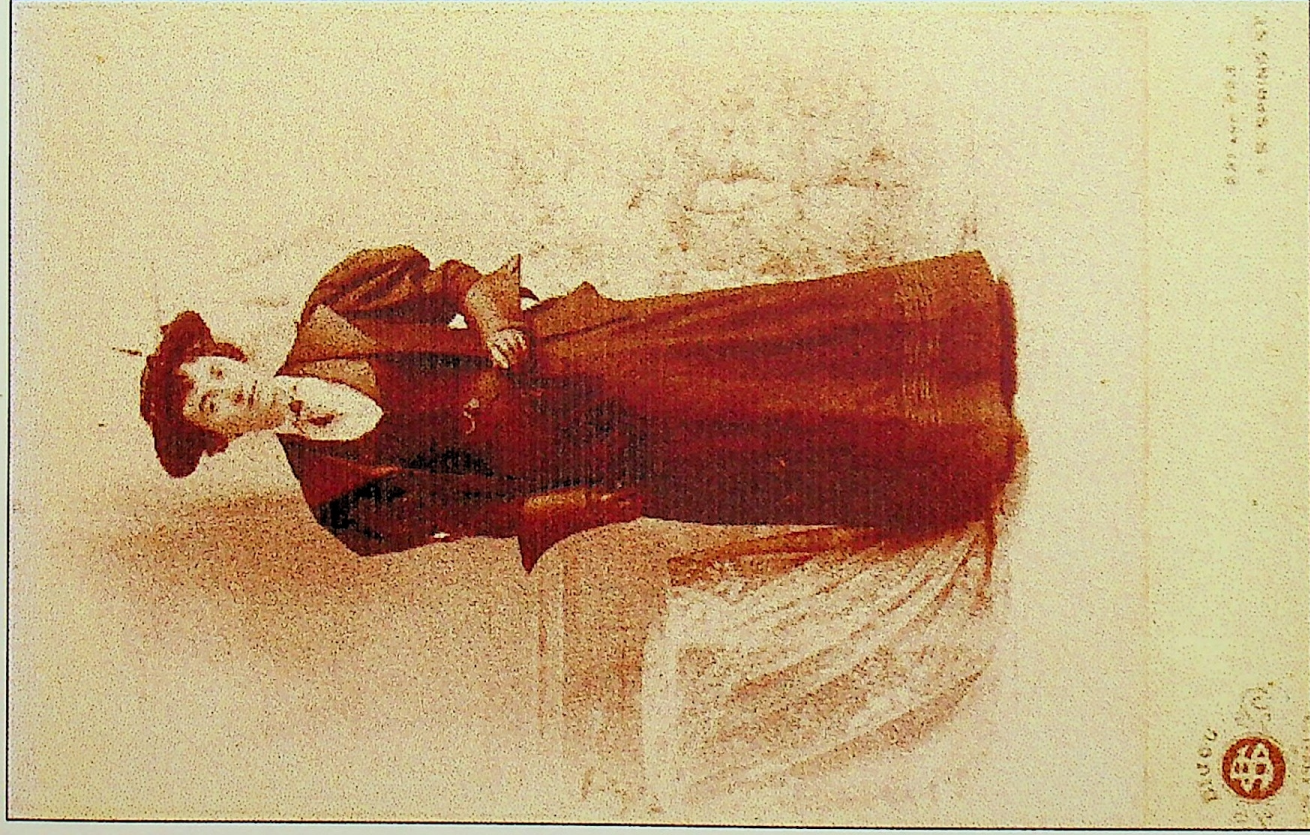
Packing Out — Snow's Canyon, June 1914



Milo with the pack train with ore — 2 sacks on each burro. Jack Cress loved his stock and never overloaded them. Each sack of ore weighed about 80 pds, gold ore. We had a grand time here — worked 6 days a week and Sunday spent with Jack. Our camp was 2 miles up the trail, about 1500 ft. rise from Snow's Canyon. Jacks were prospectors best friends and many a mine was found when hunting for them!

Prospected for 40 years and spent 25 hunting for them!





Jessie Norris Fowzer, 1890  
The height of fashion of the Gay 90's!



### A Picture History of the Beginning of Millspaugh

This album was Jessie Norris Fowzer's album of pictures taken of Millspaugh, California. Her daughter, Elizabeth L. Mecham, grew up in Millspaugh and has kept this album of the surrounding territory, along with notes on the back of the pictures and written in along the sides, top and bottom, as you can see.

She wanted the original album to go to the Eastern California Museum in Independence, California. Her son, Richard, and I have made copies to go to the Matarango museum in Ridgecrest, since it is so near the area of these pictures. We hope you will enjoy looking back in time and seeing how our pioneers settled and lived in this country. The written explanations of many of the pictures were those on the back. Some of the pictures were pasted in so were not disturbed, but most have enough explanation written in the margins.