

Sketch by Dede Lyon

*Our museum is located in the great Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains of California.*

*Our culture of the Washoe people, agricultural era, and silver mining of the surrounding areas display our pioneering history of Alpine County.*

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## **ALPINE COUNTY MUSEUM**

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[alpinecountymuseum.org](http://alpinecountymuseum.org)

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## **MUSEUM HOURS**

*Thursday, Friday,  
Saturday, & Sunday  
10:00 a.m. - 4:00  
p.m.*



*Original article  
published Volume  
X Number 2  
Fall 2004 Alpine  
Review*



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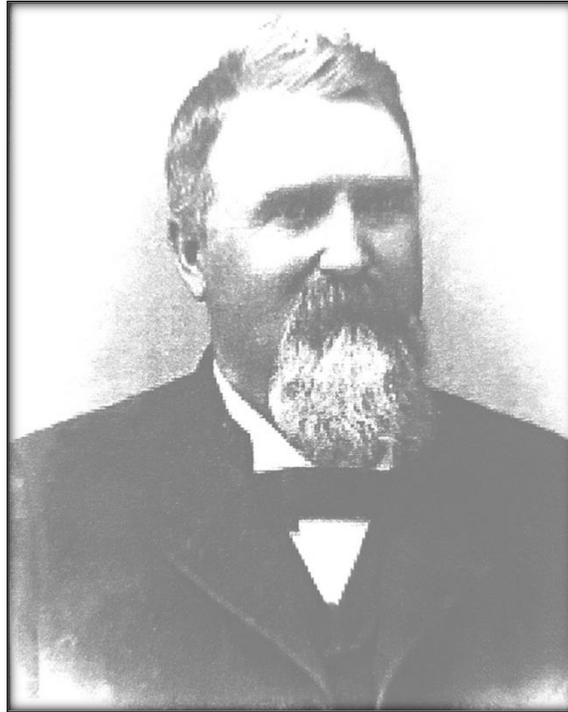
# **ALPINE REVIEW**

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Fall 2020

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## **THE BLOODS OF BEAR VALLEY**

By: Eric Jung

In the late 1850's, groups of local boosters from various towns in the Mother Lode were competing to make their respective roads over the Sierra the main route. The Donner Summit route (now Highway 80), the Hangtown Road (Highway 50), and the Carson Pass Road (Highway 88) were leading contenders. Sonora Pass (Highway 108) fell out of the competition after an early jump, as travelers discovered it was not nearly as good a route as the mayor of Sonora represented.

The Big Trees-Border Ruffian Pass Road was the other major contender during this period. BY 1854, there was a hotel at Bog Trees, drawing tourists up what would become Highway 4 and ensuring that the road would be well maintained to that point. By 1855, a Smith and Company were cutting hay at Big Meadow and at the yet-unnamed Bear Valley meadow and hauling it down the mountain on a road good enough for freight wagons.

*The Bloods of Bear Valley continued on page 4*

*The Alpine Review is published quarterly by the Historical Society of Alpine County.*



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## **President's Message**

BY: TOM SWEENEY

Another 3 months have passed, and we are still unable to put our planned changes to the museum in motion. Parts of the plan have been started but the moving of the displays came to a halt because of the size and weight issues.



We hope to be getting closer to opening but everyday closing day is also creeping closer. You might have not seen the museum grounds this summer so I will tell you they look great. We got ahead of the weeding and the flowers planting really added to the look. Barbara Howard and her volunteers have been keeping up with the watering of the plants. The building and grounds crews have kept the grass cut and trimmed. We want to thank all these people or their work.

We have received donations of historical items which will be added to our collection along with monetary donations. Both types are greatly appreciated. In the November Alpine review, we will have the stories related to these donations in greater detail. We hope to be working in the museum by then so we can display these items for everyone to see.

I encourage anyone who has items stored in a box under the bed, in the closet or in the garage that would add to the story of Alpine County to share it with the museum. If you would like to donate them or let us photograph the item and give us the story that goes with the item. We would like to add to our collection of the Alpine families and what it was like to live in Alpine County. One thing that I would like to add is pictures of any of the highways, roads, trails, early homes, and family photos.

As an example, I am sure that some of us who did not live here in the early days would be interested in seeing what the highway from Woodfords to Markleeville was like. Judy Wickwire and I have been working on the rotating photo collection which you can see in the Administration Building. We are now working on expanding it to the Library, HHS, BHS, Woodfords Station. If anyone would like to suggest other sites that might be of interest let us know. If you would like to support this effort by sponsoring a picture it is only \$60.00. We have our next group of photos just about ready to hang. Each photo will have the sponsor's name attached.

I want to thank all the members of the Alpine County Historical Society for your support during difficult times we are all going thru. We cannot wait to show off the new look of our entire Alpine County Museum Complex.

Tom



# CURATOR'S CORNER

by: Kristiina Wiedenhoft



Well, I can't believe it's already Autumn! An entire year has gone by since I started with the Alpine County Museum. Having only been able to have the museum open for a couple of months, this certainly wasn't the year I was expecting! I was so looking forward to spending this summer at the museum, interacting with the Alpine County community and sharing my love of history and cultures with you all in person, as well as sharing the changes and updates I have been making and plan to complete. We would be welcoming you back with open arms if we were able to do so in a safe way for everyone, but for the moment, our hands are still tied. So for now, we are working on finding new ways to connect you to the museum from afar, whether this be through our new website (still under construction, but will be ready soon!), our added social media accounts, virtual tours, or maybe some additional articles or emails. All the while, I'm still working on a big reorganization project and sprucing up the indoor exhibits to more fluidly tell the story of Alpine County's history.

I'm so excited to say we have received some wonderful donations this summer that will be excellent additions to the museum's collection. We are so thankful to have been given these pieces of Alpine County's history and we will preserve them carefully and display them proudly, as important and fascinating parts of this history. As a preview, we received an original marriage license from the earliest days of Alpine County, along with other supporting photographs and documents. It is accompanied by a fascinating story that we will detail further in November's edition of the Alpine Review...stay tuned! From other generous donors, we have received photographs, signs, children's toys, adding machine, scale, and much more! I want to give

each specific item the proper descriptions and recognition they deserve because they are all equally important to the museum, but there are just too many to detail in one short article. But stay tuned for updates highlighting many of these as we find their permanent home in our collections and displays. We cannot thank you enough for the generous donations, these items are so important to the museum and the public, its an honor to receive them and be able to preserve and share them for generations to come.

And don't forget, even though the indoor part of the museum is currently closed, we are still welcoming and encouraging you to come and visit our grounds (while practicing safe social distancing). There is plenty of history to see from the outside, with the Schoolhouse, the Jail, the Stamp Mill, and more! Not only that, but we have a wonderful green area with tables that the public can use for a nice picnic lunch. (yes, there is some shade!) And the beautiful landscaping and gardening that has been done by our amazing volunteers and historical society members. We are still hopeful that we will get to open sometime this season, but either way, we want you to enjoy the grounds and outdoor area and we will find a way to bring the inside to you.

As always, thank you all for your continued support, we couldn't do this without you! We can't wait to see you all soon. In the meantime, here are ways to reach us from a distance:

Website: [www.alpinecountymuseum.org](http://www.alpinecountymuseum.org)  
Facebook: @alpinecountymuseum  
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YouTube: coming soon!

And in 1855 a surveying party financed by a coalition of businessmen from Murphys, Angels Camp, and Stockton assessed the chances of a wagon road all the way over the top to Hope Valley, naming Grizzly Bear Valley on their way through. They followed the present alignment of the highway to Hermit Valley, then over Boarder Ruffian Pass to Hope Valley. They reported that the portion of the road not yet prepared for wagon traffic from Bear Valley to Hope Valley was an easy horseback ride and a fine candidate for a wagon road.

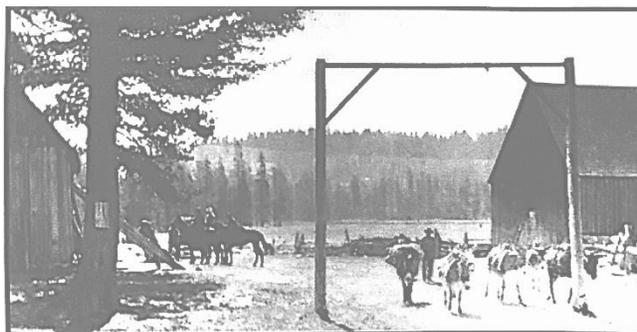
The boosters raised \$5,000 for improvements and awarded the contract to two members of the survey party, L.W. Noyes and Dr. N.C. Condon. Work commenced in 1856, and the first recorded wagon train came over that same year, referred to in a San Andreas newspaper as a Border Ruffian group. Border Ruffians were pro-slavery partisans in the Kansas-Missouri border wars. It's very likely that that's how Border Ruffian Pass got its name.

The winter of 1856-7 did heavy damage to the Hangtown Road, and the new Big Trees – Boarder Ruffian Pass Road became a favored route for a couple years, to the dismay of Sacramentans who were vying with Stockton for economic supremacy in the Central Valley. In 1859, silver was discovered in Nevada, then in Kongsberg in 1860 in what would become Alpine County. This had the effect of increasing traffic on the road, now going west to east, and necessitating an alternate route from Hermit Valley to the silver mines in eastern Alpine County.

Some time during this period, the teenaged Harvey Spaulding Blood came to California from New Hampshire. One account has his birthdate as 1838, another 1844, while the 1850 census reports it as 1840. He is still in Goshen for the 1850 census but missing entirely from the 1860 census. He is first reported in California manufacturing shake near Big Trees. He was probably too far up into the mountains to be caught by the 1860 census, but he must have been working hard and profitably. Some time between 1860 and 1863 he had made enough

money to buy the meadow at Grizzly Bear Valley, taking over the haying operation from Smith and Company and running cattle. He built a small cabin at the low end of the meadow, away from the road.

The road was getting plenty of traffic but was still only good for wagons to Hermit Valley. Riders had to go on horseback from there to Kongsberg which was by now Silver Mountain City. The Boarder Ruffian Pass Road was still usable for wagons but was seeing a decline in traffic, as Sacramento-Placerville interests improved the Hangtown Road.



Junction of Blood's Station House and Toll Gate Roads  
Circa 1910. The big Lodgepole Pine still stands in 2004

The Murphys/Angels Camp/Stockton boosters weren't giving up on their route. In 1862 the state granted a franchise for a toll road to Silver Mountain City to the Big Tree and Carson Valley Turnpike Company. The Company sold stock to raise \$100,000 and commenced work in Mountain City, at which point riders still had to go horseback. The state sued the Company for back taxes. The Company lost enthusiasm for what was turning out to be a harder job than anticipated. In May, 1864 they contracted with Jonathan Curtis and Harvey Blood to complete the work and collect tolls for five years, after which the road was to revert to the Company.

Blood built a bigger cabin for himself next to the road. Within a year he bought out Curtis and started expanding the Bear Valley operation, putting in a toll gate (there was another down the road at Dorrington), meat house, barn, henhouse, store, small hotel, milk house, and blacksmith shop. His road crew operated out of Hermit Valley. Alpine County had been created just two months before he

took the road contract, and the first election showed a voting site at Road House, Stanislaus. This was Grizzly Bear Valley.

Blood was evidently a good road boss. Within a year the road was done, and he settled into the routine he would keep for 45 years, maintaining the road, collecting tolls, catering to travelers and ranchers, running cattle, and harvesting the hay which grew 3 feet tall in the lush Bear Valley meadow. In winter he moved down below the snow to Calaveras County, first in Murphys and then to a house on Main Street in Angels Camp.

He became one of Calaveras County's leading citizens, with a reputation for integrity and industry. He parlayed his profits from the Toll Station into a variety of enterprises, buying and selling real estate all the way to Stockton, and filing mining claims and at least two homesteads in Calaveras County.

The five year anniversary of the road contract came and went. The Turnpike Company, if it was still business, had no interest in taking the road back. By 1869 the Matteson and Garland Stage Line had a regular run from Stockton to Silver Mountain. The stage schedule listed H. Blood as the high country agent at Bear Valley. The "Grizzly" had been dropped from the name, although there were still plenty of grizzlies around Bear Valley.

The 1870 census caught him in Silver Mountain City with his youngest brother, the 19 year old Frank J. Blood. There is no mention of a toll station there, but it seems logical to assume that there would be one at the eastern terminus of the toll road, and he may have hired his brother to man it. At the other



*Elizabeth Gardner Blood.  
"Lizzie" grew up at the western terminus of Blood's toll road in Dorrington. Photo courtesy of Calaveras County Historical Society*

end of the toll road in what would become Dorrington, John and Mary Rebecca Dorrington Gardner had a daughter Elizabeth, born 1853. On January 12, 1876 (or 1874 according to one record), Harvey married Elizabeth, known as Lizzie or Lissie. In July, 1877, they had a daughter Rebecca, known as Reba. Popular account has it that the young Reba stole pies from the window sill where her mother left them to cool, and gave them to grateful surveyors who named the peak east of Bear Valley after her.



*Harvey bought the Murphys Hotel in 1881, then sold it a year later. The road franchise was renewed by Alpine and Calaveras Counties in 1887 and again in 1893. In 1898 he won a seat in the State Assembly. In the 1900 census, his occupation is listed as "Caitalist".*

The surveyors who made the first official map of the area for the government were in the area in 1878, which makes the story problematical. Perhaps they named the mountain in honor of the new baby, or perhaps it was a later group of surveyors. Whether apocryphal or not, the story is too good to leave out.

In 1878 Blood bought a 160 acre land patent at Cottage Springs. He would not know it, but two of his properties would turn into ski areas; one at Bear Valley and the other at Cottage Springs. He certainly knew the area's first skier, though. Snowshoe Thompson probably stopped at Blood's Toll Station in winter, and certainly in summer since Thompson was the most famous stage driver of his day.

In 1880 census notes Harvey, wife Elizabeth, the 2 year old Reba, and Harvey's 21 year old niece Ada Blood, daughter of Harvey's brother Joel. This is the second relative who is recorded following Harvey out to California. Word of his prosperity would certainly have gotten back to Goshen, New Hampshire.

It's not recorded when Harvey first got involved with the Masons in Calaveras County, but by 1880 he became Lodge Master at the Bear Mountain Lodge in Angels Camp. He had earlier joined the Ophir Lodge in Murphys and probably moved over when he moved his residence to Angels Camp. He served as Lodge Master in Angels Camp from 1880 to 1893, and again from 1900 to 1902. He rode down once a month in summer to preside over Lodge meetings. Attendance at meetings was not always good. Masonic records state that Harvey would sometimes sit on the front steps of the Lodge, waiting for a Lodge brother to pass by so he could get a second to pay the bills. He was heavily sought after to preside over Masonic funerals in Calaveras and Tuolumne Counties. In his earlier days he may well have known Samuel "Mark Twain" Clemens, who was an officer of the Bear Mountain

Lodge.



*Rebecca "Reba" Blood, daughter of Harvey and Elizabeth. She grew up in the mountain way summering in Bear Valley and wintering in Angels Camp. Photo courtesy of Calaveras County Historical Society*

In 1881, the Monitor Argus reported that "a party of our people started for Bear Valley today intending to work on the reservoir which is to be built at that place." The 1855 survey party had noted that Bear Valley's meadow offered a promising site for a dam at the low end of the meadow to catch the water from the three streams

which converge there. Mining companies had been metamorphosing into water purveyors since the late 1850's, and Harvey apparently was considering such a project at Bear Valley. But it would never be built. We can only speculate why. Sacrificing the meadow for a lake would have meant giving up the hay and a verdant pasture.

Harvey bought the Murphys Hotel in 1881, then sold it a year later. The road franchise was renewed by Alpine and Calaveras Counties in 1887 and again in 1893. In 1898 he won a seat in the State Assembly. In the 1900 census, his occupation is listed as "Capitalist".

In December, 1902, Reba married San Francisco banker Tilden Tognazzini. They would have three children, Evelyn, Harvey, and Constance. Harvey died in infancy.

In 1910, Harvey gave up the road franchise. The road became a free public road. In the 1910 census, Harvey and Elizabeth are listed in Angels Camp with a 43 year old Chinese servant, Xi Wing. They were said to have a Chinese cook, a mark of prosperity, and this was probably Xi Wing.

In May, 1910, Harvey went to San Francisco to visit Reba's family and bring back her children for a Bear Valley summer. He suffered a stroke while waiting for the Oakland-San Francisco ferry, and died a few days later on May 9. His Masonic funeral in Angels Camp was one of the biggest ever held, with hundreds in attendance including Masons from Alpine, Calaveras, Tuolumne, and Amador Counties. The man who had presided over hundreds of Masonic funerals was remembered as an exceptional person, steadfast in friendship and honesty, a man to be counted on in business, politics, philanthropy, and family. He was buried in the Masonic cemetery in Altaville, facing the Sierra he loved.

In the 1920 census, Reba is listed in San Francisco with husband Tilden and two daughters Evelyn and Constance. But curiously they have apparently changed their last name from Tognazzini to Tilden. Researcher Phil Dean theorizes that it may have had something to do with a tragic incident in 1919. A Dr. Washington Dodge attempted suicide by shooting himself in the head; the wound was comparatively insignificant, but in the resultant fall, he struck his head on the floor. Dr. Dodge was said to be despondent over a lawsuit filed against him by Tilden Tognazzini and Charles Leege. It was apparently a matter of honor.

The 1920 census also shows Lizzie living with them in San Francisco. That year the family sold the Bear Valley property to the Bishop Mining and Cattle Company, which had designs on the dam

Harvey never got around to. The Lombardis, a Calaveras County ranching family, had already taken over the operation at Bear Valley, still using the buildings Harvey built, including hand-carved furniture and a homemade wooden cash register.

Reba Blood circa 1900

Some time between 1920 and 1930, Reba and Tilden divorced. By the 1930 census, she is married to Dr. Alfred B. Grosse and living on Brewer Avenue in San Mateo. 77 year old Lizzie is still with her.

In 1950 Tilden Tognazzini, Reba's ex, died in San Francisco. Reba died on April 12, 1959, in Santa Barbara. She was buried beside her father and her child Harvey in the cemetery in Altaville.

Harvey Blood and his family were Bear Valley's first citizens. From their summer home there, they kept up one of the ruggedest roads in the West. They watched the traffic on the road go from hopeful immigrants and miners on wagon and horseback to tourists and anglers in boom and bust of the Silver Rush, the passing of the grizzly and the wolf, the departure of the Washo who had occupied Bear Valley before them, the rise of the ranching culture in the high country and the beginnings of the tourist economy which would replace mining and ranching as the County's economic engine.

Harvey Blood's hand-colored picture has a place of honor at the Ophir Bear Mountain Masonic Lodge in Murphys. His name is on the ridge overlooking Bear Valley and one of the streams that

pass through the meadow on the way to the Pacific, and Reba's name is on the mountain to the east where Jedediah Smith may have spent two miserable nights in 1827. And their spirits live on in Bear Valley, still a place where travelers can stop to rest and enjoy the beautiful meadow where cattle yet graze.

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The sign that hung from the toll gate at Blood's Toll Station. It is now at the Old Timer's Museum in Murphys.



The Toll Station in early winter. Louie Lombardi, who with his family took over the Bear Valley operation from the Bloods, told Bruce Orvis (founder of modern Bear Valley) that there was always time after the first snow to get the livestock out and shut things down.

Photo courtesy of Calaveras County Historical Society.

# Secondhand Smoke

## What is Secondhand Smoke?<sup>1,2</sup>

Secondhand smoke is a mix of two types of burning tobacco.

- One comes from the burning end of a cigarette, cigar, or pipe.
- The other is exhaled by a smoker.

## Health Risks<sup>1,2</sup>

- Secondhand smoke can be as harmful as smoking.
  - » It has over 7,000 chemicals, about 70 of which can cause cancer.
  - » It kills over 41,000 non-smoking adults in the U.S. every year.
  - » It can cause heart disease, lung disease, stroke in non-smokers.
  - » It can also cause cancer.
- Secondhand smoke slows healing.
- Kids who breathe it get sick more often. They are at risk for:
  - » Ear infections
  - » Colds
  - » Asthma attacks
  - » Bronchitis and pneumonia
  - » Coughing, wheezing
  - » Shortness of breath
- Babies are at higher risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Secondhand smoke can harm pets, too.

## Limit the Risk

- Any contact with secondhand smoke can be harmful. No level is safe.
- Keep your home and car smoke-free.
  - » In California, it is illegal to smoke in a car if anyone is under 18 years old.<sup>3</sup>
- Ask people not to smoke in your home or car. Going to another room, or opening windows, is not enough.
- Make sure that no one smoke around your kids. Be firm.
- If you smoke, stop!



**Call for FREE help to quit smoking!  
1-800-NO-BUTTS**

<sup>1</sup> National Cancer Institute (2018). *Secondhand Smoke and Cancer*.

<sup>2</sup> CDC (2018). *Secondhand Smoke (SHS) Facts*.

<sup>3</sup> California Legislative Information. *Health and Safety Code, Article 2.5. Smoking in Motor Vehicles*.

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A selection of available pictures can be viewed at the Museum **and** all of the Historical Society Events.

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*If you would like to receive this newsletter by email, please let us know!*

Check out our website [www.alpinecountymuseum.org](http://www.alpinecountymuseum.org) and be sure to add us to your favorites. Announcements and additional information about our events will

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postponed  
due to COVID-19.  
Visit [www.alpinecountymuseum.org](http://www.alpinecountymuseum.org) for updates*

The Historical Society of Alpine County  
PO BOX 517, Markleeville, CA 96120

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