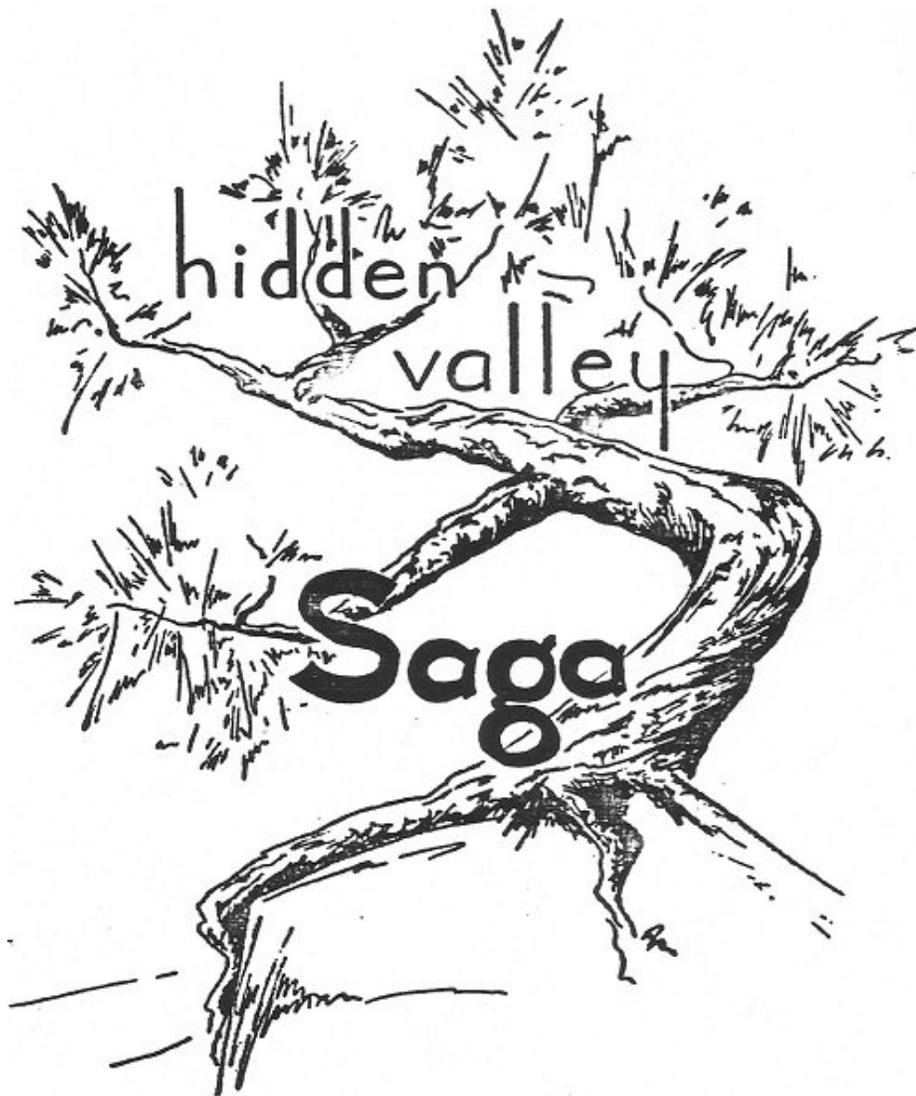


Fern R. Sayre (1905 - 1979), author of "Hidden Valley Saga," was an amateur historian and one of the original residents of Hidden Valley. In 1961 the HV Women's Club offered the brochure for sale for \$1.50 with the goal of raising money for some historical markers and perhaps a small museum in Hidden Valley. The fund-raising effort was apparently unsuccessful, but the brochure was reprinted in 1976 as a Bicentennial tribute.



*by Fern R. Sayre*

# *How One Man's Dream Came True!*



**Joseph Allan Beek**

THIRTY YEARS AGO the Secretary of the California State Senate – in between looking over bills and calling the roll – drove to a wooded stream in the foothills between Folsom and Auburn and camped out.

He caught sunfish and black bass, cooked them over a fire in front of his tent, and communed with the great outdoors. When he returned, after a week-end, to the exacting duties of the upper house of the California Legislature, he was fresh and ready for action.

Today Joseph Allan Beek, affectionately called "Joe," is still the Secretary of the Senate, still an outdoorsman first, last and always, continues to fish and sleep in the same area. But today he shares his dream with his "children," the residents of Hidden Valley.

Ten years ago Mr. Beek bought several hundred acres of land where he had been camping and fishing for years and started the development of his beloved Hidden Valley. Today it is an exclusive residential tract with ten ponds and lakes, miles of bridle trails, beautiful homes nestled among the oak trees. To complete his dream Joe gave 200 acres of forest preserve right in the middle of the valley to the homeowners, for their private use. On the largest of the 10 lakes – Oak Lake – a Tournament of Lights is held every August with upwards of 30 oared and sail boats competing in a gayly decorated water fiesta reminiscent of those held in Venice, Italy.

Developing Hidden Valley was nothing new for Joe Beek. Fifty years ago, he was largely instrumental in the development of the Newport Harbor. This sheltered harbor on the coast of Orange county, south of Los Angeles, is now one of the most famous smallcraft harbors in America. It docks approximately 6,000 boats of all shapes and sizes. Joe's permanent home is here but when the State Legislature is in session he lives in Hidden Valley.

So this is Joe Beek; Secretary of the Senate, Commodore, U.S. Navy Reserve (he served as convoy commander in the Pacific in World War II), realtor, developer, fisherman, water-skier, and general all-round guy.

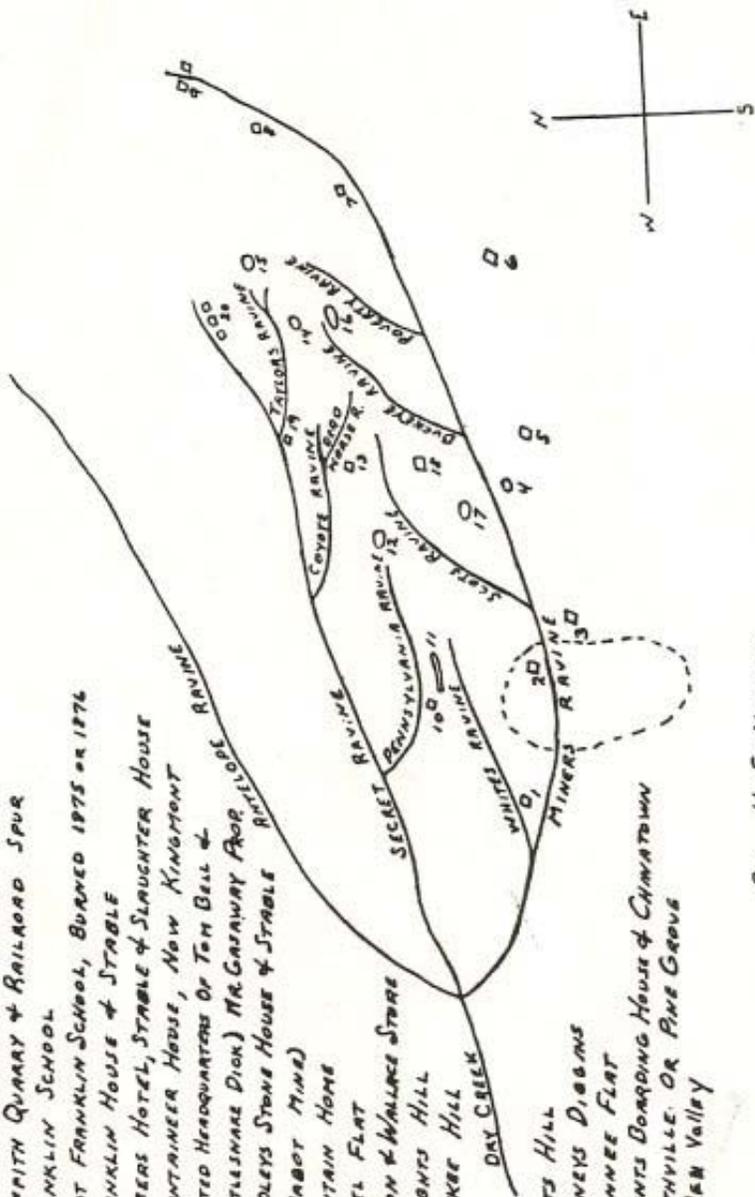
—DENNY DALY

Almost 15 years have gone by since our "Hidden Valley Saga" was printed, and Mr. Beek has passed on ...

In 1976 as a Bicentennial tribute the Women's Club of Hidden Valley had this booklet reproduced for the property owners of Hidden Valley.

LEGEND

1. Fountain House
2. Union House & Stable
3. Willa Wood Tavern & Railroad Station
4. Griffith Quarry & Railroad Spur
5. Franklin School
6. First Franklin School, Burned 1875 or 1876
7. Franklin House & Stable
8. Prosser Hotel, Stable & Slaughter House
9. Mountaineer House, Now Kingmont  
(Rented Headquarters of Tom Bell &  
C. Rattlesnake Dick) Mr. Caraway Prop.
10. Bradleys Stone House & Stable  
(Chabot Mine)
11. Mountain Home
12. Rebel Flat
13. Sisson & Wallace Store
14. Wrights Hill
15. Yankee Hill
16. Scots Hill
17. Gionys Digons
18. Chinnee Flat
19. Grants Boarding House & Charnatow
20. Smithville. Or Pine Grove
21. Hidden Valley



By H. E. MILLER  
LOOMIS, CALIFORNIA

# *The Hidden Valley Saga*

By FERN R. SAYRE

This is the story of Hidden Valley, today a modern, unique development, beautiful homes with all the modern conveniences and the advantages of country living. A Community Club House, many lakes for boating and swimming, horse trails, hiking trails, cultural clubs and many more planned activities. To think just 106 years ago the Southern Maidu Indians inhabited this same vicinity with its beautiful rolling green hills, thickly wooded forests and flowing streams (later called Miner's Creek). Wild game was abundant – fish, rabbits, quail, pheasants, deer, bear, mountain lion, etc. To this day you can see the mortars in the rocks just below the bridge from the Map House where the Indians pounded their corn and camped up on the hill.

In May 1849 gold was discovered by Claude Chana in Auburn and the miners started for the diggings. A trail between Sacramento and Auburn existed from an early date and it was over this trail through Hidden Valley that the miners made their way to the diggings and other settlements of Placer County. This early trail was made into a fair road by the innumerable miners and their beasts as they picked their way over the most convenient route. In those days when the only means of travel was by foot or oxen team, it was necessary to have watering places at convenient distances along the route. The distance from Sacramento to Auburn at that time was 45 miles. Merchandise from Sacramento brought over this road at \$10.00 per 100 lbs. during good weather and the rainy season \$30.00 to \$40.00 per 100 lbs. The road in the winter became practically impassible and this thoroughfare was described by one contemporary as "Two roads, one two feet below the other" while another termed it a "bottomless sea of mud." Miners mostly had to shoulder their packs and picks and trudge along the hot dusty road to their place of destination.

Fortunate was the miner who could obtain a seat on the slow plodding ox teams. It took at least two full days for a team to make the 45 mile journey, often longer, depending on the condition of the road and the weight of the load being carried. The freight wagons of native California manufacture was a broad bottom affair from 40-48 inches in

width. The sides rising with a slight divergence from a right line form and sometimes 7 and 8 feet wide—head and tail ends sloping at an angle of 45°—forming a box from 16 to 25 feet in length and shaped very much like an old fashioned bread trough. Wagons cost \$300.00 to \$500.00. Mules later replaced the oxen and cost from \$300.00 to \$600.00 per pair. Weight of wagons ranged from 2200 lbs. to 2800 lbs. and could draw 5,000 to 9,500 lbs. This is the type of wagon that first passed through Hidden Valley on the way to the mines and communities.

Speaking of wild game – grizzly bear infested this region in the early days of the miners and one killed weighed 1100 lbs. One miner caught a bear near the Mountain House on the Auburn Road by merely slipping a noose over his neck and the bear followed his captor about as meekly as an "Irish Porker". The bear finally freed himself of the rope and ran over the hill so rapidly that his enemy gave up the chase (The Gazette 5/19/53).

Wm. Gregory is credited with starting the first freight and stage line in 1850. In the summer of 1850 there appeared in the Sacramento Transcript the following notice:

#### "IMPORTANT TO MINERS"

And the traveling community in general

Wm. Gwynn's Line of Tri-Weekly Stages from Sacramento to Auburn.

This Stage Line offers great facilities to the traveling community. It's cheap, speedy and comfortable accommodations make it of interest to all. Fare was \$10.00 to Auburn – later reduced to \$4.00. The stage left the Humbolt Hotel in Sacramento, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 7 a.m. The return trip left Auburn Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 a.m. The return trip was mostly down hill and the fare was only \$6.00. It took 10 hours for a stage coach to drive from Sacramento to Auburn and there were many stopping places like the Union House in Hidden Valley for the weary traveler to rest.

There were many other stage lines starting to operate at this time such as the U. S. Mail Line, Sacramento to Ophir, Brown and Parrish, Mail Pilot Line and numerous others using the road through Hidden Valley. A great disappointment to the writer was to find out during my research that the Butterfield Stage Coach did not go through Hidden Valley but followed the route from Sacramento to Folsom to Placerville and over the mountains.

Small settlements seemed to spring up over night—the most notorious near Hidden Valley was Rattlesnake Bar, built on the flat bench high up and back of the low bar from which it derived its name. There were several cabins, tents, hotels, theater, Wells Fargo Office, daily

freight and stage lines operated and the population was approximately 1,000. Rattlesnake Dick (or, Richard Barter, an Englishman) was a well known highwayman of that day—Mr. Fenn Laird's Great Grandfather, J. Laird, knew Rattlesnake Dick from England and he never bothered Mr. Laird's store at Rattlesnake Bar. Other places like Horseshoe Bar, Murderer's Bar, Oregon Bar, Condemned Bar, Buckner's Bar, Mountain House, Fountain House, and numerous others opened for business—ferries at first plyed the river and charged \$1.00 for wagons, 50c empty, each animal 25c, footman 25c. Permanent settlements started building—Folsom, Roseville, Rocklin, Loomis, Auburn, all within a few miles of Hidden Valley. A little story told about Jim Loomis, or "unprogressive" Jim as he was called, who for a time, was saloonkeeper, railroad agent, express agent and Postmaster, kept the mail in a cigar box at the end of the bar in his saloon. An unconfirmed rumor has it that one day a Postal Inspector visited him and protested the way he was handling the U. S. Mail—Mr. Loomis picked up the cigar box and tossed it into the street. Loomis also had a kite shaped race track whereon Sundays the country boys would bring the fast horses and patronize the track. All the settlements had their amusing as well as tragic happenings just as we do today.

A story relative to Hidden Valley in the mining days is that a party of miners were panning for gold on Miners Creek and two bandits held them up and made off with several sacks of gold and put them in the back of their wagon—the miners soon started off in pursuit and when they caught up with them and searched the wagon, no gold was to be found, and to this day no one knows whether they were able to bury the gold before the miners caught them or whether it bounced out of the wagon over the rough road.

John Curtis homesteaded Hidden Valley in 1854 and the Maidu Indians departed, burying all their belongings. Why, no one knows. I was unable to find out whether they were chased off Hidden Valley or whether they were sent to a reservation. Mr. Curtis built the Union House, which became one of the Stage Coach and Freight Line stops—it was about 40'x50' and in the shape of a ham, perfectly plain in front with the front door on the right side. As you went in, the saloon was on the right and living quarters on the left, the whole back was a large dining room and a shed was built on for the kitchen. The stairs were on the outside to the upper story which was called the corral where there were beds for the weary traveler, but the stage and freight wagon drivers preferred to sleep outside under their wagons—I don't blame them, there were only two windows in the structure in front. It was a plain wooden structure made of redwood. The horses were watered down by the well—which Mr. Beek has since reconstructed just down from the Map House. In 1862 there was much excitement, the railroad started operations and passed through Hidden Valley to within 6 miles

of Auburn, right across from the main entrance to Hidden Valley was the Willa Wood Tavern and Railroad Station. Following is a letter from Mr. Wendell Robie of Auburn to Mr. Jack Sterling giving some interesting information about the railroad.

“March 2, 1953

Dear Jack:

"The old railroad which was built through Hidden Valley, supplied much freight for the mines at Auburn, Nevada City, Grass Valley, Iowa Hill, Yankee Jims and Michigan Bluff, was built by the Sacramento, Placer, and Nevada Railroad Company. Its survey was commenced July 21, 1858 by T. D. Judah, who was Chief Engineer of the California Central Railroad which had earlier started construction of their railroad from Folsom to Marysville and which Colonel Charles Lincoln Wilson actually completed to Lincoln (named after himself) on October 31, 1861. The Sacramento, Placer, and Nevada Railroad (Auburn Branch RR) utilized the California Central bridge over the American River below Folsom and made a junction with it just north of the bridge.

"The word "nevada" in the name of the company does not refer to the State of Nevada, because any such geographical designation was unknown at that time. It referred to Nevada, which we now call Nevada City. It is of great historical significance that Theodore Judah happened to make the survey for the American Branch RR as he had appeared the previous year before Congress to advocate the passage of legislation which would authorize construction of the proposed Transcontinental Pacific Railroad over a more northern route by way of Noble Pass, northeast of Marysville and into the Central Valley of California. By reason of his survey of the railroad through Hidden Valley, he became acquainted with Dr. D. W. Strong of Dutch Flat, who had been impressed with the apparent feasibility of a railroad route upon the present route, which was later utilized to build the Central Pacific. Dr. Strong was a very admirable public spirited man and contributed largely from his personal funds to finance a continued survey by Judah over the Truckee Pass and eastward. This survey was employed in the bill which the Congress passed in 1862, and was utilized in building the Union and Central Pacific, with tremendous benefits to the Placer County region in which we live.

"After the survey by Judah for the Placer and Nevada Railroad through Hidden Valley to a point 6 miles southwest of Auburn, the company was organized with James E. Hale of Auburn as President and with all support possible from various enterprising citizens of Auburn and all this region.

"The first grading work was begun on August 20, 1861, near Folsom and on September 20, 1862, the road was completed and put into opera-

tion to Auburn Station. At the Station, various large warehouses were built and stage and team lines made it their starting point for their business. Quite a busy little village grew up around the Station. Much freight for all of the mines and communities in the mountains was hauled through Hidden Valley on the grade of this railroad until June 1864, by which time the Central Pacific was completed to Newcastle, which became a better depot for freight and passengers instead of Auburn Station and soon the business of the Sacramento, Placer, and Nevada Railroad ceased entirely.

"It was interesting to me yesterday to see the old grade and to learn that some of the granite culverts remain as monuments to this progressive little enterprise sponsored and financed by progressive and forward looking citizens of our region. ~ hope you can erect some sort of a sign along the railroad at Hidden Valley to call attention to some of the significant items of information concerning this old original railroad. In point of age, it was the third. railroad to be built in California. The first and oldest was built from Sacramento to Folsom; the second from Folsom to Lincoln; and the third is this Auburn Branch from Folsom to Auburn Station.

Sincerely,

Wendell T. Robie"

Mr. Henry Miller, an early settler in Hidden Valley area, told me the Union House burned down in 1905 and a two story dwelling was erected and the three sons of John Curtis used Hidden Valley as pasture for their cattle. The sons later moved to Nevada, and Hidden Valley which comprised 480 acres at that time was split, and in 1914 Samuel Laird bought 320 acres which is now in Hidden Valley, and a Mr. Pendleton bought the other 160 acres. Mr. Laird and his son, Fenn Laird, bought Hidden Valley for Hydraulic mining purposes. Fenn Laird told me that he scooped out of what is now Oak Lake with a team of 4 mules and a Fresno scraper and dug up all the articles that the Indians had buried in 1854, including bows and arrows, pottery, beads, bits of clothing, etc. With their mining operations completed, in 1915, they sold to Martin Ludwig.

Mr. Ludwig used Hidden Valley for grazing purposes and it was this year that Mr. Beek first saw Hidden Valley, it was in a wild state and the old house was still standing with a shed in the back. Mr. Beek fell in love with the property and could see the future possibilities and received permission in 1927 from Mr. Ludwig to enjoy the pleasures of Hidden Valley such as: swimming, hiking, fishing and picnicking and for many years enjoyed these wonderful advantages with his host of friends.

Mr. Beek told me of an incident that happened in 1935 in Hidden Valley which he never could understand, a man came with a gang of

"Beefy Gals" and they cut down many of the beautiful Oak and Pine trees evidently for the wood to sell, which was a pity. The old timers called them The Amazons.

Mr. Ludwig consented to sell Hidden Valley to Mr. Beek in 1949 and immediately our sub-division was started. Hidden Valley had been a dream of Mr. Beek's for many years and finally it became a reality; and now, after 5 years Hidden Valley is well on its way to being a thriving community.

Hidden Valley never had a specific name except for the creek which was named Miners Creek during the gold rush days until the very appropriate name of Hidden Valley was applied to it. Mr. Beek built a beautiful home with a swimming pool and another one for the caretaker. Edgar Sayre built the first home with a fish pool, then the George Spauldings and Alvin Gaines built their spacious homes overlooking beautiful Oak Lake and today we have 18 completed homes and several under construction. In the next few years there will be many homes and the commercial corner will be built up.

Mr. Joseph Beek built our Yacht Club and our first Commodore is Carl Brockman—we have our sail boats and row boats on Oak Lake, swimming, fishing, hiking, horseback riding around a beautiful bridle trail clear around Hidden Valley, all the things that make up a summer resort we have the year round. Mr. Beek, with the able assistance of Pat Rollins, started our wonderful Tournament of Lights, our floats made by the children and members of Hidden Valley are more beautiful each year, if that is possible, and this is the second year for our swim regatta—Mr. Beek has presented numerous cups to the children—of which they are justly proud. We hope to add the Hidden Valley Rodeo and the Hidden Valley Players in the future.

We commend Mr. Joseph Beek for bringing his dream to reality and doing all the various improvements to beautify Hidden Valley, making it the outstanding development in the country. Mr. Beek has gone far beyond the duty of a sub-divider and I know that all the members appreciate his wonderful efforts including his immortal song about Hidden Valley which will go down in history. We also have a poem about Hidden Valley written by Jack Hurrell, a guest of Edgar Sayre last year (even our guest caught the Hidden Valley fever). To Jack Hurrell we say "thank you." Jack actually had a dream that the Leaning Pine was calling to him and told him its story. I think all of us would like to write a song or a poem about Hidden Valley, I call it the Last Frontier for peace and quiet and all the wonders that unfold before your eyes—so many beautiful birds, butterflies, pheasants and quail coming to drink at our pools, seeing rabbits, squirrels, deer, through the woods.

Mr. Zarp told me he counted 11 deer in his garden in the back yard, while he was fishing for black bass, blue gills and trout.

After living in Hidden Valley every summer since 1951 I became aware of the historical significance of my surroundings and started my research project which is now completed and all I can say is—"IT'S PARADISE."

To the following I give credit for the research contained in the "Saga of Hidden Valley."

History of Placer County - Mr. Gus Stallman - Mr. Henry Miller - Mr. Fenn Laird - Miss Alice Law - Winchester Dairy - Sacramento Union - Sacramento Transcript - The Gazette - Mr. Wendell Robie - Mr. Joseph Beek - Mr. Allan Ottley of the California Section of the State Library - May Perry, Curator of Auburn Museum Michael Harrison.

We wish to add that Hidden Valley is surrounded with historical lore - The various Stage Coach Stops - The most unusual Mining venture of the early days on the American River just a little ways from Hidden Valley - The Story of the North Fork Dam and Ditch by May Perry. We are telling these stories on the preceding pages as we are sure our readers will be interested due to the fact they can drive to some of the ruins still standing. .

**Fern R. Sayre**

**Lot 14 - Hidden Valley**

## *About the Author . . .*

FERN R. SAYRE, the author of the "Hidden Valley Saga," is one of those rare individuals that delights in searching the archives for the overlooked or unknown facts of our California history. She has been a substantial research contributor to the Placer and Amador County Historical Society and in that capacity she literally dug up the story of Hidden Valley.

She has generously contributed her many months of labor to the residents of Hidden Valley to make this booklet possible. She is the wife of Edgar Sayre, former Sacramento City Councilman. They were one of the first residents of Hidden Valley and maintained a summer home in the valley for many years.

They now live high on a bluff overlooking beautiful Folsom Lake just a stone's throw from her beloved Hidden Valley. It won't surprise any of us if any day now she should come up with the exact number of fish in Folsom Lake—and incidentally—have the facts to prove it.

# *Historical Spots Near Hidden Valley*

## **THE UNION HOUSE**

The Union House is on the same road as the 16 mile House, The Old Auburn-Folsom Road. It was built by a man named Curtis in the early 50's. The original building was torn down but Mr. Beek built a beautiful home on the site and the old well has been preserved. Mr. Beek bought the property from the last owner, Martin Ludwig of Auburn. The original House, part of the house was shipped around the horn. This was a stage coach stop and the railroad ran right through the property. (See Hidden Valley Story).

## **STONE HOUSE**

The Stone House was a hotel and feed barn for people who traveled in the 1860's to 1870 between Sacramento and the country above the present site of Roseville. It was located a little east of Roseville. This place was built by Frank Bradley in the early 60's. The well known Chabot family of Oakland now own the property. A man by the name of Morgan now resides in the house. The house is built of cobblestones picked up from the surrounding country—the barn is also built of cobblestones with the stalls of wood. It is all standing and is being used. Pennsylvania Ravine runs through the property which was mined extensively in the early days.

## **THE FOUNTAIN HOUSE**

The Fountain House was built about the same time as the Stone House and for the same purpose. The property is now owned by Sam Cavitt of Roseville. This place is about 2 miles east of Roseville. It was destroyed by fire in the nineties. A house now stands on the site of the old building. It received its name from an old spring located on a hill behind the old building.

## **THE FRANKLIN HOUSE**

This was another station on the Sacramento-Auburn Wagon Road. It was built in the 50's by a man named Wiscon. The building burned down about 1905, nothing is there except a marker where the house stood. The present owner is Reader Crocker of Loomis.

## **THE WILDWOOD TAVERN**

This place was built along the old Folsom-Auburn Road and operated in the 1860's. The building was burned down but the old well now marks the site. J. A. Ferguson of Loomis is the owner.

## **THE SIXTEEN MILE HOUSE**

The 16 mile house was another overnight stopping place. It got its name because it was 16 miles from Sacto on the old Sacto.-Auburn Road. It was built by a Mr. Neff. It is now owned by Mr. Wachtells. The old building is still standing and is occupied.

## **THE MOUNTAIN HOUSE**

This is one of the oldest landmarks in Placer County. It was one of the finest in its time. The house is still standing although it has been remodeled. It is now the home of J. J. Brennan, President of the California Fruit Exchange. Mr. Brennan named it Kingmon after his wife's father who once owned the place.

It was once the hideout of Tom Bell, a notorious bandit of the times. Before he became a bandit Tom Bell was a physician and surgeon. Why he started a life of crime no one knows. Many times he would stay with a sick man until he had recovered, which showed he was kind at heart.

It is said that one time Tom Bell held up a Catholic Priest on the north end of the old suspension bridge over the American River near where the town of Big Gulch was a thriving community. The Priest said, "I know you are Tom Bell and you took my last twenty dollars." Tom then gave the priest his twenty back plus twenty of his own.

Another time Tom and his gang staged a holdup and were making a getaway when their horses tired so they stopped at Wildwood Tavern and stole some fresh horses from Sam Laird, who was the owner at that time. Sam took chase, sometimes coming within an hour to their camp. He finally traced them to Kern County where they left the horses and fled. Sam's nephew, Frank Laird, lives in Loomis.

# *The Leaning Pine of Hidden Valley*

By Jack Hurrell

*My home is on a rolling hill,  
Far from busy cities.  
And travelers often pass me by  
With looks of silent pity.*

*Their murmured sighs and tear filled eyes  
Are not for such as me.  
Why, my life has been more rich by far  
Than Their's will ever be.*

*I've seen the old time stages roll,  
With Wm. Gwynn Stage, on their side.  
And watched the miners grub for gold,  
And seen the vigilantes ride.*

*I've seen men kill with eyes of hate,  
And chuckle as they gloat.  
I've seen men meet a hero's end,  
And other a hangman's rope.*

*I've smelled the smoke of a thousand fires,  
That pioneers have laid.  
And watched an Indian Mother  
Suckle her new born babe.*

*I've seen young lovers hand in hand,  
And fallen women too.  
And watched the wild flowers bow their heads  
With the weight of morning dew.*

*I've felt the Summer's fiery blast,  
And Winter's bighting cold.  
But what care I for such as that,  
Because my heart is bold.*

*I call no man my master,  
So do not pity me.  
I've lived my life to the fullest,  
Tho' I'M just a twisted and fallen tree.*