



Founded July 24, 1968 and  
designated a 501(c)(3) in July 1971

**Truckee Donner Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 893**  
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**[www.truckeehistory.org](http://www.truckeehistory.org)**

## **ECHOES FROM THE PAST**

### **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

**DECEMBER 2017**

**ISSUE 4**

#### **Dear Members**

I am pleased to be your President again! The society is very lucky to have so many people supporting me. I can't say thank you enough to Barbara Czerwinski, Heidi Sproat, Ron Rettig, Karl Pape, Katie Holley, Greg Zirbel, Patricia Featherstone and our two new Research Cabin Crew Members, Dave and Judy DePuy. It is because of their dedicated energy and motivation that we can meet the challenge to accomplish the many projects we undertake.

If you have not looked at the website recently and seen the new **Image Collection** section, please do so. Heidi has been working very hard on this project. It takes many hours to put these photos on line for viewing, so please take a look! Also, Dave DePuy is now helping scan and number the collections so we will be adding more in the near future.

Short is simple, and that is what my message is today. May you all have a wonderful holiday season. We will be looking forward to updating you about new

projects in the next newsletter.

Respectfully,

Chaun Mortier, President

#### **CALENDAR**

Events will be posted online at our website

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## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

**2017-2018 EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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*Old Timers' Picnic,* [Chelsea Walterscheid](#)

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*Publicity, Position Open*

*Echoes From The Past, Newsletter Editor /  
Webmaster* [Heidi Sproat](#)

*TDHS eNews Editor,* [Heidi Sproat](#)

Truckee Donner Historical Society ("TDHS") Board meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m. at the Joseph Research Library at 10115 Donner Trail Road, Truckee. Board meetings are open to the public.

TDHS does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information in these articles.

TDHS retains the right to republish submitted material. Please contact TDHS for permission to use any content in this publication.

**Notice to Members**

In 2015, the TDHS Board of Directors approved a change in membership renewal to reflect the Society's bi-annual renewal schedule - January or July. For specific details, please visit our website.

We hope you have been continuing to enjoy this quarterly newsletter. We realize that sometimes printed copies are much easier to grab, but we will continue to distribute our Newsletter electronically. As always, the newsletter will be readily available online and accessible on a quarterly basis. If you are a TDHS member, an email will be sent to you advising you of posting.

Editor's Note: This Newsletter is interactive - it is designed to be read *online* and contains links to relevant source material and in many cases, links to larger images for easier viewing.

**James Tennant Rock Collection**

One of our TDHS regular volunteer members, Ron Rettig, has come across a slim volume of 1880 notes that appear to be from mineralogist James Tennant. In an effort to determine the source and significance of the work, Ron contacted the Geological Society in Piccadilly, London, and learned that Tennant is the author of several books on mineral specimens.

A noted gemologist, Tennant was the first Professor of Mineralogy at King's College, London, and Queen Victoria's official "Mineralogist." We have included a drawing of Mr. Tennant and a photograph from our collection of items presently on view at our Old Jail Museum. If you have ANY information about this collection, please contact us at Truckee-Donner Historical Society.

Tennant, James (1858). *Catalogue of fossils, found in the British Isles, forming the private collection of James Tennant, F.G.S.* London: J. Tennant, 149 Strand, W.C.

**Notes:** Found in the TDHS Old Jail Museum by Ron Rettig in July 2017. Book now in TDHS Joseph Research Library locked safe. The box with rocks specimens remains at the Old Jail Museum. Donor is unknown.

*Images for Tennant article, see page 3*

*Please get involved with your Truckee Donner Historical Society (TDHS). The only way we can offer programs and events is if YOU, as a volunteer, step up and get involved. TDHS is an all-volunteer, 501(c)(3) organization so any and all donations are gratefully appreciated and tax deductible. Our mailing address is Truckee Donner Historical Society, P.O. Box 893, Truckee, CA 96160.*

## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

*Tennant collection continued from page 2*

Ron also found a 20 page history on James Tennant written in 2015 which also includes images of his many collections. Link. (Below) Engraving of James Tennant, from his obituary in the March 12, 1881 "Illustrated London News." Adapted by the newspaper from an undated photograph.



Ron was also able to confirm with the Geological Society that the inscription and signature in our volume appeared to be genuine. More photos are available at this link.

(Right) Image of James Tennant Mineral collection located at Truckee-Donner Historical Society Old Jail Museum. Photo courtesy of Ron Rettig.



### Your Membership Corner

Have you ever wondered how we do what we do? Did you know we could not do what we do without you?

If you are reading this you are already taking the first step to answer these questions. You are showing your interest in Truckee! You are showing your passion about its history! These are just two of the common threads among all our faithful volunteers, members and yourself. Common threads are the engines that create action to get things done.

Action can transcend as active participation that produces the fruits of our volunteer efforts. Or action can be as simple as making a monetary year-end donation, a recurring donation, becoming a member, or renewing your TDHS annual membership. It is a fact that the work of our active volunteers would not be possible without the generous, consistent, and faithful monies generated through your donations and membership dues.

TDHS from its 1968 inception has been a 100% volunteer non-profit organization. TDHS has never and still does not receive any local, state or federal funding to help us do what we do! The Society's longevity and much needed stewardship of Truckee's large and small artifacts, historic photos and written history continue to flourish only with contributions from many founding families of Truckee, grants, and caring individuals by taking action in many ways.

Did you know our membership dues are payable with either a January or July renewal month? The choice is yours to make when you renew your membership. Just remember to select the month you prefer to pay your dues. If you forget we will assign the month closest to your payment date.

To join or renew your TDHS membership click onto our [Membership page](#). Here you will find our Membership Form to [download](#) to pay by check or select one of the membership levels of support to create a PayPal Subscription to automatically pay by debit or credit card after your first online payment. This page also provides a [Make a Donation button](#) to provide a one time or year-end donation. If you have any questions please send an email to: [membership@truckeehistory.org](mailto:membership@truckeehistory.org).

So, as 2017 concludes we hope you will keep TDHS in your thoughts and consider how you can make a difference by answering our questions with *your* personal action steps. Thank you!

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and wishes for a Happy 2018 filled with your own treasured memories.

Billie Cornell, Membership Chair



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

**What is 'Plug and Feather'?****By Chaun Mortier**

If you know what Plug and Feather is, raise your hands.

Historically, 'Plug and Feather' is a method for splitting rocks. Examples of this method have been found as far back as Egyptian times. It is a simple technique wherein the chosen stone is first examined to determine the direction of the grain. After the location of the split is chosen a line is scored on the surface of the stone. Holes are then cut or drilled along the line typically 10-20 cm apart. Sets are then inserted into the holes with the "ears" of the feathers facing the direction of the split line. The plugs are then struck with a stone maul in sequence. An audible tone from the wedges changes to a 'ringing sound' when the wedges are tight. Between each series of strikes, a pause occurs to allow the stone to react to the pressure. Eventually, a crack appears along the line and the stone splits.

In Egyptian times, Bronze plugs and feathers were used. In England, it is known as Feather and Tare. In 1803, Lt. Governor Robbins of Massachusetts was tasked with building a new prison. In a chance encounter, he met Mr. Tarbox who was using a modified method and was drilling as many holes as necessary instead of two or three as was standard. Tarbox was hired to teach this method to quarrymen in quarries in Massachusetts. The method spread rapidly and became the basis for the modern method still used today.<sup>1</sup>

So, what makes up a Plug and Feather set? Each set will include a metal wedge (plug) and two shims (feathers). The feathers will be wide at the bottom, tapered and curved at the top. When placed together the width of the set will be the same at the top and bottom.

Since these sets are generally narrow, no wider than a finger, nor long, the ensuing hole within reason will always be about as wide and deep as a finger. This makes it easy to identify this type of rock splitting versus other drilling methods. The method was used

to make building stones.

It would appear that this method was very popular in the early 1900s in the Truckee Area. Examples have been located in various locations which include the Old Jail Museum Garden, Hooligan Rocks (Safeway Center), Old Stone Garage (Now Totally Board), Truckee Cemetery (Headstone), Sierra College, and Private homes.<sup>2</sup>

An example of "dating" for use is the Retaining wall at the Truckee Veterans Memorial Building which sits on the site of Charles F. McGlashan's Mansion. McGlashan purchased the neighboring rocking stone and the hill in 1891. By 1893, the stone was encased in a tower as a museum. His house was finished by 1898. Turning to new issues, the subject of retaining the surrounding hill came to the forefront. His children became concerned that he might use the big boulders surrounding the house as the fodder for this wall. Cautiously they approached the subject one day with their father at lunch. In the following discussion, Mrs. McGlashan suggested using Hooligan Rock because of its nefarious reputation. As it was only a mile from the house and easily quarried, it was decided this would be ideal. A fine example of Plug and Feather can still be seen at the remaining rocks. Not only is there an example of the split line but there remains, in one of the rocks, an old set of Plug and Feather.<sup>3,4</sup>

We haven't yet finished our hunt for examples in Truckee! If you have evidence of Plug and Feather at your house or are aware of other examples of this kind of rock splitting, please let us know and we will come by and document it!

We have a number of images of examples of Plug and Feather. Here are just a few to view.

<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plug\\_and\\_feather](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plug_and_feather)

<sup>2</sup> Nick Sassarini home, S. River St.

<sup>3</sup> McGlashan, M. Nona. *Give me a Mountain Meadow*. 1977, pp. 11-13.

<sup>4</sup> Safeway Center, East End Driveway

*See images of examples of  
Plug and Feather next page 5*



Local Truckee examples of Plug and Feather



(Above) **Sassarini** home



(Above) **McGlashan** retaining wall; note Rocking Stone Tower visible in middle back of photo



(Above) More evidence on **McGlashan** retaining wall of Plug and Feather; again note Rocking Stone Tower is in the top right corner



(Above) More evidence at **McGlashan** retaining wall

**Sierra College, Truckee** - next 5 images



(Above) TDHS volunteers Barbara (yellow) and Heidi (green) climbing rocks at Sierra College on the hunt for more evidence of Plug and Feather



*Images continue on page 6*



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

*Plug and Feather images continued from page 5*



Photos still at Sierra College



## California Highway Patrol

**By Chaun Mortier**

It was a dark, snowy evening. Seriously, that thought can be one of peaceful ambience by the fireplace or standing out in the snow and wind clearing up a snarl of traffic on a cold and lonely highway.

This article is an attempt to consolidate the story of the California Highway Patrol – Truckee Division. To date, the California Highway Patrol has been a presence in this mountain paradise for 88 years. You see them on good days and on bad, driving the highways and streets; you might even have the pleasure of meeting one of the men or women, either by their enforcing the laws of the state or just some neighbors' back yard Bar-B-Que.

So, here is the chance to read about them, their history, and their part of keeping this, our home, safe.

There were three seeds that were planted that eventually helped create what we now know as the California Highway Patrol.

In May of 1853, the California State Rangers were created. They had one purpose only, to capture or kill Joaquin Murrieta and his gang, the Five Joaquias. This was a very short-lived agency, as by July of 1853, their task had been performed with the death of Mr. Murrieta. The Rangers were then disbanded.<sup>1</sup>

The second of these seeds, California State Police (CSP), was founded in 1887. Their assignments were to protect State Agencies, the Governor, and the state capitol. They were also tasked with patrolling the aqueduct systems, performing tax seizures, and providing investigative services. They are still an active agency.<sup>2</sup>

The third seed was created in 1910. This was the direct parent seed of the Highway Patrol. The State Traffic Patrol was created due to the increasing number of automobiles on the roadways at that time.

On August 14, 1929, California Highway Patrol was born. Their primary responsibility was to enforce

*CHP article continues in page 7*



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

CHP article continued from page 6

traffic laws on county roads and state highways.<sup>3</sup> In November of 1929, the State bought 75 automobiles and 300 Patrol Cycles.<sup>4</sup>

In 1931, The Highway Patrol was initially a Department within the Division of Motor Vehicles and Truckee was under the Roseville umbrella. It was then the Division of Law Enforcement.<sup>5</sup>

To understand the whys and wherefores of the agency, it is necessary to take a look at the reason they were created in the first place.

In 1900, there were 780 vehicles registered in the State. In 1995, there were 22,431,749, not including the 532,053 motorcycles.<sup>6</sup> By 2005, there were 32,487,477 and 659,184 motorcycles; 2006 vehicles were at 33,182,058 and motorcycles 709,947. This growth of public use of motorized vehicles is what triggered the need for enforcement.<sup>7</sup>

In 1941, communications between dispatch and officers was by means of two-way radios. In 1942, the CHP Auxiliary was formed. Interesting details emerged because of World War II. There was a fabric shortage, so the use of long uniform coats was discontinued and the birth of the Eisenhower Jacket came to be. By 1947, the CHP separated from the Department of Motor Vehicles and became a Department. The current uniform style was adopted, and the current shoulder patch was created in 1958. In 1959, Individual ID numbers began and Badge numbers indicate rank and seniority.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America: An Encyclopedia edited by Wilbur R. Miller.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.chp.ca.gov/home/about-us/the-history-of-the-california-highway-patrol>

<sup>4</sup> Oakland Tribune, November 17, 1929

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.chp.ca.gov/home/about-us/the-history-of-the-california-highway-patrol/milestones-in-time>

<sup>6</sup> Federal Highway commission Statistics, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ohim/summary95/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policyinformation/statistics.cfm>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.chp.ca.gov/home/about-us/the-history-of-the-california-highway-patrol/milestones-in-time>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.policecarwebsite.net/fc/capdcars/chp/chp30.html>



## Truckee and the Beginnings

Traveling back to before 1929, to the State Traffic Officer, we find a W.C. Fouyler patrolling Highway 40 between Donner Summit and Stateline. On July 8, 1929, the Nevada State Journal expounds upon his work with the heading "Truckee Speed Cop Makes Lot "Pinches."

Indications are that Officer Fouyler was possibly also the First California Highway Patrol officer for the Truckee Region as history indicates that regional officers were absorbed into the Highway Patrol. Although the photos are not exactly dated, from research, we know that this vehicle on the streets of Truckee was a California Highway Patrol Vehicle. The best guess is this is a 1932 Ford.<sup>9</sup>



Photos Courtesy of Thomas Macaulay from the L.E. and Nina Smith Photo Collection, Truckee-Donner Historical Society.

CHP article continues on page 8

## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

CHP article continues from page 7



The first station (above) for the Patrol was located across the what is now the High School. This was next to the Emigrant Trail Lodge (2017: Front Street Pizza) \*Courtesy of Truckee-Donner Historical Society. This picture, although not dated, appears to be in the late 40s and this resembles a late 40s Buick.



By 1953 the Patrol had moved into its second office, (above) located on Highway 40. This building was in the General Vicinity of the now (2017) Christian Science Building.



Pictured: Marty Sturcke, Tom Sheehan, C.B. Maynard, Roy Stallard, ? Peterson, Captain Richard Langner and Commissioner Bernard Caldwell. \* In TDHS collection

## Truckee Speed Cop Makes Lot 'Pinches'

TRUCKEE, Cal., July 27.—With summer motor touring at its height State Traffic Officer W. C. Fouyler, who patrols the highway from the Donner summit, through Truckee to the Nevada state line, is working long hours, bringing in many offenders.

Sunday morning at 1 o'clock, while Claude C. Lauretser, wife and party of Napa, were driving along the shore of Donner lake, a car piloted by Dick Ahlf of Hobart Mills, collided with them, demolishing the larger car, the officer said. Mr. Lauretser and a friend, Mrs. Yeumans of Donner lake, were treated at Truckee for face cuts and bruises about the body.

A third machine, driven by John Kopco, crashed into the standing cars. Kopco, at a preliminary hearing pleaded not guilty to a charge of reckless driving.

Edwin G. Lozano of Reno pleaded guilty before Justice C. A. Ocker to a charge of reckless driving while under the influence of liquor and was fined \$250, which he paid.

Boyd Harvey of Davis was picked up speeding 60 miles an hour along the Donner lake road. He pleaded guilty and was fined.

J. S. Kingsley of Reno pleaded guilty to speeding through Truckee at 3 o'clock Sunday morning, and was fined.

July 8, 1929 Nevada State Journal



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

CHP article continued from page 8



McIver's Garage stood where Donner Pass Road now runs between The Truckee Hotel and the Beacon Station (BCS095)



William Gautsche, Donner Summit (DS009)



In 1964, plans were put into motion for a new office that would house the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Highway Patrol. That office was developed for a 20-year occupancy. The building still stands today. The office for the Highway Patrol Department of

Motor Vehicles moved out eventually to the Shopping Center to the west. CHP is currently in the process of building a new station across from Truckee Donner Recreation and Parks at the site of the Old U.S. Forest Service Building.



Although going from one officer to five to 26 in the 70s to the compliment now, the California Highway Patrol – Truckee has always been an integral part of the Truckee Scene. Officer Gautche recalled in an interview that when he arrived in Truckee in 1951, there were 800 people. Today there is well over 16,000.

Although this is just a small window of the History of the Highway Patrol in Truckee, there is more to come. From single officer shifts to the Internet, many avenues have opened for a much larger and detailed written history. As chapters are developed, they will be shared.

### Update on a Prior Article about the Steamer **TRUCKEE**

One of our eagle eye researchers happened upon a recently posted *Los Angeles Herald* article in the California Digital Newspaper Collection ("CDNC") about the November 18, 1897 running aground of the Steamer **TRUCKEE** upon the Umpqua land spit. On its way from Tillamook to San Francisco, the **TRUCKEE** succumbed to a terrifying squall, and was a total loss. Even after discharging its load of lumber, (the ship was owned by The Truckee Lumber Company of San Francisco), the **TRUCKEE** was no match for the gale force winds. Our original TDHS article was published in our September 2015 Echoes, pp. 5, 7. This new newspaper online article is available at this CDNC link. Enjoy catching up.

## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

**2017 TDHS Accomplishments**

Thank you to all our volunteers who have dedicated their time, talents, and energies to continue to serve the mission of preserving our rich Truckee history.

- \* Participated in practice hikes and actual Donner Party Hikes - several TDHS members were guides
- \* Performed Old Jail Museum and Garden work on a dozen days
- \* Participated in interview for television show
- \* Toured the Statewide Museum Collections, State of California in Marysville
- \* Participated in Air Show and Family Festival
- \* "Nick's" Pond cleanup Day at Truckee Springs
- \* Project Hike to view Plug and Feather Rocks at Sierra College
- \* Facilitated new plaque mounted in Old Jail Museum for Jacob Teeter
- \* Participated in Donner Hoedown, Donner State Park
- \* Coordinated 15 scheduled visits to the Old Jail Museum, 6 with unannounced groups
- \* Paid respects at three funerals: Nick Sassarini, Frank Titus, and Robert Zirbel
- \* Explored the possibility of registering the Masonic Arch with Nevada City Landmarks Commission
- \* Hiked to Mystic grave
- \* Bi-annual meeting for coordinated museum
- \* Facilitated sound recordings at the Old Jail Museum
- \* Swapped Old Jail Museum displays
- \* Maintained current TDHS website
- \* Planned and participated in TDHS Annual Dinner
- \* Celebrated Veterans Day with the Town of Truckee and hosted luncheon at Veterans Hall
- \* Hosted July Old Timers' Picnic at Truckee Regional Park
- \* Facilitated Friends of Veterans Hall Yard Sale

- \* Answered dozens of email inquiries about people, places, events, and historical memorabilia, including questions of historical interest and significance
- \* Received and commenced cataloging three separate multi-box donations
- \* Prepared and made a presentation to Truckee Rotary seeking a grant to assist with digitizing a growing image collection
- \* Coordinated and commenced an online Image Collection display using Hobart Mills images as the initial collection
- \* Opened and maintained a presence in the Joseph Research Cabin weekly on Thursdays for public access and individual research
- \* Set up and hosted TDHS information booth on one Truckee Thursday
- \* Coordinated and participated in the Third Annual Collaborative "Fund Raiser" for TDHS with Bar of America, "No One Goes Hungry"

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Truckee-Donner Historical Society submitted an Application for designated national historical status for the Truckee Veterans Memorial Building and Rocking Stone Tower to the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service in April 2017. The Application NPS 10-900 was recently returned to the Truckee-Donner Historical Society with recommendations and suggestions for more information. A revised NPS application will be resubmitted early 2018.



## 2017 Old Jail Museum Visits

The Old Jail Museum welcomed some 3,736 visitors in 2017. In addition, there were 65 visitors from schools and tours. In 2017, there were about 300 fewer visitors than last year, but we believe this is due to the multitudes of visitors arriving at the same time; we could not count them all quickly enough.

The following numbers reflect those who signed our visitor guest book.

Bay Area	62	California (outside Northern CA)	31
Along I-80	27	East Coast	22
Truckee Area	21	Midwest	18
Nevada	16	Southern States	11
West Coast	9	Alaska	2
Hawaii	1		

We also had visitors from Brazil, England, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Slovenia, and South Africa.

In Memory of Pat McCartney

Thank you to our faithful docents, support group, and tour guides.

Karl Pape

Patricia Featherstone (Isabella Bird)

Chaun Mortier (Madam M)

Dennis Cook (Captain Culpepper)

Beverly Cook (Irish Rose)

Peter Kolp

Ron Rettig (The Banker)

Katie Holley

Norm Justesen (Snake Bite)

Ron Grove

Jerry Blackwill

John McCormick

Greg Zirbel (The Old Miner)

Steve Harris

Richard Joslin (Toot)

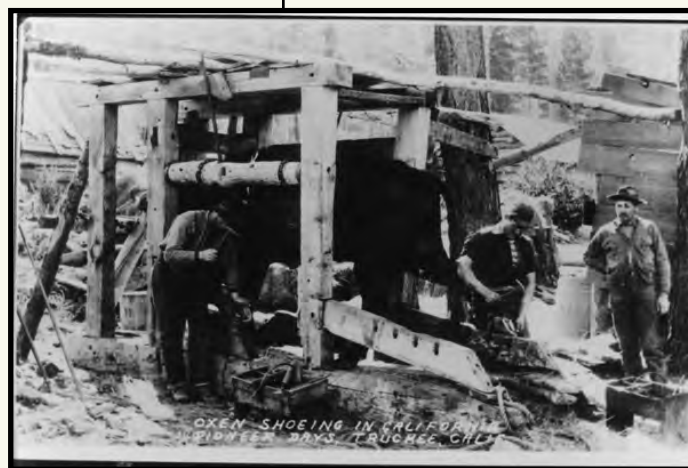
Delilah, our canine companion

## Rotary Grant for Digitization Status Of Image Collection

By Heidi Sproat



Truckee-Donner Historical Society is the grateful recipient of a grant from the Rotary International Club of Truckee who granted us funds to commence the digitization of many recently donated photographs and artifacts. This initial effort has been successful. We are pleased to report that as TDHS volunteers are diligently combing through the mounds of donations to select representative samples of images that best display Truckee's history, TDHS volunteers have digitized over 300 images from times gone by. At present we are making available our **Hobart Mills Collection**. We completed a design of an Image Collection that is both "browsable" and "searchable" by subject matter or by individual collection. TDHS sincerely thanks the Truckee Rotary for their grant which has enabled us to start this most important project. Digitization project link - **TDHS Image Collection**.



Coincidentally, one of our members discovered this link in The University of California "Calisphere" Image Collection. To our surprise, our own Hobart Mills collection also holds this image. If you search in our Image Collection for "shoeing" and "oxen", you will

see this image in our Hobart collection, HM0264. This image could be an H.K. Gage photograph taken sometime between 1874 - 1886; we are still trying to verify this information.

## The Story Behind the 1888 Commissioners Official Rail Road Map By Judy DePuy

If a picture is worth a thousand words, what is an old map worth? In this case, plenty. Found in the Truckee Donner Historical Society (TDHS) archive is an original Commissioners Official Rail Road Map of California (July 1, 1888). Thought to be the oldest map in the collection, the map brings us back to a time of change here in California and the importance of railroads to our local, state, and nation's development.

### Introduction of the Railroads

Railroad maps represent an important historical record, illustrating the growth of travel and settlement as well as the development of industry and agriculture in the United States. They depict the development of cartographic style and technique, highlighting the many achievements of early railroads.

Prior to the development of railroads, commerce in California had struggled in the 1850s and 1860s due to the significant geographic barriers that separated it from the rest of the country. The rugged terrain in the west, limited waterways and passable roads, made moving goods, passengers and communications slow, expensive, and many times unreliable. The discovery of gold, the desire to settle the new frontier, and the success of the eastern railroads further increased interest in building a railroad to the Pacific Ocean.

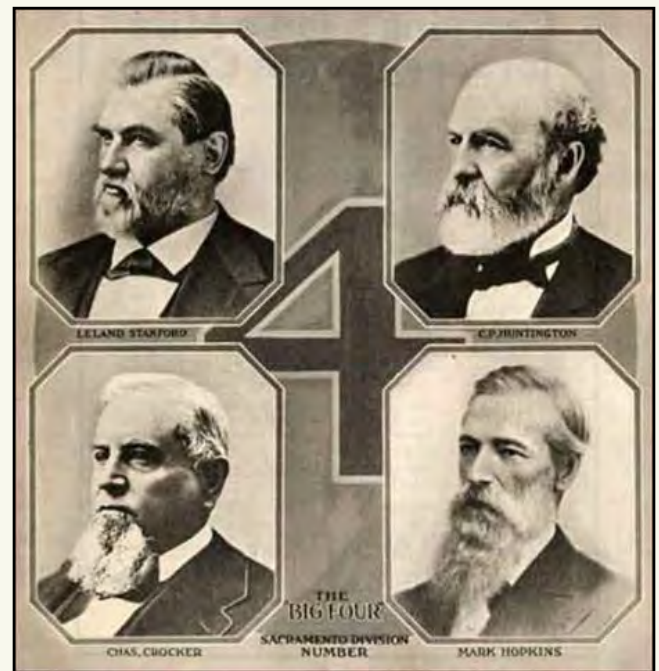
Theodore D. Judah, the engineer of the Sacramento Valley Railroad, became obsessed with the desire to build a transcontinental railroad. Judah found a central Sierra route that would tap the Comstock mining trade and build the western segment of his transcontinental railroad. Unable to procure federal funding for his ambitious plan, he secretly decided to form his own company. In 1860, he approached Leland Stanford, Collis P. Huntington, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker, leading Sacramento merchants, and soon convinced them that building a transcontinental line would make them wealthy by tapping the wealth of the

Nevada mining towns and utilizing forthcoming legislation for federal aid to help fund railroad construction.

It was through Judah's efforts and the support of President Abraham Lincoln (who saw military benefits in the railroad lines as well as the bonding of the Pacific Coast to the Union), that the Pacific Railroad finally became a reality.

### The Big Four

By the end of the 1870s the four merchants, known as the "Big Four", effectively monopolized California transportation. Their California railroads in 1877 had 2,340 miles of track, encompassing 85% of the rail lines in the state. The 1888 Commissioners map depicts the huge amount of control the Big Four had on railroad transportation.



(Above) <https://goo.gl/z245K7>

<http://tcrr.weebly.com/money-and-power.html>

*During the Civil War (1861-1865) President Abraham Lincoln wanted to connect the east and west coasts and ensure California would be a slave-free state. Originally, the flatter railroad route was to go south through Los Angeles (preferred by the southern Senators) but when the southern Senators left Congress and cut their connections to the Union that left only the northern Senators to vote and they preferred Judah's Sierra route.*



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

*Rail Road Map article continued from page 12*

Huntington continued to invest and acquire other railroads in new territories, using what had been learned in expanding and controlling California's railroads. Beginning in 1884 and finishing in 1887, the Big Four connected their California & Oregon Railroad in the northern Sacramento Valley to Portland and the Columbia River. They also absorbed other Oregon rail lines thus confirming their unrivaled western railroad empire. In 1887, the Southern Pacific Company acquired South Pacific Coast railroad, a narrow gauge that connected the San Francisco Bay Area and Monterey Bay communities. The 1888 Commissioners Rail Road Map depicts the change of ownership to the Southern Pacific Company.

From modest beginnings as Sacramento shopkeepers, the Big Four now ranked among America's richest and most powerful business leaders.

### Public Anti-Trust Sentiment

During the 1860s and 1870s there were significant conflicts between the Southern Pacific/Central Pacific and its rivals over control of routes, terminals, government subsidies, rail services and rates, and influence over public policies. Unfair price wars to the public were created to hurt competition. This created a sense of distrust and animosity towards the railroad and began the anti-railroad political movements across the nation.

Public concern over the unbridled power of the Southern Pacific Railroad grew. On April 15, 1880, a 3-member Railroad Commission was established, primarily to approve transportation prices. The board consisted of P.J. White, President, and A. Abbott and James W. Rea, Commissioners. They were elected by the people of California to serve a four year term starting from January, 1887 and are listed on the TDHS 1888 Rail Road Commissioners Map.

In trying to establish their authority, the Railroad Board ordered a reduction of 10% on the freight tariff of the Southern Pacific Railroad (Northern Division) mainline to and from San Francisco and other intermediate

stations. They posted the reduced rate schedule and sent a copy to the officers at Southern Pacific Railroad (Northern Division). Legal counsel for Southern Pacific Railroad responded saying the reduction would be too much of a burden on the company and they would not be able to cover operational costs. Southern Pacific quickly dominated this commission to its advantage. The Railroad Commission suspended the stated order until January 1888. Public outrage re-ignited.

### So What Happened?

The Commissioners Official Rail Road Map of California (July 1, 1888) captures a time of railroad consolidation and big tycoons. Fortunes were made and lost and the Government tried to keep up with the growing pains of a new nation.

Two years after the printing of the 1888 Rail Road Commissioners Map, Congress passed the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890. This landmark federal statute attempted to prevent the artificial raising of prices by restricting trade or supply. The purpose of the Sherman Act was to preserve a competitive marketplace to protect consumers from abuse and nefarious dealings by monopolists whose acts artificially preserved their monopoly status.

As for the Big Four, in 1890 Stanford and Huntington's business relationship fell apart. Stanford was absorbed with political aspirations and not interested in the business matters of the company. After Hopkins and Crocker passed away (1878, 1888), Huntington secured their interests in the Southern Pacific Company and forced his own election as company president by threatening to expose Leland for neglecting his business duties and jeopardizing Southern Pacific's interests by his politicking. Leland died 3 years later (1893).

### Conclusion

The Southern Pacific Railroad was the first railroad to connect Los Angeles to the rest of California and extend its lines as far as New Orleans. Before the railroads were built, it took emigrants 6-7 months to

## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

*Rail Road Map article continued from page 13*

travel from the Midwest to California. The transcontinental railroad reduced the time it took to fewer than 7 days. In 1888, change was happening fast.

Come visit the Truckee-Donner Historical Society and see the original 1888 Commissioners Rail Road map and learn more about our historic community.



(Above) Train Glenbrook Steam Engine  
May 23, 2015 By Greg Zirbel - Restored

### Sources:

Southern Pacific Railroad Company Records:  
1862-1997,  
(<https://searchworks.stanford.edu/view/4084828>)

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Richard J. Orsi, **Sunset Limited**, University of California Press, 2007, Pages 3-70.

Wikipedia: Big Four, California Public Utilities, Sherman Act

H.S. Crocker  
(<https://www.hscrocker.com/our-company.html>)

Library of Congress, historical maps

Comments from: Karl Pape, Jerry Blackwill (TDHS members)

### **Maker of the Map**

*On the bottom left corner of the Truckee Donner Historical Society map is the notation "Lith H.S. Crocker & Co. S.F.". Founded in 1856 in Sacramento, Crocker's first headquarters was a tent which had a small sign that simply read "H.S. Crocker Company Printers". As gold and silver poured down from Mother Lode and the state of Nevada, San Francisco became the center of the West Coast printing industry. In 1871, Crocker established its first printing and lithography plant. In 1885, Crocker built a five-story plant which was considered to be the finest commercial printing establishment in the West.*

*The 1888 Commissioners Official Rail Road Map is a color lithography map. Color lithography was used to distinguish regions and administrative divisions and was introduced in the 1850s. Color accentuated the many lines of intricate railroad networks and continued to be manually applied to many maps until the end of the 1800s.*

*TDHS research staff have not been able to locate another reference or copy of this 1888 map. The map donor remains unknown. The original map was restored and framed using funds from the TDHS and the TDRS (Truckee Donner Railroad Society). It can be viewed at the TDHS Joseph Research Library. Laminated map copies may be available for \$25 at the TDHS Research Library. Postage is extra if mailed. Higher resolution prints - suitable for larger framing - may also be available. Contact TDHS for more information.*

*Rail Road Map article continues with  
map on page 15*



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter

Rail Road Map article continued from page 14

And now, finally, the 1888 Commissioner's Official Rail Road Map. Enjoy.



## Echoes From The Past Newsletter



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