

THOMAS L. McFARLANE

Thomas L. McFarlane, one of the oldest and most expert miners on the Pacific coast, was born in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, in January, 1840. Meeting with financial reverses by which he lost his property, Mr. McFarlane's father moved with his family to Iowa when Thomas was four years of age. He died in that State some twelve years ago. In 1859 Mr. McFarlane drove six yoke of oxen across the plains for a company who were freighting for the United States Government from Fort Leavenworth to Salt Lake. The train was composed of thirty wagons and thirty-six men, and the company received an average of fifty cents per pound for transportation. On reaching Salt Lake, Mr. McFarlane and seven comrades bought a team and came through to California that fall, reaching Placerville late in September. The same autumn he came down to Kern County [California], where he had two brothers engaged in farming, and joining them he pursued the same vocation for two years. In the fall of 1861 he came to San Bernardino County and spent the winter Holcomb valley. This was the season of the great flood, and the low lands of the San Bernardino valley were entirely inundated, forming a continuous lake of water many miles in extent. In the spring of 1862 Mr. McFarlane returned to the Kern River country and went into the mines, where he and his three comrades took out \$1,600 apiece in six weeks. In 1863 and 1864, he and his brothers built what is known as the McFarlane toll road, which extended from the Kern River to the Tulare valley, a distance of about forty miles of mountain road. They kept the road until 1870, when a lack of travel, owing to a change of outlet by way of Los Angeles to the seaboard, they were compelled to surrender their charter and lost their investment. In February, 1870, he and his brother started for Ivenpagh (*sic.*), their total capital being \$450. After reaching their destination and prospecting until they were about worn out and disheartened, the subject of this sketch accidentally ran on to an uncovered ledge of rich silver ore, and hence was the first discoverer of that now famous mine from which several million of dollars have since been taken. He and his brother incorporated as the Ivenpagh (*sic.*) Mining Company, which was afterward reincorporated as the Ivenpagh (*sic.*) Consolidated Mining Company: this firm has taken out nearly two million dollars. Mr. McFarlane still owns valuable mining property there. His brother, A.J. McFarlane, was the discoverer of the Long Tom gold mine in Kern County, which has been very productive. There were four of them interested in it, and after working it profitably for a time they sold it for \$20,000. In 1876 Mr. McFarlane started into the livery business in San Bernardino. He has also tried merchandising and

dealing in real estate, but his chief success has been in mining.

In 1878 he married Miss Seely, daughter of David Seely, one of the early pioneers of San Bernardino Valley [California], and they have resided in the city ever since. Their homestead comprises nearly an acre of land on Sixth Street between L and D streets. They have two children, a son and a daughter.

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