

# Stockton Republican

## 1854

“Hope Long Deferred,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, January 14, 1854, p. 2:

“Mr. Millmore, in his late trip to the Tejon pass, fell in with a settler away down in the Tulare valley, ‘about a hundred miles from nowhere.’ He was curious to inquire what led him to select so lonely a spot for a location. ‘Well,’ said the man ‘it’ll be valuable some day, when the great railroad comes this way.’ That man had *faith*.”

“Later News from the Indian Reservation—Arrival of Capt. Howard,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, January 20, 1854, p. 2:

“Capt. Howard arrived last night from the Tejon Pass. He left the Indian reservation on the 10<sup>th</sup> of the present month, and he gives the most glowing description of Lieut. Beale’s experiment with the Indians. He is working wonders. There are now some 2,300 of these wild inhabitants of the Sierra Nevada now profitably engaged in the cultivation of the soil, and the cry is still they come, as every day brings some new accession. It is a mistake to suppose that these are Mission Indians; the vast majority are men who have frequently been brought in conflict with the whites. Runners have been sent to every part of the State, and even tribes of the Sacramento region have sent their representatives to inquire into the condition of affairs, and all are delighted at the prospect. Lieut. Beale had only sixty Indians to commence with, but the news soon reached the ears of one of the most influential chiefs in the southern district and he brought in every man of his tribe.

“Capt. Howard says that the objection which some urged against Lieut. Beale’s plan, namely, that it is situated in the midst of a county which will ultimately be settled by the whites, has no force. It appears that his reservation is bounded on the south by a desert country, on the west by a lake, and on the east by the mountain region; on the south again lies an almost desert country. [Check:] The Indians reside comfortably in tule [houses] of their own construction, but in a short time, Lieut. Beale will teach them to erect adobe buildings. [Check:] There are no ardent spirits permitted [within] the reservation. The lakes and streams afford an abundance of fish and the prairie abounds with game. Many of the Indians are employed in dressing skins. Some specimens of their work we have seen. Capt. Howard had a ‘big talk’ with the Merced Indians the day before yesterday.

“The Four Creek country is fast settling up. On Tule river, where six months ago there was only one family, there is now a population of some fifty persons.”

“The Indian Reservation,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, January 21, 1854, 2:1:

“In yesterday’s issue we furnished our readers with some interesting particulars relative to the proceedings of Lieutenant Beale, at the Indian reservation. Owing to the lateness of the hour, when the intelligence was furnished, we were unavoidably compelled to omit one or two items.

“On this reservation are numerous gulches, well watered by never failing springs. These gulches, or ravines, are now occupied and cultivated by the Indians, who are divided into companies, each company having a rancheria.

“There are 2,000 head of cattle, 500 goats, and almost an innumerable horde of hogs on the reservation. The Indians are well fed, well, though, of course, plainly clothed, contented and happy.

“In our view, Lieut. Beale’s plan has been completely successful, and if he be sustained by the government and allowed to provide another reservation for the northern districts of California, we shall have no further trouble with the Indian population.”

“Ferry on Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, January 21, 1854, p. 2:

“Capt. Howard informs us that Major Gordon and Capt. Dill have established a ferry on Kern river. This enterprise will prove a great accommodation to cattle dealers and others who have occasion to travel on that route to the Lower Country.”

[Check year:] “Cultivation of the Tule Lands,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, January 31, 1854, 2:1:

“The feasibility of making the tule lands available for agricultural or gardening purposes has generally been doubted; but in the neighborhood of Stockton the experiment has been successfully tried. There are some five garden spots within seven miles of this city, situated on the banks of the San Joaquin. The land, a year ago, presented a very uninviting aspect, being covered with tules of the most rank growth, and being overflowed for months together. The traveler, as he passed on the steamboat, at that time, little dreamed that such ‘country’ could be made valuable and productive. However, a few energetic men, who were not ashamed to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, nor afraid to defy the armies of mosquitoes that so long has held undisputed reign in that vicinity, resolved to bring the marsh under cultivation. Some tried at first to build a levee, but owing to the porous nature of the soil, it was speedily washed away. They then set to work, in the dry season, to raise the land itself. In this undertaking, they have succeeded. Ditches have been dug in the rear of their little ranches, and the soil from them heaped on the garden. Thus the land has been ‘made’ and is now some four feet above high water mark.

“The soil is of the richest description. Three crops of vegetables can be raised on it in one year. At the present time the gardens present a most luxuriant appearance, and the gardeners themselves are in high spirits. The work of reclamation was a great and most useful undertaking, and the bold, patient and industrious projectors deserve the public thanks.”

[Check year:] P. Edw. Connor to Jas. M. Scofield, “From the Tejon—Movements of Lieut. Beale—Farming on the Indian Reserve—Indians in Council, &c., &c.,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 11, 1854, p. 2 (Tejon Military Reserve, Feb. 2, ’54.):

Roving Jack, “Interesting from Tulare—How they Live in the Far South,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 27, 1854, 2:4 (Merced River, March 23, 1854):

“MERCED RIVER, March 23, 1854.

“SIR:—Having just returned from a tour through the southern portion of Tulare county, I take occasion to drop you a line, giving a short sketch of the times which I have seen, and at some future period I will give you a general description of the country as I found it, as I must say that there is no country perhaps under the sun that remains so little known abroad as do the many lovely portions of Tulare county. I was as far south as the Four Creeks and Tule River. This

country possesses advantages over almost every other portion of California in point of agricultural resources; it has the greatest abundance of good timber and a vast body of rich arable land, vying in point of fertility with the productive valleys of the ancient Nile. There are at this time some four hundred citizens permanently located in the vicinity of the Four Creeks. They seem a happy, intelligent, law-abiding and hospitable people. They have their county organized, and have their quota of civil officers, but have no use for them. They live in peace and harmony, and seldom, if ever[,] disagree. They enjoy good health; hence I would recommend as a desirable place for either lawyers or doctors, should they happen to take it into their heads to emigrate to this Eden of California, that they should supply themselves with good ploughs and the necessary accompaniments and they will doubtless find abundant practice and a very rich reward. The citizens of Four Creeks are hospitable and magnanimous towards the wayfarer, as I had an advantageous opportunity of testing upon my exploring tour. A fine ball came off at the beautiful little village of Visalia, (the county seat of Tulare county,) at which I am proud to say I was an invited guest. Imagine my surprise at seeing quite a number of the fair sex grace the neat little ball room with their presence. We had an excellent support [supper], served up very tastefully by Dr. Matthews.

"I have just learned that the report of the murder and robbery of Capt. Howard is utterly false, as he (Capt. Howard,) is quite well, and has as flattering prospects in life as any of us.

"Business is going on finely at the Indian Reservation. The report of the Indians leaving Lieut. Beale is also false. The Indians upon the frontier are very peaceable; they seem to have the utmost confidence in the soldiers who are stationed along the borders at Fort Miller and Woodville.

"ROVING JACK."

[Check year:] "Latest from the Indian Reservation—Interesting Intelligence—Lead Mine, &c.," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 30, 1854, 2:2:

"Capt. P. E. Connor, who left the Indians Reservation on [—] the Tejon Pass, some fifteen days ago, arrived in this city yesterday morning. He had kindly furnished the following interesting particulars of affairs in that region:

...

"... Several bands of cattle and sheep have lately passed through the Canada [Cañada] de las Uvas into the Tulare valley. There has been no travel through the Tejon latterly; the Canada de las Uvas being a much lower pass and, consequently, a much better road. Both Passes open into the Tulare valley and are fifteen miles apart."

...

"From Mariposa," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, May 1, 1854, 2:5 (*Mariposa Chronicle*):

"The Mining news from Mariposa is very encouraging. The *Chronicle*, of Friday, says:

...

"AGRICULTURAL.—From every part of our county we received the most encouraging accounts of the prospects of the miner and agriculturalist. The valley of the Merced is actually teeming [—] fields of grain. On the Mariposa, Chowchilla, and Fresno [Fresno] creeks, many permanent settlements have been made, and extensive tracts of the best land in the world are already under cultivation; and even here, away up in the mountains, many patches of barley and wheat are to be seen, giving promise of an abundant return—conclusively demonstrating that our mountain soil is adapted to agricultural, as well as mining purposes."

...

“The Wheat Crop of San Joaquin,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, May 25, 1854, 2:1:

“We have lately reason some estimates of the wheat crop of San Joaquin County, which our agricultural friends say are calculated to leave a wrong impression on the public mind. A gentleman who, himself, has 400 acres of wheat in ear, informs us that there will be *at least* twenty thousand acres of wheat harvested in San Joaquin County this year. There are not less than twelve thousand acres on the upper part of the Calaveras and what is known as the Mormon Slough. From the Four Mile House, on the Sonora road, to Comstock’s place, it is one continuous field of wheat.

“Notwithstanding the recent cold nights, the crop will average at least thirty bushels to the acres; n the Calaveras it will average forty bushels. Thus, we estimate that San Joaquin County will this year yield 600,000 bushels of wheat.”

[More to come.]

“Important News from the South—Discovery of Gold on Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, May 29, 1854, 2:1:

“By private letter we have received intelligence that gold has been discovered on Kern River. The locality of the discovery is about midway between the Four Creeks and the Tejon Pass, and will ultimately prove of great importance to the settlers in that vicinity, affording as it will, a market for the produce. Other discoveries will be made, and the time is not far distant, we think, when the placers of that section of country—from the San Joaquin to the Tejon—shall become numerously settled by sturdy miners. Then the southern portion of the San Joaquin valley will be settled and cultivated, and its agricultural resources fully developed. Even now thousands of acres are in a promising state of cultivation in that vicinity, and the yield of grain of vegetables, we are assured, will be sufficient this year to supply the demand all [sou?]th of the Mariposa [Creek], including Indians and whites.

“We extract from our correspondent, as follows: ‘I have just received news, by Mr. Worlding [Worland], from Kern River, of recently discovered gold mines at its head waters. The streams being high they could not prospect.—In places where they washed upon the banks of the river, they found it would yield from five to twelve cents to the pan. He thinks the prospect good, and has ordered three loads of goods, which will be the first ever taken to that section of country.’

“This news is of great importance to our citizens, as it afford a new market for our merchants and tradesmen.”

“Cheering News from the Tulare Region,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 6, 1854, 2:2:

“The recently reported discoveries of gold on Kern river are fully corroborated by later intelligence from that quarter. We yesterday conversed with a gentleman, just down from the San Joaquin, from whom we further learned that the discoveries are not confined to Kern river, but that the gulches, creeks and ravines intervening between that and White river, for a space of thirty miles, prospect flatteringly for very rich diggings. Mr. Worlding [Worland], who just made the discoveries, has sent forward several loads of goods, and intends locating a trading post on one of the creeks between the two rivers. He also hired, on the San Joaquin, about thirty Chinamen intending to engage in mining as well as trading.

“On Saturday we saw a gentleman from Four Creeks, in town, making large purchases for the new diggings, and he informed us that many of the farmers, in that vicinity, had abandoned, temporarily, their ranches, to visit the new *placers*.”

“On the head waters of the San Joaquin, where mining is as productive as in any other section of the State, the miners have nearly depopulated the camps thereabout and gone to Kern river. One reason for this, however, is that the high stage of water at present precludes their operating on the San Joaquin.

“The gold found at the new diggings is *fine* in size and quality, and prospects from one to four bits to the pan—in some places more than that average and in others, less.

“We are informed that a party of gentlemen were to leave our city yesterday, or to-day, for Kern river.

“A writer in the *Mariposa Chronicle* says that the news has occasioned quite a stampede amongst the miners of Millertown and the neighborhood round about. All who can leave, are going to the new diggings, many leaving claims that are paying from five to twelve dollars a day. The writer proceeds—neither mules nor horses can be obtained for love or money. Both of our Justices, Stallo and Donaldson, are leaving; they say as there are no citizens here, their services will not be required, and they consider that they have as good a right to a share of the golden egg as others.”

“From Mariposa,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 6, 1854, p. 2:

“The mining intelligence from the Mariposa region is very cheering, without taking into consideration the important discoveries on Kern river.

“The *Mariposa Chronicle* says:

...

“BARLEY CROP.—The barley crop on the Merced, and in other parts of the county, is now nearly all gathered. We are informed that the yield will not be as large as that of last year, and that there was also much less ground put down in barley, although the difference is more than made up by the large amount of wheat sown.

“NEW RACE TRACK.—Mr. L. Vining has completed a new race track just beyond Hopperville, 900 yards long, on which the bloods have been trying their nags during the past week. We hear of a \$400 match being made, to come off in a few days.”

“A New Market Opened,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 13, 1854, 2:2:

“The best news that has reached Stockton in many months, is the intelligence of the discovery of gold on Kern river. Thus a rich and extensive gold region has been opened to the enterprise of our people, and a new market for the merchants of this city. We anticipate that shortly a large population will seek employment in the country south of the San Joaquin [River], and that the miners from the comparatively exhausted [?] northern mines will at length find it advantageous to come hitherward.

“The discovery will eventually be beneficial to Stockton in another point of view. It will, we think, lead to the navigation of the upper San Joaquin. The distance from Stockton to the gold region is 350 miles. If a steamer were placed on the river, and run between the great Tulare lake and Stockton, 250 miles of land travel would entirely be avoided. We believe that a bill has already passed the Legislature for the construction of a canal to connect the San Joaquin river with the lake. The enterprise might be accomplished by a small outlay of capital, and would prove advantageous as well to the settlers on the Four Creeks as to the miners on Kern river.

“Several loads of merchandise and provisions have already left this city for the newly discovered mines. Compton, Sanderson & Co. alone, we understand, sent off last week, three heavily laden teams.”

“News from Kern River—Great Excitement,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 13, 1854, 2:3:

“Mr. Westcott arrived on Saturday, from the new diggings on Kern river. From him and other gentlemen, we collect the following information:

“The new diggings are situated some 350 miles from Stockton, high up in the elevated region, in the direction of Kern’s pass. The traveler follows the southern trail until he strikes Posey [Creek], beyond White river, thence he proceeds along an Indian trail (by which Fremont came to California on his last trip) in a south-easterly direction. Kern river, where the gold has been struck, is a stream about as large as the Mokelumne. The flats forming its banks are represented to prospect richly, and [?] of the whole adjacent mining country the [—] be said. For twenty miles from [—] strikes the diggings, the road [—] rugged; so much so that it is necessary [—] to use pack mules in the transportation of provisions, &c. Wagons are of no service.

“Messrs. Compton, Sandersoh [Sanderson] & Co. exhibited to us yesterday, a package of dust, which Mr. Westcott had washed from the surface of the earth. It is fine and smooth, and differs somewhat from the gold found in Mariposa. Our informant states that there is plenty of dirt that pays four cents to the pan, which is equal to \$10 per day to the man.

“At the present time there are only some 75 miners on Kern river, but it is expected that large number are now on their way thither. Great excitement exists throughout Mariposa county respecting the new discovery, and many of the best citizens are preparing to go South.

“As may well be imagined, the settlers of Tulare county—the Four Creeks region—are in high glee. Kern river is only 60 miles distant from Visalia, so that they will shortly have a ready market for their produce.

“There is no doubt that the reports from the new diggings are true in every particular.—The gold region resembles, in geographical feature, the region around Hangtown, and extends over a vast area.”

C. D. Gibbes, “Some Description of the Great Tulare Lake and Lake Slough,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 14, 1854, 2:3:

“Mr. C. D. Gibbes had kindly furnished us with the following description of the Great Tulare Lake and of the slough with connects it with Kern Lake. In a postscript [postscript] to his communication, he intimates that life in that remote region is not of the pleasantest kind. He says ‘the thermometer stands at 88<sup>o</sup>, and the mosquito bites strong.’

“TULARE COUNTY, }

“In Camp on Lake Slough, June 4, ’54.}”

“Sirs: Supposing that some information of this portion of the country will be acceptable to the public, I take the opportunity of sending by a Mexican who is going to Los Angeles, a few hurried lines.

“From about six mils south of Tule river, the country east of Tulare Lake, and the slough connecting it with Kern Lake, for at least a distance of fifteen miles east, presents a barren, uninviting appearance, generally a poor alkaline soil, in which a horse, in many places, gets up to his knees at every step he takes; and the only growth is greasewood, wild sage and chapperel [chaparral] bushes, with occasional patches of salt grass. Water is very scarce. As we approach the Sierra Nevada, however, the land becomes of a better quality, with good timber on the streams, and in the valleys at the foot hills, some good selections for farms can be obtained.

“Tulare Lake is a little more than fifty miles long, and about thirty miles from the shore on the east side, south of Tule river, it presents an open view to the base of the coast range, the margin being generally low and muddy and the water shallow for a distance of half a mile it, it being not more than two feet in depth. The south end of the lake is covered with tules for some distance

out, and is about one hundred miles east, and one hundred and fifty miles south of Stockton; making the distance in an air line of one hundred and eighty miles.

“The slough connecting Kern and Tulare lakes spreads out in a tule swamp, from two to four miles wide, for a distance of thirty miles up. I attempted to run a line through, but before I had gone a mile we passed through water up to our necks, and had to return. We therefore had to travel more than thirty miles from the lake before we found a place to cross. The stream here was 120 feet wide, and 25 or 30 feet deep, with a very strong current.— . . .”

[More to come.]

“Late from Carson Valley,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 28, 1854, p. 2:

E. Edward Hewitt, “From Pacheco’s Pass,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 8, 1854, 2:3 (Pacheco’s Pass, San Luis Rancho, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 1854):

W. J. Howard, “Interesting Letter from Tejon Pass,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 8, 1854, 2:3-4 (Tejon Pass, June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1854):

“TEJON PASS, June 24, 1854.

“DEAR SIR: Yesterday we arrived here, and found all in good health. Lieut. Beale has moved into his new house, and Mr. Beale appears to be pleased with her change of location. Last night the Indians had a grand dance in front of Lieut. B.’s house. Among the spectators present were Col. Mansfield and Lieut. Moore, with an escort of ten dragoons. To-day they start up the country.

“The crops here look fine. The Indians have just got through harvesting. Mr. Bishop gave Col. Mansfield a bunch of wheat, the growth of their fields, which excellent any thing I ever saw in my life, some of the heads measuring five and six inches in length, and the grains exceedingly large and well filled. Corn is excellent, and is now ready for the table; pumpkins plentiful.

[Possible comma after “good land.”] “I prospected on Tule river recently, but did not discovery any thing worth mentioning, except beautiful valleys, good land and a fine grazing country. With regard to reported gold discoveries on Kern river, I think them false to a certain degree. There is gold there, and dirt that will pay two cents to the pan, but that will not pay to work it. All the gold that is found appears to be taken out of the sand or decomposed granite. In washing a pan of this sand or granite there is not sufficient dirt to muddy the water used in washing. I think the prospect is far better on Tule river than on Kern.

“I met Mr. Alex. Godey yesterday, on his way to Tulare Lake to bring a tribe of Indians in; he had with him a number of Indian boys who were acting in the capacity of teamsters. He told me that he and a party had prospected Kern river when very low, and that it would not pay. Yesterday I also met with Judge Stallou and Rubidoor, just returned from a prospecting tour on Kern river. They report that it is a complete humbug. Mr. R. is an old mountaineer, and he states that there is more gold to be found on the Mohave than on Tule river. It seems to me that the Kern river excitement was gotten up for the benefit of a few (ferry owners). We met Mr. Worlinding’s [Worland’s] Chinamen returning to the San Joaquin. We left Dr. Keith on Tule river with a party of Jews; they intend to prospect well before they leave.

“A gentleman just in from the Colorado, states that the gold discoveries in that country only exist in the imagination. He also states that Capt. Smith is near Los Angles [Angeles], on his way up, with some of his men, and a number had left him to go to Sonora, Mexico.

“Yours,  
W. J. HOWARD.”

P. E. Connor, "Letter From Capt. Conner—Later from the Indian Reservation," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 12, 1854, 2:3 (Tejon Military Reserve, Tulare County, July 1, 1854):

"TEJON MILITARY RESERVE.

"Tulare County, July 1, 1854.

"DEAR SIR: Captain Howard and myself arrived here on the 20<sup>th</sup> June. Our march from the Merced [River] to this place was rather slow, in consequence of being encumbered by a party of would-be miners, of Stockton, on their way to the new El Dorado on Kern river.

"We met several parties returning from the new diggings, and the universal answer to our several questions was, 'Oh, there is gold on Kern river, but not enough to pay me.' I afterwards ascertained, on arriving at the river, that but a few of those persons [have] done anything; being mostly men of the stamp that will not work under any circumstances. Many of them never stuck a pick in the ground, not even dismounting from their half-starved, raw-bones old horses.

"However, the reports as first circulated were highly colored. There are about twenty-five men working on the river at present, who intend to continue working two and three cent dirt until the river falls, when they expect to find richer deposits. Three cents to the pan is the most that has been found as yet, and there is only one party working dirt that rich—the others only two cent dirt. The river is very high, and they expect to do better when the water subsides sufficiently to enable them to reach the bed rock. I think, however, that they will be disappointed in the water falling low enough for their purposes, as Kern river is known to remain high longer than any tributary of the San Joaquin. Its south fork, which heads in Walker's Pass, is fed by almost perpetual snows, and its north fork, which has its head among the highest peaks of the Sierra Nevada, is a roaring torrent the greater part of the year. So, to talk all things into consideration, those persons who expect to find a fortune in a day, or dirt richer than three cents to the pan, had better stay at home."

...

"Captain Howard and myself intend starting, as soon as our horses are sufficiently rested, on a short tour of exploration to Owens Lake and the desert beyond the Sierra Nevada, and return through Walker's Pass. You may expect us in Stockton about the 1<sup>st</sup> of August.

"Very respectfully, Yours, &c.

"P. E. CONNOR.

"To JAS. M. SCOFIELD, Esq., Stockton."

"A Change," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 17, 1854, 2:1:

"The *Republican* will in future be published tri-weekly, instead of daily. We are satisfied that the wants of the public do not require a daily paper in Stockton, and that the expense attendant upon such a publication is too heavy to be met by a remunerative profit. So soon, however, as we can be convinced that the business of our city will warrant us in the publication of a daily paper, we shall promptly meet the emergency. Our publication days, for the present, will be Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This change is made in conjunction with the *Argus*, which will be published on alternate days. Our terms will be the same as they were heretofore when the *Republican* was published tri-weekly, and will be found at the head of our columns on Wednesday, which will be our next day of publication."

"Our New Steam Mills," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 17, 1854, p. 2:

“The large steam flouring mill of Messrs. Page, Webster & Gove is being pushed forward with great rapidity to completion. The masonry work is nearly finished, and the engine will soon be in running order. Everything about its appointments appears to be on the most extensive and complete scale, and when finished it will be one of the largest, if not *the* largest mill in California. It will be capable of turning out some two or three hundred barrels of flour per diem, enough in all probability to supply the daily consumption of the entire San Joaquin valley. It is the intention of the proprietors to start steam this week, and by the first of August have everything in running gear for constant working.

“The City Mills, under proprietorship of Messrs. Sperry & Baldwin, have also been greatly enlarge and much improved. We visited their mill on Friday last, and are greatly indebted to the junior partner for his kindness in explaining the various ramifications of a flouring mill, and showing us about his premises. They have completed their enlargements and additions, and are already in working condition. We were shown a sample of flour, from this year’s wheat, manufactured last week, of excellent quality, and as fine grained as any Eastern mill can produce. The *modus operandi* of making flour, to the uninitiated, is novel and interesting. Take the grain as it goes into the hopper, smut, stalks and dirt, all mixed together, and follow it around and about the mill (leaving at one place smut, dirt and stalks, at another bran, and another shorts), to its *flour bin*, reminds one of separating the ‘chaff from the wheat,’ in downright earnest. It is well worth taking a look at. We are informed that the City Mills are capable of producing one hundred and fifty barrels per diem.”

C. D. Gibbes, “Letter from Tulare—U. S. Survey. No. II,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 21, 1854, 2:2.

“CAMP ON THE SIXTH STANDARD LINE, }  
 “Near Base of Coast Range, June 24, ’54. }  
 . . .

“Numerous bands of wild horses, antelope and elk, roam over the tule lands. There are three or four hundred Mexicans encamped in the mountains near us, who are engaged in catching mustangs; when they saw us surveying, they wished to know if government wanted the mustangs. Although they are armed with revolvers, and go about in large parties, they appear to have a dread of the wild Indians, as they inquired very particularly if we had seen any and if they shot arrows. I have seen no sign of any on this side of the lake. I was at Juan’s rancheria, on the south-east shore of the lake, which contains fifty or sixty Indians, but they are quite friendly; they live on elk, fish, and fowls and grass seeds, and cultivate a few melons. There is a wagon road from here running west into the mountains, which the Mexicans say goes to San Luis Obispo, distant about a day and a half’s ride.”

[More to come.]

“Later from the Tejon,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, July 28, 1854, p. 2:

“To Capt. P. E. Connor, Inspector of Customs at Tejon Pass, who arrived in this city last evening, we are indebted for the following interesting items: The Captain left Tejon ou [on] the 20<sup>th</sup> inst., and Kern River on the 21<sup>st</sup>.—The Indians at the Tejon were very much dissatisfied with the removal of Lieut. Beale, and it was very difficult to make them understand that it would not make any change in their condition. Notwithstanding the exertions of Mr. Bishop, the sub-Agent, who keeps a constant guard, some of them leave nightly. A party of one hundred left about the 15<sup>th</sup>, and were pursued by Mr. Bishop and six Americans but could not compel them to return

without shedding blood, which he avoided and let them go. They belonged somewhere near Owen's Lake.

"The news from Kern river is cheering. The miners are in high spirits, but are much in want of provisions and clothing. A Mr. Glenn and a Mr. Moore own two small claims, which pay on an average seventy-five cents to the pan. Others were making from three to ten dollars a day, and as the river is falling rapidly the prospects brighten. A party who left Stockton on the 7<sup>th</sup> June will arrive here tomorrow. They all intend returning with provisions and mining tools. They prospected White River, twenty-five miles this side of Kern, and it yielded from four to six cents to the pan. The water, however, has stopped running for the season, and the miners will have to use rockers. There is plenty of water in pools."

C. D. Gibbes, "Letter from Tulare—U. S. Survey," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 7, 1854, p. 2:

"From Mariposa," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 7, 1854, p. 2:

"The Mariposa *Chronicle*, of Tuesday last, contains the following items of news:

...

"CROPS.—The wheat crops in Tulare county are spoken of as being extremely light, particularly in the King's river valley—yielding, in many instances, not more than 10 or 12 bushels per acre. Corn, potatoes, and garden vegetables, have also generally proved complete failures this season, partly in consequence of the swarms of grasshoppers which have devastated that section of country."

"Later from the South," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 7, 1854, p. 2:

"By the arrival of the *Sea Bird* at San Francisco on Friday last, from San Diego and intermediate ports, we learn that great excitement prevails at Santa Barbara in regard to the Kern river mines; numbers had left their various occupations, and gone thither. The miners were averaging from \$10 to \$25 a day. Rich specimens of quartz and fine gold have been brought from there. The gold regions are reported to be very extensive. A number of teams have already left Santa Barbara with provisions, &c., for the diggings, it being the nearest point to the mines, and only one and a half day's travel over an excellent wagon road."

"Kern River Mines," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 18, 1854, p. 2:

"An extract from a private letter published in the [Stockton] *Argus*, speaks of the 'great scarcity of provisions on Kern river, and says that the mines are the best in California.' We conversed the other day with a gentleman who holds a claim in the dry diggings, near Pleasant Valley, and had returned the week before from Kern river; he informed us that provisions were plentiful and the holders were anxious to sell at low prices. He considers his claim here worth two on Kern river."

"Later from Southern California," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 23, 1854, p. 2:

"By the steamer *Southerner*, just arrived, we have Los Angeles papers to the 17<sup>th</sup> inst.

"The 'Southern Californian' says: 'We are happy to learn that our enterprising citizens are taking steps to connect this place with the fertile valleys of Tulare, by constructing a good wagon

road across the top of the hill at San Fernando. We are informed that Judge Ogler has, within the last few days, been circulating a subscription paper, soliciting funds for this purpose, and that he has succeeded in getting \$2,000 subscribed, which we think is entirely sufficient to build it.

“ROAD MEETING.—Our citizens, one and all, are requested to meet at the new building of S. K. Labatt, on Main street, at 12 o'clock this day, for the purpose of adopting preliminary measures for the building of a road into Tulare Valley.—*Star*.”

...

“Kern River Mines,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, August 30, 1854, p. 2:

“The *Mariposa Chronicle* says: ‘So many conflicting accounts are prevalent concerning these mines, that it is almost impossible to arrive at any conclusion as to their truth or falsehood. We have been assured, however, by Mr. John Sylvester, whose veracity is unquestioned, that within the last month or two, since the river has fallen so as to allow a thorough prospecting, many rich discoveries have been made. A great scarcity of provisions exists in that region, and it would be advisable for prospectors to carry a supply of provisions with them.’ ”

“Later From the South,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, September 4, 1854, p. 2:

“The steamer *Sea Bird* arrived at San Francisco on Saturday morning, bringing Los Angeles dates to the 31<sup>st</sup> ult. By this arrival we learn that the British bark *Amelia*, bound to San Francisco, from London, went ashore, Aug. 26<sup>th</sup>, at St. Simeon’s Bay. [Check:] She [lives] high and dry. The reported gold discoveries, in the vicinity of the Tejon Reservation, is confirmed. There are on the ground 130 men, Americans and Germans, who are averaging from \$4 to \$25 per day. There are sufficient provisions on hand to supply the miners now at work.”

“Tulare County—Official Returns,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, September 29, 1854, p. 2:

“The *Times and Transcript* furnishes the following election returns of Tulare county, which are official, having been forwarded by the clerk of said county:

“*For Congress*

“*Clerk of Supreme Court*

“*State Senate*

“*Assembly*

“*County Judge*

“*Assessor*

“*Treasurer*

“*Administrator*

“*Surveyor*

“*Coroner*

“Latest News from Humboldt and Carson Valley,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, September 29, 1854, p. 2:

“Express to Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, October 2, 1854, p. 2:

“We understand that an express will be established, at an early day, between Stockton and the Kern river country. Mr. Lusk, the gentleman connected with this enterprise, is well known in the

northern portion of the State, being formerly of the firm of Lusk & Rhodes, Shasta Express. Should this undertaking pay, it will place us in regular communication with a large district of country, and a population hitherto deprived of mail or express facilities. An undertaking of this kind deserves encouragement, and we sincerely hope Mr. Lusk will find it sufficiently remunerative to continue. We are satisfied that the people south of the Merced [River] on the Fort Miller road, and at Fort Miller, on King's river and the Four Creeks, will give Mr. Lusk as much substantial aid as they possibly can. They have demanded mail facilities for a long time, but have as yet no post office south of the town of Mariposa, and we believe there is no express office south of that place.

"Mr. Lusk left this city on Saturday last, and carried an express, we are informed, for Wells, Fargo & Co. Success to the enterprise."

"From Mariposa," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, October 16, 1854, p. 2L

"The Mariposa Chronicle, of Saturday, furnishes the following:

...

"ALMOST A DUEL.—A difficulty originating in a game of cards, occurred at the El Dorado [Saloon] on Tuesday evening last, between Mr. John W. Ross and Mr. LeRoy Vining, during which the former who was somewhat under the influence of liquor, was pretty roughly handled. Next morning a challenge from Mr. Ross was accepted by Vining, and the parties proceeded to a spot a short distance back of town, where the preliminaries were settled and the affair about to take place, when the *sport* was interrupted by constable Harbert, and the principals conducted to the office of Justice Washburn, when they were required to give bonds in the sum of \$1000 each."

"Teams and Freights," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, October 16, 1854, 2:1:

Occident, "Mariposa Correspondence," October 19, 1854, p. 2 (Bear Valley, October 8, 1854):

...

"The news from Kern river is not of a very encouraging character. I have conversed with several men, members of companies that have just returned from the far-off gold fields, and they represent everything in a deplorable state; whole families are down with the chills and fever; the market overstocked with provisions; hundreds on their way to the new river. Flour is selling at \$6 and \$7 per hundred, and few buyers; and, to cap all, nothing to be made after gold seekers arrive there. One and two dollars a day is not sufficient to recompense a man for working in this far-off region, among hostile Indians, and in a climate where very few will escape sickness.

OCCIDENT."

"Stage Lines," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, October 23, 1854, p. 2:

"From Mariposa," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, November 6, 1854, p. 2:

"The Chronicle, of Friday, the 3d inst., furnishes the following news:

"MINING.—Miners on the San Joaquin, in the neighborhood of Millerton, are represented as doing extremely well. Donaldson & Co. are making from \$10 to \$20 per day to the man.

“Lockhart & Co. are realizing from \$100 to \$200 per week each. Most of the sand forming the bars on this river contains considerable quantities of fine gold, which amply repays washing, where proper methods of saving it is observed.

“This portion of the county is comparatively unprospected, owing to the want of water and sparse population.

“Kern river is nearly deserted, most of those who went there induced by the exaggerated tales of rich diggings, have left in disgust. Many of them have remained on White river, where they are preparing for winter operations. It is supposed that most of the gulches in that section will prove extremely rich, those which have been prospected paying well.

“On the Fresno, many miners are making good wages, but the water is gradually rising and driving them from the bed of the creek. A great many gulches emptying into the Fresno have been thoroughly prospected; the gulches and small creeks in the low hills between the San Joaquin and Fresno, and between the latter and the Chowchilla, have all yielded excellent prospects, and would furnish employment to thousands of miners, if supplied with water.”

...

“From Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, November 8, 1854, p. 2:

“Mr. Joachimsson of this city, who has just returned from the Kern River country, has furnished us the following items of interest:

“On Kern River there are some twenty-five or thirty miners at work. Some of the number are making good wages, while others are doing but little. All are sanguine of a good yield of gold when the rainy season sets in.—There is very little sickness on the river.

“The miners on White river, about twenty in number, are doing little, in consequence of the scarcity of water. Our informant is of the opinion that when the rains set in the mines in this vicinity will yield well.

“The statement, published some time since in the southern papers, setting forth that the Kern river mines could be reached with more facility by way of Los Angeles than by any other route, our informant states is altogether erroneous. A number of miners from this section of the State, and who went on the steamer to Los Angeles, found that they could have gone from Stockton to Kern river, via the Four Creeks, in less time and at less expense than they did by the southern route.

“At the Four Creeks an excellent steam flouring mill is in operation, and flour is selling at \$10 per hundred pounds. The crops of wheat and barley in the neighborhood are excellent. Chills and fevers prevail there to a considerable extent at present.”

C. D. Gibbs [Gibbes], “Tulare Correspondence,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, November 20, 1854, p. 2:

“Postoffices,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, December 4, 1854, 2:1:

“For the information of the people in Mariposa and Tulare, we would state that we understand from the Mail Agent of this State, Col. Fry, that Postoffices have been located at Millerton and Woodville, but no route was established until the last session of Congress. The route is now from Quartzburg to Campbell’s Ferry, and Visalia to Woodville. It will be soon advertised and let, and the service rendered under a regular contract between those points.”

“There is no difficulty in obtained a post office, if any number of citizens will petition the agent, that they want an office, and are willing to carry the mail for the revenue, which it may

yield. The power to locate the office does not give the agent the right to establish a route. This must be done by Congress. There is, however, no trouble in obtaining an office for a neighborhood, if the people will have the service performed for the revenue it yields, until a route is established, and the contract for service let. The next Congress will undoubtedly attend to the wants of our people in this respect.”

“Capt. Conner,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, December 13, 1854, 2:1:

“This gentleman arrived from the Tejon on Monday last, and will assume the duties of Postmaster of this city on the 1<sup>st</sup> January. Capt. Conner reports everything quiet at the Indian Reserve, and that the harrowing in of the volunteer crop of wheat and barley had been finished.

“The miners on Kern river were doing well, making from \$6 to \$12 per day. New diggings had lately been discovered about forty feet above the bed on the banks of the river, which could be worked winter and summer. There was a great scarcity of provisions, and some of the miners had gone to White river for their winter supplies.”

“Later From the South,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, December 13, 1854, 2:

“By the arrival of the steamer America at San Francisco, on Sunday evening, the 10<sup>th</sup> inst., we have the San Diego Herald of Dec. 2, and the Los Angeles papers of the 7<sup>th</sup>.

...

“The Southern Californian contains the following items:

“The report from Tejon is that every thing is quiet—that the Indians, since the arrest of Redman, are satisfied to let the law take its course, and have gone to work as if nothing unusual had happened. They have confidence in our laws and are willing to abide by them.

[Check:] “The miners [at] Kern river are doing exceedingly well. The average yield of gold is about \$6 per day. Provisions are abundant, and as soon as the road to Tejon is completed, they will have every facility to carry on their operations advantageously.”

...

“The Kern River Mines,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, December 27, 1854, p. 2:

“The Los Angeles Star says: ‘Large quantities of goods are going forward to these mines, which indicates not only that the miners there are doing well, but also that Los Angeles is the best point to lay in their supplies. The San Fernando Hill is now passable for heavy loaded teams; the roads are good the whole distance, (about 150 miles,) and everything bids fair for our merchants to do a lucrative business with the miners in that section of the country.’ ”

## 1855

“More News from Kern River—The Richness of the Mines Confirmed,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 23, 1855, 2:2:

“Messrs. Turman and Webber, two gentlemen well known in this community, arrived in town yesterday direct from Kern River. They report the mines as not alone confined to Kern River, and the creeks, gulches and ravines contiguous thereto, but scattered profusely about the country in that neighborhood. Wherever the miner’s pick has been struck, and a good *prospect* made, gold

has been discovered. In many places it is exceedingly rich, vieing [vying] well with the miraculous stories of '49, and yielding quite as liberally. The process of obtaining the gold at present, is confined wholly to *toms*, for the want of lumber. Miners are making from \$16 to \$60 a day by the use of the tom, and much larger amounts would be obtained but for the want of water. There is no question that the mines are very rich; and these gentlemen are of the opinion that they are much richer than any ever yet discovered in California. [Check: Great [numbers] from Mariposa county are flocking thither; and many of the ranches in the San Joaquin valley are being deserted, the owners of the same all bound to the new diggings.

"Mr. Webber is well acquainted with the route to Kern River *via* Stockton, and gives the San Joaquin valley *via* Stockton, a decided preference. He has furnished us the following table of distances by both routes.

"ROUTES FROM SAN FRANCISCO.

"From San Francisco to San Pedro . . . . .	450
"From San Pedro to Los Angeles. . . . .	25
"From Los Angeles to Tejon . . . . .	120
"From Tejon to Kern River . . . . .	36
"From Kern River to the diggings . . . . .	25
"	---
"Total . . . . .	656

"ROUTE FROM STOCKTON.

"From Stockton to Fort Miller . . . . .	130
"From Fort Miller to Woodville . . . . .	60
"From Woodville to Kern River . . . . .	73
"	.....
"Total . . . . .	263

"It will be borne in mind that passengers taking the Los Angeles route are obliged to make a sea voyage from San Francisco to San Pedro, which more than makes the difference represented, besides being more tedious and expensive. When they arrive at San Pedro, pack animals are about the only transportation to be obtained, while by the way of Stockton, the best of mule and horse teams can be procured at a very reasonable price of transportation. Full fifty per cent. less than by any other route.

"Besides the above routes, Messrs. Turman and Webber inform us of another through this valley, which cuts off fully forty miles, better than that described above. Follow on the west bank of the river, due south. Teams can cross the slough at the bend in the river. Preparations are being made, however, at this point, for a ferry boat.

"One of these gentlemen (Mr. Turman) is a well known teamster, and is willing to contract to carry freight from Stockton to Kern river *at five cents a pound*. Both Mr. Turman and Mr. Webber concur in the opinion that the proposed route will be a saving of at least forty miles over the Fort Miller route, combining the advantages of grass and water. Mr. Webber informs us that a nine yoke ox team can take at least 2,500 lbs. more to the mines from Stockton than from Los Angeles.

"Major Stickney, (one of our townsmen,) who has located himself in trade at the Kern river mines, has sent all of his goods forward by this new route.

"The above named gentlemen will remain in town for a few days, and will give any information our citizens may desire, on inquiry at Messrs. Avery & Hewlett's."

"Still Later from Kern River," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 24, 1855, 2:2:

"From Maj. Stickney, who arrived last evening from White river, (on which he is located in trade) we learned the following particulars:

“The Major left his camp about nine days ago. He informs us that at the time he left, the miners working in the ravines and gulches were doing very well; particularly in Greenhorn or Rich Gulch. He had heard many large stories of the reputed wealth of the country—that many were making big strikes—alleging that as high as \$50 to the pan and had been taken out. The story was too large for him to believe, as nothing of the kind had come under his observation. He does however believe that the mines will yield good average results; and he will vouch for nothing more. Many miners are making from five to eight dollars per day to the man. All, however, are deterred from obtaining the gold for the want of water. The gold obtained is of a bright color, fine, and very much like that obtained on the San Joaquin and Fresno.

“At present the mining is confined to the ravines and gulches contiguous to Kern river. The bed of that river has not been prospected sufficiently to give an opinion of its richness. High up on the banks of the river, the mining is mostly prosecuted. Gold has been found over an area of country thereabouts of about forty miles, and prospects from three to ten cents to the bucket.

“The Major represents the trip to these mines as very tedious and expensive and advises all who contemplate visiting the Kern river mines to ‘think twice’ before they start, and every one go on his own responsibility; not to rely on any statement they may obtain from newspapers or other sources; and not to start without they had the means to get back again. The gentleman appears to be very conscientious in his statements, and seems to avoid everything like Gold Bluff or Gold Lake discourse. At the time he left he thinks there were not more than one hundred and fifty or two hundred engaged in mining in that locality. Common cradles or rockers are used for obtaining the gold.

“He gives the San Joaquin valley route *via* Stockton the preference, as being not only the pleasantest but also the cheapest. Goods taken by the Los Angeles route have cost parties as high as thirty cents to the pound, while he was selling flour as low as 12½ cents a pound.

“The Major will remain in town for a few days. Any one desiring information from him can call at Compton, Sanderson & Co.’s.”

“More News from Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 27, 1855, 2:1:

“Two gentlemen who arrived in this city yesterday evening, direct from the Kern river mines, Messrs. R. Matthews and P. L. Randall, fully confirm the reports heretofore received regarding the richness of this new El Dorado. By them we learn that the mines are extensive and lasting, and that in the main gulch now being worked which leads into Kern from the direction of White river, miners are making from \$16 to \$50 [?] a day to the man, by the use of [long] toms. This gulch is well supplied with water, and is now all claimed. There are numerous other gulches in that section, not so well watered, which prospect well, paying from 5 to 12 cents [to?] the pan from the surface down. The diggings are generally of the most desirable kind known to miners, paying good wages from the [top?] to an average depth of from four to twelve feet. One of these gentlemen, Mr. Randall,[?] says he has conversed with many miners now in that section, who have been in California since the golden year of 1849, and that they say they have now struck a place which fully equals, if it does not surpass, any that they have ever seen. Hopes run high, money [is] plenty, and everything wears a prosperous appearance. These gentlemen reside at Visalia, but are now leading their teams for Kern river, where they have already established a trading post. On their way hither, they met a great many parties *en route* for the new diggings. In their own county (Tulare), every body that can leave home is going. The road from Stockton, they say, is far preferable to any other road,[?] perfectly practicable for loaded wagons[?] to Posey valley, which is within [—] miles of the diggings. Pack animals are used to convey the goods the balance of the distance.

[Check quotation:] “We are opposed, as a general thing, to publishing inflammatory reports of new diggings, to dazzle the hopes [?] of our [—] population, and lead them to a land [?] of locations where they have a sure living; and thus far have published nothing which has not been fully vouched for by responsible names. We must now, however, concede the point, and [fully?] believe that the mines in the region of Kern river are extensive, and rich almost beyond precedent. A large population is destined [—] to be located in that section, adding their thousands monthly to the already unprecedented yield of our vast gold fields.”

“Further from Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 27, 1855, 2:1:

“By the courtesy of Walter W[—], Esq., we are permitted to make the following extract from a private letter, received by our fellow townsman, Judge. A. G. Stakes. The Judge closes his letter as follows:

“ ‘There is much excitement there about the mines of White river. [We suppose he means Kern river.] *They are no humbug!* I am going by that way, and in my next [letter] will advise you specifically.’

“Judge Stakes writes from Visalia, under date of Feb. 4.

“Collector Scofield received on yesterday, a letter from Inspector Hewitt, stationed at Pacheco’s Pass, in which he says, ‘The Kern river excitement is raging in all [?] the country round. Some have already gone, and many more are preparing to leave.’ ”

“Arrival of the Steamer—News from the Kern River Mines,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 27, 1855, 2:3:

[Later.]

J. M. Brown, “More about Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, February 28, 1855, 2:2 (Stockton, Feb. 27, 1855):

“*Editor Republican.*—Having just returned from the Kern river mines, I give you a few items for the information of the public.

“I found on my arrival at Greenhorn Gulch, where the first discovery was made, all the miners were very busy at work on their claims, which were paying very well, ranging from 8 to \$50 per day. Claims could not be bought unless at very extravagant prices. The day of my arrival, one party of two, at the head of the gulch, took out \$50; but as they had been making from two to three ounces daily since they commenced working their claim, to them it was but a common occurrence. Another party, lower down, on the same day, made an ounce to the man; and a party at the mouth of the gulch, consisting of four men, took out \$1000. The entire gulch is already taken up, and by a few men only, each one being allowed 200 feet. New comers go about 15 miles higher up, where they are making from \$8 to \$16 per day. It is reported at the gulch, and firmly believed, that a party of five or six, about 40 miles higher up in the mountains, have been making \$100 a day to the man for the last month; and the very day of my arrival, a company went to look them up, as the[y] had not disclosed their whereabouts. The earth is so unlike that of the more northerly mines, that miners from that section, on arriving at Kern river, can hardly believe there is gold to be had. The earth is black and rich, and grows a fine forest of pine, cedar and oak. Men are engaged sawing lumber at 90 [?] cents per foot; some [are] building houses, some long toms, and all are occupied in one way or another.

“The road from Fort Miller to Kern river is better than from Stockton to the San Joaquin, and all know what a fine wagon road the latter is; it is so far superior to the Los Angeles route, that

the whole trade and travel will be by way of Stockton in a very short time. The former road unites with that from Stockton at least thirty miles before entering the diggings, and teams from both cities unload at the same place, in order to pack the goods into the gulch. The freight from Stockton, including packing, is nine cents; from Los Angeles, thirteen cents; a difference of four cents in favor of Stockton. Visalia, the county seat of Tulare county, is now supplying the miners with an excellent article of flour, turned out of its mills, at \$15 per hundred; and as they have but a short distance to freight it, they can sell much cheaper than shippers from elsewhere. Their flour is really a good article, and for whiteness and lightness, when made up, is equal if not superior to any made in California, and if the mines hold out, Tulare county will become one of the richest in the State. One of their mills is worked by steam; the other by a stream capable of turning a dozen mills the entire year. I forgot to state that the diggings in Greenhorn Gulch pay from the surface down about four or five feet. The owners of one of the claims, to show me what could be done, took a pan full of earth from the surface of a dry ravine, after scraping away the grass, and washed out about six cents' worth of as fine gold as I ever saw; it is granular and not scaly gold, as found in other sections. Snow and rain fell the whole time of my stay, so that they would have plenty of water. There is an abundance of provisions on hand, and no fears need be entertained of starvation; and there is plenty of room for all the idlers in the State to make a living.

J. M. BROWN."

"From Kern River," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 6, 1855, 2:2 (Stelle to Mariposa *Chronicle*):

[Check sentence:] "Mr. [G. W.] Steele, of Stelle's Express, has furnished the editor of the *Mariposa Chronicle* a couple of letters, received by him from a gentleman at the Kern River mines, from which the following extracts are given:

"I have visited most of the different mining localities in California, and from my experience since I have been in this place, regard the diggings, in the many gulches emptying into Kern river, superior to any that I have seen in the State. [Check sentence:] The success and smiling faces of the miners, reminds me of the good old days of 1850.

"Worland's Store, which is the grand rendezvous, is situated on Worland's Flat, near the head of Greenhorn Gulch. A good road to this place can be had—cutting off some twenty miles—by passing up Deer Creek and by Linn's ranch.

"The diggings here resemble those in the vicinity of Sherlocks's[,] Agua Frio and Mariposa. Reports are coming in hourly of more discoveries, extending along the North Fork of Kern river. Water can be had in many of the gulches, and if we are blessed with a good rain, more gold will be taken out there, than ever was in any part of California.

"Two weeks ago at Worland's store,—on Sunday—I saw more gold dust exhibited, than I had ever before witnessed at any trading post in the State, and the same disregard of economy that prevailed in '49 and '50.

"Crowds are coming in daily, and the Flat begins to resemble a town or village. I would advise you to establish an office there at once.'

"Commenting on the above, the *Chronicle* says: 'Not being acquainted with the writer, we are unable to judge of the credibility of his statements. Our opinion is,—and it is formed upon the testimony of some of our old miners, who visited Kern river during the excitement of last summer—that the whole excitement is a grand humbug.'"

“Great News from Kern River!—Marvelous Intelligence Concerning the Richness of the Mines!,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:1:

“Mr. Charles McKee, engineer at the San Joaquin Mills, in this city, has just received some very important intelligence from Kern river. His letter is dated ‘Greenhorn Gulch, Kern River, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>,’ and is of the latest date from that quarter. It is from his friend, W. G. Green, (of Bristol, R. I.,) and commences with the information that he has prospected the diggings; and says they are good, and plenty of them. The average yield is from five to ten dollars per day to the man. Some companies, who have sluices and toms, are making from \$100 to \$300 per day to the man. The water, he says, will soon give out. As the letter is of earlier date than our recent rains, we expect the diggings in the neighborhood [neighborhood] of Kern river must be yielding, by this time, richer than any ever before discovered in California.

“The writer then says: ‘I advise you to come here as soon as you can, and bring with you one-quarter inch sheet iron for toms; also, bellows, anvil and tools for blacksmithing, for they charge \$3 for pointing a pick.’ And [he] closes by saying that he is going across the mountain range, prospecting, but will write again before long.

“We must confess that the intelligence received from Kern river appears almost too good to be true. No diggings in California, ever before discovered, can compare with them in richness, providing the reports we are receiving daily are confirmed. *But it is confirmed*; every new story confirms what we have heard before; the above confirms the last intelligence received by the [steamship] America. But the miners have been, heretofore, so grossly humbugged about new diggings, that it requires confirmation ‘strong as holy writ,’ and we don’t blame them for it. To go to the Kern river diggings would necessarily involve any one in a heavy expense, and all letter writers should be careful how they write inflaming stories, that will not bear examination. The times are too hard for speculators and others to humbug the laboring masses. They have not the time, nor means, to spare in chasing up every visionary scheme that may be invented to enrich the pockets of men who ‘live by their wits;’ and we sincerely trust that the intelligence we receive from Kern river may be true—if for no other reason, at least for the success of the hundreds who, now hurrying to that point.

“Mr. Briggs, the bearer of the above letter, says the mines are ‘good enough for him;’ he left for Nevada [County] yesterday morning, to take his whole company to Kern river.”

Fort Miller, “Steam to Fort Miller,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:1 (Stockton, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1855):

“STOCKTON, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1855.

“*Editor Republican*.—My attention was arrested this morning by a poster of the steamer Daniel Moor, bound for Fort Miller *via* the San Joaquin river, and by the following statements, viz: That said military post was only 75 miles from the Kern river mines, and that there were abundant facilities for transit from said Fort to Kern river.

“It appears to me, Mr. Editor, that it is no more than justice to the multitude who are now seeking a cheap and speedy conveyance to Kern river, that the press should correct the erroneous statements in the above named poster. The facts are as follows:

“It would be impossible for any steamboat to navigate the San Joaquin but a few hundred yards above Dr. Edgar’s ranch, five miles below the Fort, and more than probably that the attempt would not be made to pass Royal’s ranch, 14 miles below—the highest point ever visited by a steamboat. And it would also be impossible for a large company to secure conveyances from the landing to the mines, without experiencing an annoying and expensive delay. And instead of the passengers finding themselves, as stated in the above named poster, as the place of disembarkation, only 75 miles from the mines, they would, agreeable to the lowest figure, be 180

miles, and according to the statement of a majority who have passed over the road, a little over 200 miles distant.

“FORT MILLER.

“For the information of ‘Fort Miller,’ we are authorized to state, that the distance to Kern river, as represented on the bills, was an error not ascertained until it was too late to rectify the mistake. And to obviate any disappointment, the clerk of the *Urilda*, (which left San Francisco yesterday afternoon,) was instructed by the President of the company not to receive any passage money for Fort Miller, but rather leave it to passengers on arriving in this place to go in whatever way they pleased.—EDITOR.”

“Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:2:

“Yesterday morning the *Cornelia* landed at our wharf, about one hundred Kern river adventurers. Two of the companies brought wagons and horses, in order to save detention at this point.”

“Tandem,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:2:

“A couple of gold seekers passed our office yesterday, in a comfortable looking covered spring cart, attached to which were a couple of fine horses *a la tandem*.”

“From Sacramento,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:2:

“The steamer *Daniel Moor* arrived last evening from Sacramento, with a few passengers. She is up for Fort Miller to day.”

“The Stockton Argus,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 8, 1855, 2:2:

“THE STOCKTON ARGUS appeared yesterday as a daily, yesterday morning. The name of A. C. Russell, at one time connected with the *Evening Picayune*, San Francisco, appears as editor.”

“Returned,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 10, 1855, 2:2:

“The tandem team that left this city on Wednesday morning last, for Kern river, returned last night. The axle of the cart was broken, which disabled it from pursuing the journey until repaired.”

“Good Trip,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 10, 1855, 2:2:

“The *Cornelia* landed two hundred and twenty-five passengers at our wharf yesterday morning. Of this number not less than one hundred and twenty-five were destined for Kern river.”

“Attention,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 10, 1855, 2:2:

“ATTENTION is called to the letter of ‘Junius Itinerant,’ published in another column. Persons going to Kern river would do well to profit by his advice in regard to the best route to be taken. His statements are entirely reliable.”

Junius Itinerant, "Mariposa Correspondence," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*. March 10, 1855, 2:2 (Snelling's Ranch, March 9, 1855):

"High Water—Mill Destroyed, loss \$30,000—Roads in good order—The Chapman Family—Stage to Fort Miller—The Overland Route to Kern River the surest and best—The News from Kern River still Cheering."

"SNELLING'S RANCH, March 9, 1855.

"*Editor Republican*:—The water is very high in the Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Merced rivers—several feet higher than it has been since 1853. It was impossible to cross at Heath & Emory's Ferry on the Stanislaus yesterday, in consequence of high water. Holden's Ferry, a short distance below, continued business the entire day. Tolbert & Co.'s flour mill on the Tuolumne river, a short distance below the town of La Grange, was destroyed by the flood. The water came down with such force that the foundation upon which the mill was constructed gave way, and the entire building, with a large amount of flour and grain, tumbled into the stream and was utterly destroyed. The greater part of the dam was also swept away. The loss of the mill alone cannot be estimated at less than \$30,000, to say nothing of the loss of the flour and grain, and the great inconvenience and disappointment of the grain growers of this region.

"The road from Stockton to this place is in fine order; the present rains have not affected it so much as might have been expected.

"The Chapman Family performed at the store of O. Schroeder & Co., on the evening of the 7<sup>th</sup> inst., to a large audience. Last evening, they were received with loud applause, by a crowded house, at Dickenson's Ferry, on the Tuolumne. This talented troupe of theatricals contemplate visiting the Kern river mines soon.

"The stage here leaves this morning for Fort Miller. The energy of Messrs. A. N. Fisher & Co. is just what Californians need. These gentlemen never suspend, but are ever ready to engage in any and all pioneer enterprises to accommodate the wants of the traveling public. The land route to Kern river is preferable, as the trip by water is very uncertain, but should it prove as successful as the most sanguine expectations of those concerned desire, it will not equal the overland route, as passengers landed at Fort Washington cannot complete their journey without incurring, perhaps, a greater expense than the entire trip would cost them from Stockton through by land: consequently, I would seriously advise all persons going from Stockton to Kern river to take the overland route.

"The news from Kern river is startling. The road is literally swarming with people bound for these diggings. Two hundred persons crossed the Tuolumne river yesterday, and perhaps as many crossed at other points, all moving southward.

"I understand that A. N. Fisher & Co. contemplate establishing a regular daily line of stages from Stockton to kern river in a short time. Such a line would do well now, and the sooner they establish it the better for them and for the host of anxious gold hunters that are daily rushing for this reported rich gold region.

"Respectfully Yours,  
"JUNIUS ITINERANT."

"The Kern River Mines," *Daily San Joaquin Republican*. March 10, 1855, 2:3 (James W. Turner to the *Alta California*):

"The Kern river mines are creating an unusual degree of excitement at the present time throughout the State; people are flocking thither from all quarters, and everything in the shape of news in relation to the productiveness of these mines is eagerly sought for and read. In the *Alta California* we find the following communication, which throws additional light on this subject:

“*Mr. Editor:* Thinking any reliable information may at the present time be acceptable, I hand you, *pro bono publico*, my experience. I left here for Kern River on January 4<sup>th</sup>, traveling with two mules from Stockton, *via* Fort Miller and Woodville, well prepared for prospecting. I passed through a section of splendid land, and arrived at the river in due course of time. In the first panful of dirt I tried, I was agreeably astonished with the sight of a large prospect—weight, 5 dwts, almost \$4.50. I continued panning, and in one hour had no less than seventy dwts. of beautiful, heavy, globular gold, valued at about \$56. I could pan no more just then, being too much excited. It put me in mind of the gold old times of '49. The next day I marked off a claim, but saw nobody near, and went to work with my pan, having no lumber to build a rocker. I worked six days, and made \$324 with only a pan. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day I got my mules and started back for Stockton, where I met with two men who joined me as partners, paying \$100 each for a third interest.

[Check sentence:] “We returned with long toms complete, provisions, &c., and trusted we had so managed it that no one knew our whereabouts. But we were mistaken. Three men surprised us hard at work. They prospected about all day, and returned to our tent at night with no less than \$163. They were beside themselves, and only wanted lumber. We all went out prospecting on Sunday—at least we thought it was Sunday—and went a long way. Every pan we tried, we found from one to eight dollars. Not being content, we went again next day up a ravine, which we found considerably richer than the river, with coarse gold and plenty of water. At first we could hardly write from excitement.

“Strange to say, by some means, the news of rich diggings got wind, and people are flocking there fast. There are plenty of very rich diggings for every one—the richest in California. I left there, being encumbered with much gold. I was horror-struck when I learned the banks had failed, but was thankful to think I had not arrived soon enough to deposit with any of them. When I left provisions were scarce, also lumber and tom irons, in fact, none were to be had. \* \* I return with my wife and fixings in a few days. [Check sentence:] I go *via* Stockton on the little steamer Daniel Moor, to Fort Miller, that I may be able to take some good deal boards and tom-irons, quicksilver, &c., then pack to the mines. [Check sentence:] I should advise all parties going to take four days [days] provisions, as also a little medicine for diarrhoea [diarrhea] and dysentery, the same getting prevalent from exposure and change of diet.

“Being my own bank, I have \$5000 worth of as fine gold dust as any one would wish to see, and will be happy to show it to any one who pleases to favor me with a call, and also furnish them with any particulars I can. I reside for the next few days, until I leave for the mines again, Pacific street, near the Toll Bar.  
JAMES WM. TURNER.”

Ranger, “Correspondence,” March 13, 1855, 2:2 (Snelling’s Ranch, March 10, 1855):

“SNELLING’S RANCH, March 10, 1855.

“*Editor Republican:*—This, my first of my promised letters to your paper, in reference to my travels to[,] and in the Kern river mines, is strictly true, as I intend all my future letters to be. And my friends in Stockton, I have not the least doubt, will believe them, when they know the real name of the author. I have met some people to-day on their return to Stockton, who says [say] they have been to Kern river, and pronounce the whole affair a humbug. Now, sir, I am informed by the stage driver from Fort Miller, that only four men have crossed Converse’s Ferry, on the San Joaquin, within the last week, and they all unanimously agree in saying that there are some good mines on Kern river, which would pay largely provided there was plenty of water. Most of those persons who are returning have never been south of the Merced river, and I doubt whether they have sufficient energy to carry them back from whence they came. In four days from this, if I am in good health and my old charger (Honest John) can carry me, I will arrive at the mines and know the truth or falsity of the various conflicting reports in circulation in relation to

them. In the mean time I would advise my friends to await my investigations ere they start from Stockton.

“Yours, &c.,

RANGER.”

“Important From Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 13, 1855, 2:4 (Sacramento *Union*, *Southern Californian*, and *Los Angeles Star Extra*):

“We take the following important Kern river intelligence from the Sacramento *Union*, to which paper it was telegraphed on Sunday last.

“The America arrived at San Francisco on Sunday morning with about 200 passengers from Los Angeles. Two of the returned miners state that they had been at Kern river since September last, and pronounce the reports of their richness to be a humbug. They also state that great excitement prevailed among hundreds who are destitute and desperate, and talk of hanging the store-keepers and state-drivers, through whose reports they were induced to go there. It is also stated that about 600 are returning by way of Stockton, and have induced many to turn back, who were on that route for the mines. The roads are said to be wretched, and the rivers greatly swollen.—Several who left by the America have returned. They went as far as Los Angeles, where they met a great many returning from the mines, by which accounts they were induced to return.

“A gentleman who has returned informs us that the largest prospect he got was two cents to the pan, and that was taken from the bed rock. The largest piece that he heard of was worth fifty cents. A great many are unable to get back. A gentleman named Henry I. Hewett [Hewitt], who formerly worked on Parks’ Bar, at Trinity, and other places in the Northern mines, who left on the Goliah about four weeks since, has returned. His statement is as follows:

“He has prospected on Kern river 20 miles. Most of the miners are not paying board.—Skinner, the man who took from \$20 to \$50 per day for five or six days had been at work some time previous throwing off top dirt. He afterwards tried to get work at Tejon at \$50 [a] month. At Greenhorn Gulch, which is said to be the richest of the mines, claims were beginning at \$75 each. They were represented by their owners as making from \$3 to \$5 per day. He saw five or six [long] toms at work. The most any of them had taken out was \$9 per day to the man. He went well prepared, and fed several who were suffering. He states that all the passengers will confirm his statement.

“It is represented that since the fall of snow, twenty-five miners have frozen to death. Mr. Hewitt [Hewett?] does not confirm this rumor.

“CONTRADICTORY REPORTS.

“The following accounts are taken from the *Southern Californian*:

“A correspondent writing from Kern river, says: ‘The miners here are doing well—I mean those who work. Loafers are at a discount.—Sonorians are leaving. Americans are not willing for them to work. Goods [are] scarce and high. Gold dust taken from gulches brings \$16; river [gold brings] \$14 an ounce.

“A man was shot day before yesterday, (mortally, it is said) because he refused to sell a man a pair of pants on credit. He was a German from Los Angeles. His name is Harris Caspar. The man who killed him was W. Ferguson, who has been held to bail in the sum of \$3000.

[Check sentence:] “I have just seen Mr. Moore, from Los Angeles, and he says yesterday that [the] yield from one [long] Tom was \$60; and that the mines were rich; and that after being thoroughly prospected will be worked extensively. I can say this, every one that works has money. Yesterday I saw \$500 in fine gold dust, taken from a gulch where it pays \$25 a day to the man. The dirt is carried 150 yards.

“Mr. O’Morgan, who has just returned from the mines, informs us that the times a ‘No. 1.’ Every person who has got the work in him can and does do well. He and a party offered a miner

\$500 in cash for a claim he was working, and was refused. Several Mexicans of his acquaintance were averaging from \$7 per day and upwards.

“The weather was not cold, and now snow except on the mountain tops.

“Mr. M. says that there are one thousand gulches which can be worked, and room for ten thousand miners, who can all do well. Provisions are plenty and goods cheap. Board is \$10 a week, and as good as our city affords.

“The *Southern Californian* says that Mr. Rockafeller arrived in town on Sunday night last, from San Bernardino, that there was excitement in that place in consequence of the recent discoveries of gold in its vicinity. The whole population are making outfits to the mines.

“Mr. R. says he saw a lump of gold which weighed \$28. The mines are reported rich.

“The *Los Angeles Star Extra* says, the news from Kern river is unsatisfactory, and many are returning apparently [apparently] sadly disappointed in not having realized their expectations. In view of the present aspect of things we would not wish to say anything that would induce people at a distance to leave their business in hopes of making their pile in the new El Dorado.”

Ranger, “Letter from Ranger—Kern River a Humbug,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 14, 1855, 2:2 (Fort Miller, March 11, 1855):

“FORT MILLER—March 11, 1855.

“*Editor Republican*:—*The Kern river bubble has burst*, and I can with perfect confidence assure you that the accounts heretofore published in the Los Angeles and San Francisco papers are a tissue of falsehoods throughout. There are now encamped at this place some three or four hundred persons, on their return to Stockton, some of whom are direct from Kern river, but the majority left Stockton within the last week. I also met about one hundred men between here and the Merced today, also on their way to Stockton. About one-half, probably, of those who left Stockton within the last ten days, are determined to go on to the river and see for themselves. The reports from the mines are various and conflicting; all, however, agree in saying that the whole matter, from beginning to end, was a humbug, got up by the merchants of Los Angeles for the purpose of disposing of some surplus goods they had on hand. There is gold on Kern river, but not in sufficient quantities to pay a man even as good wages as ordinary diggings in Mariposa county. There are some few making from three to four dollars a day, but that they can do only while the water lasts in the gulches. There are a large number of miners still on the river, prospecting, in hopes of finding something to remunerate them for their wild goose chase. I am very glad that the people of Stockton had nothing to do with the getting up of the tissue of falsehoods circulated in relation to those mines. I start on to the river in the morning, and shall arrive there in three days, after which I will be enabled to give a correct account from personal observation.

“Yours, &c.,

RANGER.”

[Untitled], *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 15, 1855, 2:2:

“There is no great difficulty in accounting for the Kern river *lies*. The people of Stockton and Los Angeles, the owners of stages, mules and boats are like other men, and are ready to stretch a story or invent one for their own benefit.’

“The above slanderous and unjust insinuation is taken from the *California Chronicle* of Tuesday last. The people of Stockton, so far as we know, have had no party nor lot in originating the Kern river excitement. If there is any blame to attach to any party, it must lie at the door of our southern neighbors. For several months past these flaming stories about the Kern river mines have been constantly trumpeted for in the columns of the Los Angeles papers, and found a ready

echo in the San Francisco papers—the philanthropic *Chronicle* among the number. Boat load after boat load left the Bay at every departure of the southern steamers, and when the Stockton people saw this, they very naturally set to work to divert a share of travel this way, setting forth to the public the advantages of this route over any other, without exaggerating in the least the stores about Kern river. They succeeded to some extent in securing what justly belongs to them, a goodly share of the travel. And strange to say, the *Chronicle* suddenly discovers that the whole thing is a *lie*, and sets down. [sic] the people of Stockton as among the instigators of the falsehoods for selfish ends. It is somewhat singular that the film is just *now* removed from the eyes of our very worthy and truth-loving neighbor, and the thing flashes upon his vision like a meteor that it is all a hoax.

“We are not yet fully convinced that the Kern river gold stories are utterly groundless; nor do we think that the *Chronicle* man is, notwithstanding his assertions to that effect. But that the truth has been decidedly augmented in numerous instances, we presume is the conviction of every one who has not the means of *knowing*. It is ours, and has been all the time. In a few days we will receive letters from citizens of this city, who have gone to these so-called diggings, which we will lay before our readers, and will vouch for the truth of their contents. If the *Chronicle* will have a little patience, the ‘Stockton people’ will furnish it with reliable *truths*—something which have not at all times graced its columns.”

Junius Itinerant, *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 16, 1855, 2:2 (Mariposa County, March 14, 1855):

“MARIPOSA COUNTY, March 14, 1855,

“*Editor Republican*:—The excitement that has pervaded the community for some days past is not likely to abate, as the news from Kern river is of the most flattering import. There are continually parties arriving from this new El Dorado, who have been dispatched by mining companies for the purpose of ascertaining the truth of the wonderful reports in reference to the immense richness of this new and vast gold field. In no instance am I advised of a single person thus dispatched, that the whole company has not left for Kern river immediately on his return. It is impossible to believe all the reports that are afloat descriptive of ‘big strikes,’ rich diggings, etc. in that quarter, and it is equally unreasonable to conclude that the whole matter is a humbug. Your correspondent has taken some trouble to gather some information every way; and the conclusion that I have arrived at from what has been elicited by this course is, that under the influence of this gold mono mania it is impossible to arrive at any correct data as to what a man can realize by digging in the Kern river mines. At the same time, there can be no doubt but those who are not doing well, and are able to work, can do well in the Kern river gold region. A man should consider well before he makes the start. In the first place, if he is realizing \$7 or \$8 per hand, he is doing well, and will not foolish if he attempts hunting better diggings. It should be also recollected that the distance is great, over a rough road; the place cannot be reached in a day. Some men whom I have met in the last few days, are returning; they say that it is all a humbug. They do not say that they have been there, or that they have seen any person directly from there, but as the old saying is, ‘they have seen a man who heard a man say,’ &c. These gentlemen have gone off half-cocked—did not weigh the matter well before they started, and are discouraged, and know not why; they will go back to their old camps and perhaps consider well before they start again.

“The present [rains?] have furnished water in great abundance throughout the various dry diggings around Mariposa, Agua Frio, Quartzburg, Hornitos, & c. Miners are generally doing well in this county. I shall not pretend to give the precise amounts each miner is realizing, or the number of miners at work, as I do not wish to exaggerate [exaggerate] or disparage; but rather

subject myself to the rebuke of the learned, scrutinizing *critique*, and be termed a skimmer, than be convinced in after-time of permitting a falsehood.

“Respectfully Yours,  
“JUNIUS ITINERANT.”

“‘Write the Kern River Mines Down a Humbug,’ ” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, March 20, 1855, 2:1:

“A typographical friend, who left Stockton a few days since for the Kern river diggings, writing us from Fort Miller, under date of March 17<sup>th</sup>, says the mines are a grand humbug, and that thousands are turning and dispersing through the southern mines. In conclusion her says: ‘Write the Kern river mines a —— humbug.’

“This intelligence is fully corroborated by Mr. Wilder, who returned yesterday [?], to this city. He also states that Messrs. Baldwin and Oullahan, who left for Kern river about ten days since, with a train of two hundred pack mules, have gone to the Mariposa mines to seek a market for their goods.”

“From Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, April 1, 1855, 2:

“Mr. James Woods, an intelligent gentleman who has just returned from Kern river, furnishes us the subjoined items of interest from the Kern river country, which he left ten days since. The roads are in excellent condition between Stockton and White river. The number of miners at work on the gulches is variously estimated, ranging from two hundred to one thousand, but our informant thinks three hundred is the extent of the number at work on Greenhorn Gulch, Rich Gulch, Bear’s Paw and the forks of the river. Some of the miners say they are making \$10 per day, but *all* are very anxious to sell, and ‘salting’ has been extensively resorted to for the purpose making claims ‘go off.’ Each miner is allowed 200 feet frontage on the river, and running back as far as they may choose to claim; each man is also allowed a dry claim of the above dimensions.

“At the diggings are located three stores, Allen’s, Herford’s [Hereford’s] and Blackburn’s. The amount of provisions on hand is limited, but sufficient for the demand. Bacon is selling for 50 cents per pound, sugar 45 cents, flour 20 cents, biscuit 20 cents, and tobacco \$1 per plug. Lumber is \$2.50 per M. and no demands, and toms and rockers are strewn over the diggings without owners or occupation. Picks, shovels, blankets, boots, clothing, &c., are a drug in the market. Horses and mules are selling for \$30 per head. Game of every kind is abundant.

“Mr. W. says that during the time he spent in prospecting, some four or five days, he got the color everywhere he worked, and occasionally as high as ten cents to the man, but that there is but little earth to wash, the ground being almost entirely covered with immense rocks.”

E. E. H. to James M. Scofield “Letter From Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, May 10, 1855, p. 2 (Kern River Diggings, April 23, ’55):

“KERN RIVER DIGGINGS, April 23, ’55.

“Dear Sir:—After having swam tremendous *little* rivers, clambered and toiled up might mountains, and again wended my way cautiously down their precipitous and rugged sides into the yawning and dismal depth of stupendous canons, the Rubicon is passed, and I am *in* the notorious Kern river diggings—*provided* that a comfortable seat in the bottom of a prospect hole, four feet from the surface, will establish that position. So much for preliminaries; now I will endeavor to convey to you and idea, as near correct as possible, of the actual condition of things in this quarter.

“On White river are the first diggings met with after leaving the San Joaquin, but they are meritorious of only bare mention. The number of miners upon that stream and its tributaries is probably about forty, who are for the most part making from one to five dollars per day; however, it is the fewest number who are making five dollars per day, while the greater number are making less than three dollars per day; some are making preparations to operate with quicksilver. Some cases of scurvey [scurvy] [exist]. Flour is selling at \$13 per 100 lbs.; brown sugar, 25c.; coffee, 37½c.; beef, 25c.

“The next place to be noticed is Posy Flat, a valley of low hills, surrounded on all sides by high mountains, situated on Posey Creek, 20 miles from White river, and 10 miles from Greenhorn Gulch. This is the head of wagon navigation, the depot from whence all supplies for the mines are packed. Gold has been found in the valley, but not in quantities to elicit much attention. So far as I have learned, there is but one man engaged in mining in the valley, and his success is not such as to induce others to ‘pitch in.’ Speaking of Posey *Flats*, suggests to my mind that here a chapter might be devoted to the Posey *Sharps*; but as they are of that ‘rustling’ class that have a peculiar style of providing for No. 1, I will leave them to ‘toot’ their own horn, while I will step out of the valley and blow a blast on Greenhorn, where, by the way, everybody is making a pile—‘in a horn.’ But to proceed with an air more of seriousness, I will now jot down such items in connection with the aforementioned Greenhorn as I conceive to be facts. The gulch is nine miles long, claimed from source to terminus. The gold is fine and porous, of an inferior quality, and scarce. The whole number of miners on the gulch is estimated by the traders and other competent judges to be about 200; of this number there is not more than 100 who are actually employed, and of the number really at work, there is perhaps not more than 20 who are making what is usually termed good wages. Messrs. Ogden & Co. have a claim that is paying them \$10 per day to the hand; Garrett & Co. are making about the same; Skinner & Co. are taking out from \$8 to \$10 daily to the hand; a company of Dutchmen have a claim that is yielding fair wages; one man, working alone, is said to be making an average of \$20 per day, with a rocker. These are truly good claims, and likely, when improved upon and heralded forth in the land, to attract attention and give an undeserved character to this remote region. They are no criterion by which to judge the mines in general; they are the *only* paying claims that I have been able to discover, after diligent inquiry and close observation.

“The external indications on White river and Greenhorn are not such as an old miner would admire, by any means. Still, the country embraces quite as many of the conceived essentials, and is the very type of that country on the Chowchilla, Fresno, Coarse and Fine Gold Gulches, &c., in Mariposa county.

“Fifteen miles from Greenhorn, and contiguous to the forks of Kern river, on the north side, are Hog-Eye, [Lo] Mismo, Maiden and Rich Gulches, all of which have yielded fair wages to a lucky few, but are now nearly abandoned for the want of water. Money has been raised by contribution and the contract given for the construction of a ditch that will supply Rich Gulch.

“Here the aspect of the country changes and is truly forbidding to the practical California gold-hunter,—nothing but granite, primitive and bolder, big granite and little granite, mountains of granite and valleys of granite sand, arid and barren, the field upon which the cactus, prickly pear, sage and greasewood grow in disgusting luxuriance. Many behold these things inconsistent with their auriferous ideas, condemn, *condam*, leave, and continue to *condam*, without having applied a single test. Would it not be wiser for prospectors to put aside prejudices that might seriously conflict with their interests, and wash a pan or two, just to see if it really was all sand?

“Of Kern river nothing is known beyond the operations of last year. The opinions of those who are by experience best able to arrive at correct conclusions are of such a conflicting nature, that the successes of another year must satisfactorily determine the matter. Its bed cannot be worked before the last of September, because of the vast snowy region through which it passes and drains.

“My own convictions are that the mineral resources of this section of California are not yet fully developed; that before the present prospecting *furor* entirely subsides, something will have turned up better than anything yet discovered. This hope is keeping many persons in the mines that would otherwise leave.

“At the Forks, and in that vicinity, flour is selling 18@20c. [symbol for “per”] lb.; sugar, 50c.; coffee, 50c.; bacon, 50c.; beef, 25c. Provisions, tools, bad whisky, and vicious rattlesnakes, plenty in all directions. Total effect unfavorable; would recommend only such to come here as can’t go anywhere else.

“Two men, — Gentry and Hop. Stewart, were severely wounded in an affray with one Frank Carroll, on [Lo] Mismo Gulch, about a week since. An old feud was revived over their cups, and upon some remark of Carroll’s, Hop. Stewart struck him in the face with a tumbler. Carroll at once retreated in the direction of his camp, which was near at hand, when he got possession of his revolver and turned upon Gentry and Stewart, who had pursued him, and felled them both to the ground at the distance of 100 yards, four of the six shots fired by Carroll taking effect. Carroll has gained by this act and other demonstrations an enviable reputation for sharp shooting, and is justified by popular opinion for this act, but has absconded, it is supposed, from fear of being unfairly dealt with by the friends of Gentry and Stewart. They are both recovering.

“A young man named John Dunn fell into Kern river, a few days since, four miles below the Forks, in attempting to cross on a log, and was drowned before assistance could be of avail. Dunn was recently from Santa Barbara.

“To-morrow I leave for Tejon.

“Yours, truly,

E. E. H.

“To COL. JAMES M. SCOFIELD.”

“Latest from Kern River,” *Daily San Joaquin Republican*, June 16, 1855, 2:2 (letter from Rich Gulch, June 1<sup>st</sup>, to *Sacramento Union*):

“The *Sacramento Union* publishes a letter from Kern River, dated ‘Rich Gulch, June 1<sup>st</sup>.’ The writer said that the Kern River has not ‘dried up,’ nor is it entirely abandoned. On Rich Gulch about eighty miners are at work; and on the river and various gulches about two hundred and fifty. A ditch has just been completed in the vicinity of Rich Gulch, and many are more profitably employed than heretofore; but some are unable to do well, and the number of miners is diminishing gradually. At Greenhorn Gulch miners are represented as doing well, and diggings have been struck in the bars of the river fifteen miles below. A number of quartz leads have been opened by parties of miners, and are being worked with such success as to induce their continuance; in one or two instances they promise a handsome profit.

“An election has just been held at Rich Gulch, which resulted in the return of E. M. Van Reed for Justice of the Peace, and A. D. Fairbaugh for Constable.

“The district has suffered greatly heretofore for the want of mail or other regular communication from San Francisco or Stockton. This desideratum is now supplied by the establishment of Hestin’s [Heston’s] Kern River Express, which connects with the Pacific Express Company at Mariposa, every two weeks. Mr. Hestin has shown much energy and perseverance in getting his business started and his regular return is always hailed with much enthusiasm by the miners. Several others started to San Francisco and Stockton before he commenced, but never came back, thus refuting conclusively the old adage that ‘whatever goes up must come down.’

[Check sentence:] “The writer says that preparations are being made to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and that the Declaration of Independence will probably be read for the first time on the waters and among the mountains of Kern River; and although a rude and ragged company, there

will be no lips more earnest, no hearts more true on the coming anniversary than the bands of miners on Kern River.”