

fourth annual

# J.U.N.K.

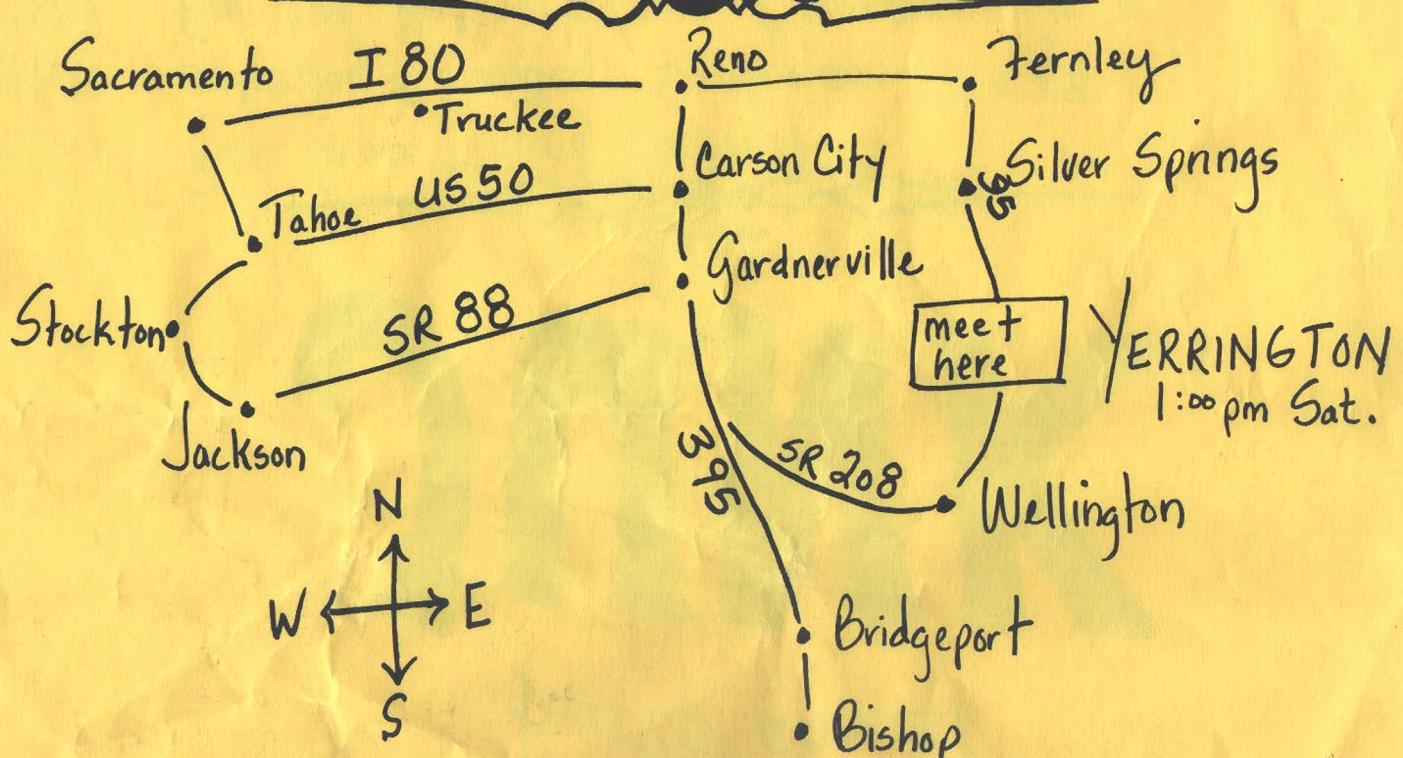
trek

WHERE: Pine Grove Mining District

WHEN: Saturday & Sunday, September 17 & 18

WHY? For the Hellavit! -- Clampers Only!

- Convoy leaves JOE DINI'S LUCKY CLUB in YERRINGTON at 1:00 pm Saturday. Late-comers ask directions at Lucky Club & follow markers to site.
- Dry Camp! 5 gallons water & shovel a must!
- Trailers & Motor Homes not recommended. 4WD trucks with campers & high clearance autos O.K.
- Bring your own FOOD, BOOZE, WATER, etc. Cook trailer will be available for your use.
- \$5.00 fee for J.U.N.K. first-timers to include badge, certificate & charcoal for cook trailer.



FREMONT - CARSON TRAIL  
AND  
PINE GROVE MINING DISTRICT

To the south, as far as the eye can see, are the Pine Grove Hills, discovered ~~and~~ by explorer John C. Fremont and his guide, Kit Carson, in 1844. The road running south was a part of Fremont's trail and was later the route of the Carson-Aurora Overland Stage. The Pine Grove Hills were opened up to mining in 1866 and the camp of Wilsonville was established. Two years later, Wilsonville became Pine Grove. Rockland, three miles southeast of Pine Grove, was established in 1868. The mines supporting both camps have gone from boom to bust several times and the communities are considered "ghost towns" today.

JULIA C. BULETTE CHAPTER 1864,  
E. CLAMPUS VITUS  
J.U.N.K. (JULIA'S UNEQUIVICAL NEVADA KLAMPOUTS)  
TREK NO. IV,  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1983

Collated and Stapled By;  
gene oliver jcb eev

## PINE GROVE, NEVADA

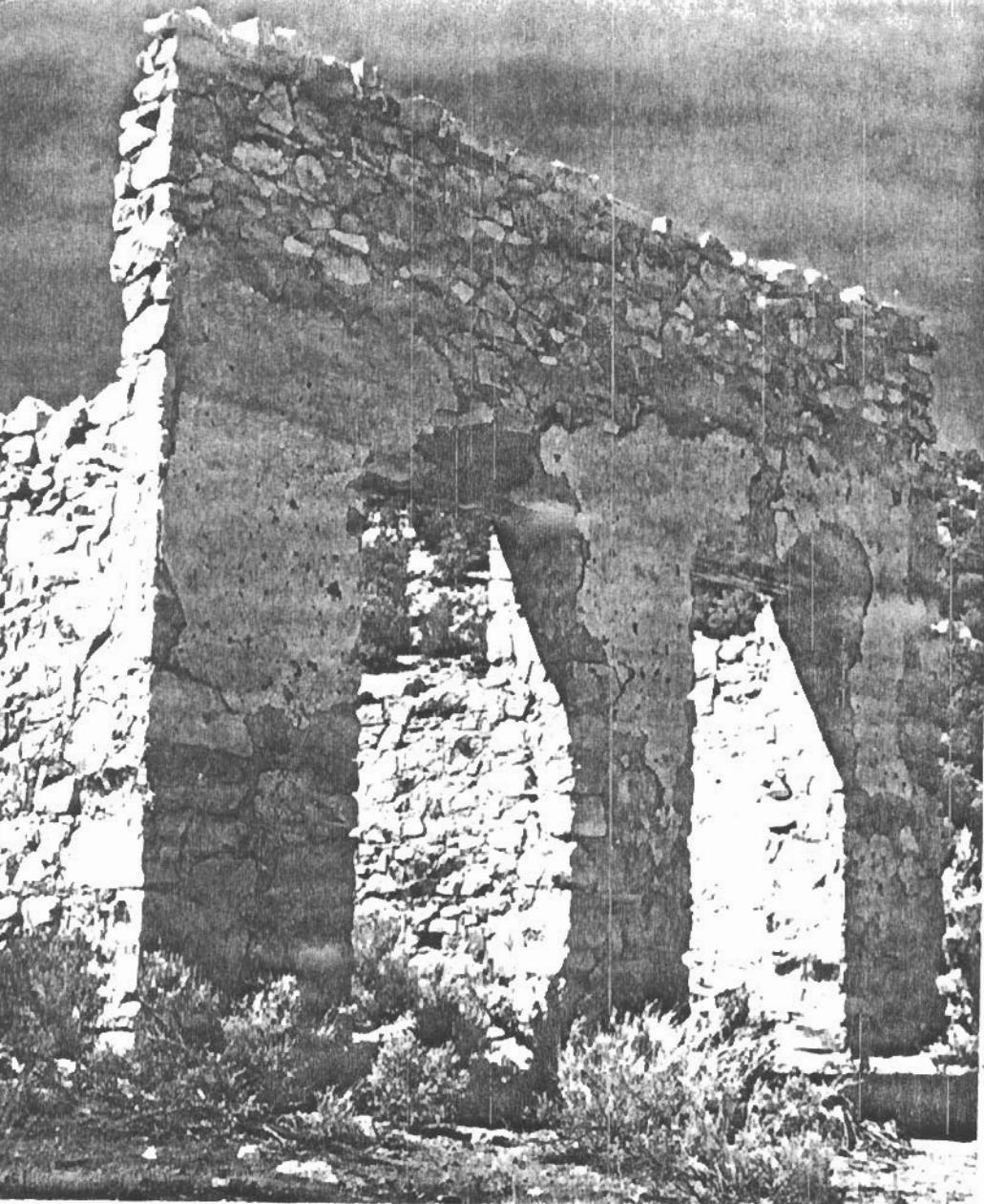
The best-preserved building in Pine Grove was apparently once a businesss headquarters, for a rusty safe lay just outside. A ruined picket fence surrounded the house, covered with withered hop vines. One of the vines still showed life, a forlorn sprig in the dead town. At one side of the door was a faded typewritten notice. "You are welcome to live here but please do not tear down."

Another building, the cookhouse, had several layers of paper on its walls, tattered and peeling off. The first layer was of newspapers, mainly the *San Franscisco Chronicle* and *World Report*. These carried the dates from 1891 to 1897. Over this was fancy imported wallpaper. Later newpapers covered the torn elegance and the latest of these were dated in the early 30's.

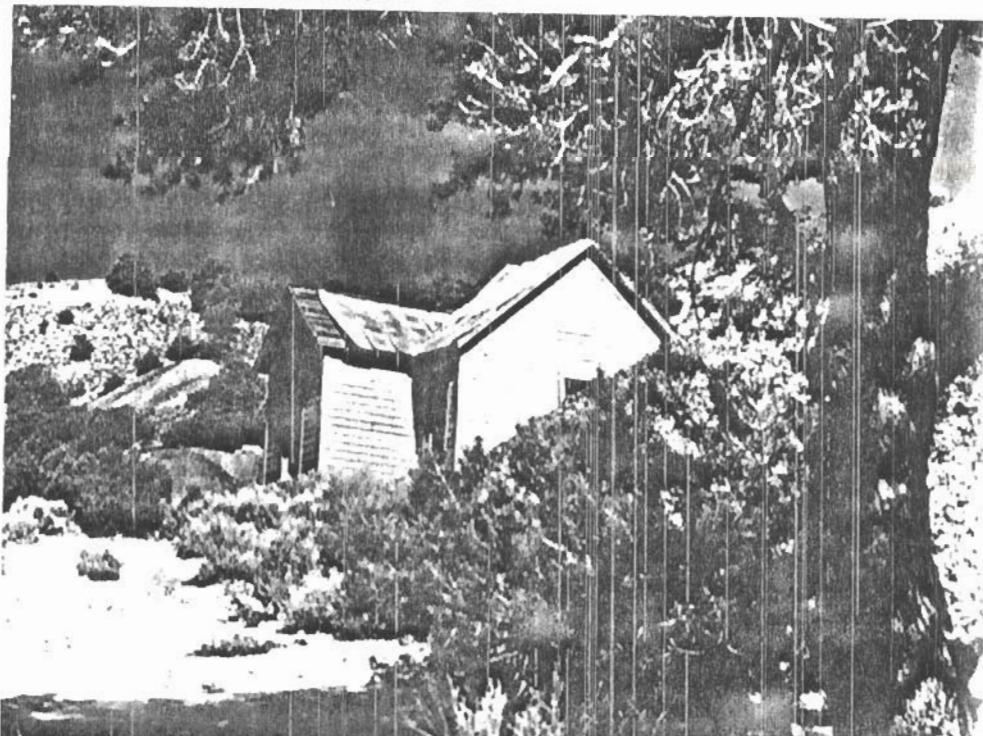
The original discovery of gold in the area was in 1866. Within a year, Pine Grove had 300 people. There were three mills shipping \$10,000 in gold bullion every week. The population continued to expand, then dwindled, grew again and, about the time the fancy wallpaper was added, in the 1880's, was at its height. The last small flurry occurred when the latest newspapers were pasted on the walls to keep out the cold winter winds. With the 1930's went the last inhabitants and Pine Grove has become a true Ghost.

DINING ROOM IN BOARDINGHOUSE seems ready to serve meal. However, accumulated dust of many years covers table and floor has two inches of dried, cracked mud.





IMPRESSIVE STONE RUINS of once busy general store. Occupying central position in original location of Pinegrove, it suffered by later removal of business section half a mile up canyon where boardinghouse and school remain. Portal now stands alone, looking out on hills scarred and torn by mine operations.



PINEGROVE SCHOOL is within 200 feet of stamp mill. Pinegrove permitted little "rough stuff" because of sizable proportion of children. Single miners went to nearby Rockland for "hell raising," there being several saloons and bawdy houses there.

# ROCKLAND, NEVADA

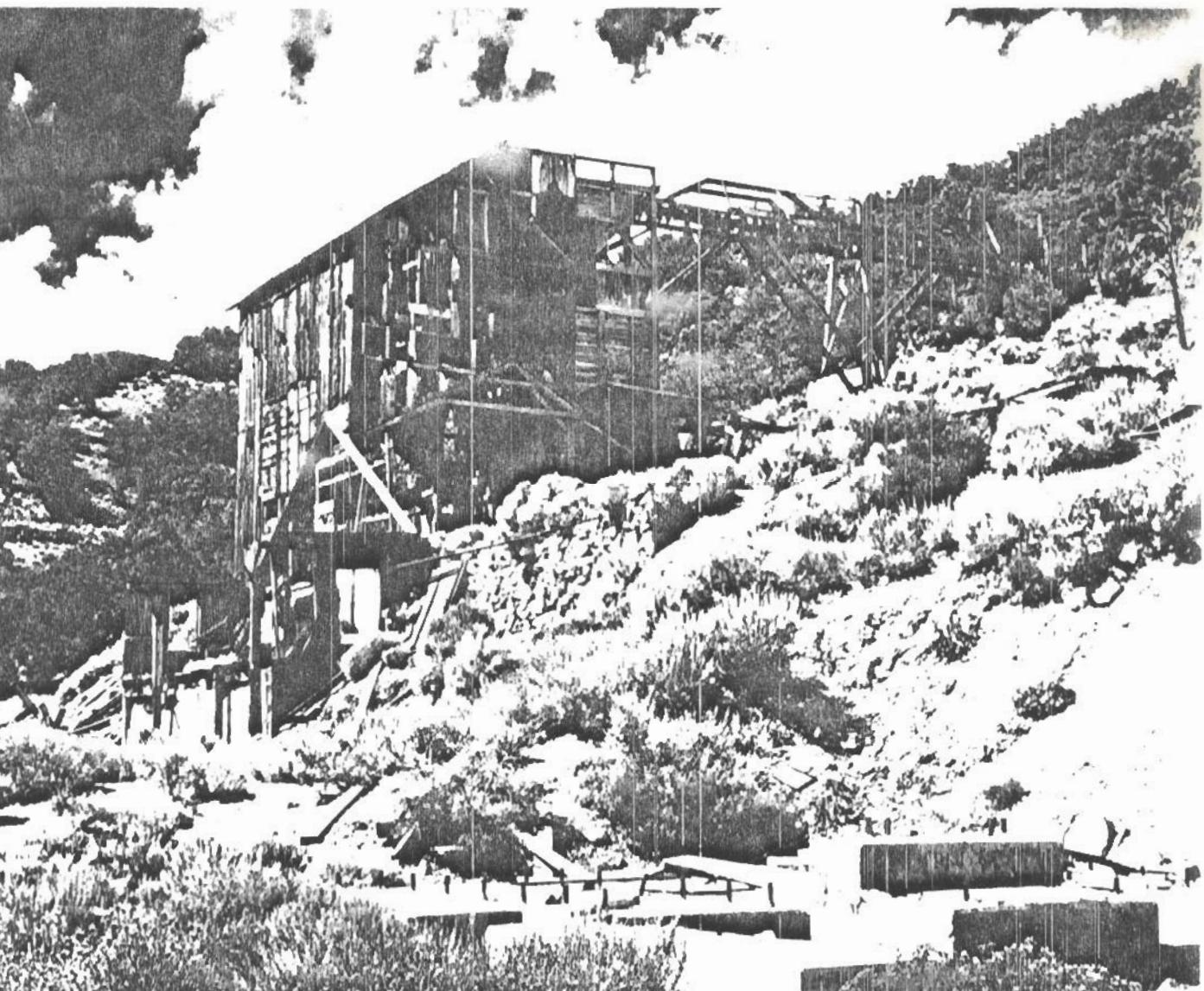
Joseph Wilson had an exciting life on the ranches and in the mines of Nevada. He died at ninety-four, leaving voluminous notes and memoirs among them the story of the founding of Pine Grove and its newer, smaller neighbor, Rockland. "On September first of 1863," he wrote, "my father, David Wilson, and uncle William Wilson, bought the squatter's rights to the Wheeler farm, consisting of 4,000 acres, for \$2,000."

This was unsurveyed land on which Pat Wheeler and his seven sons had squatted under Utah law in 1860, on the west fork of the Walker river in the extreme south end of Mason valley. The Wheelers had erected earth boundary mounds, three years being allowed to fence the land. Once on it, young

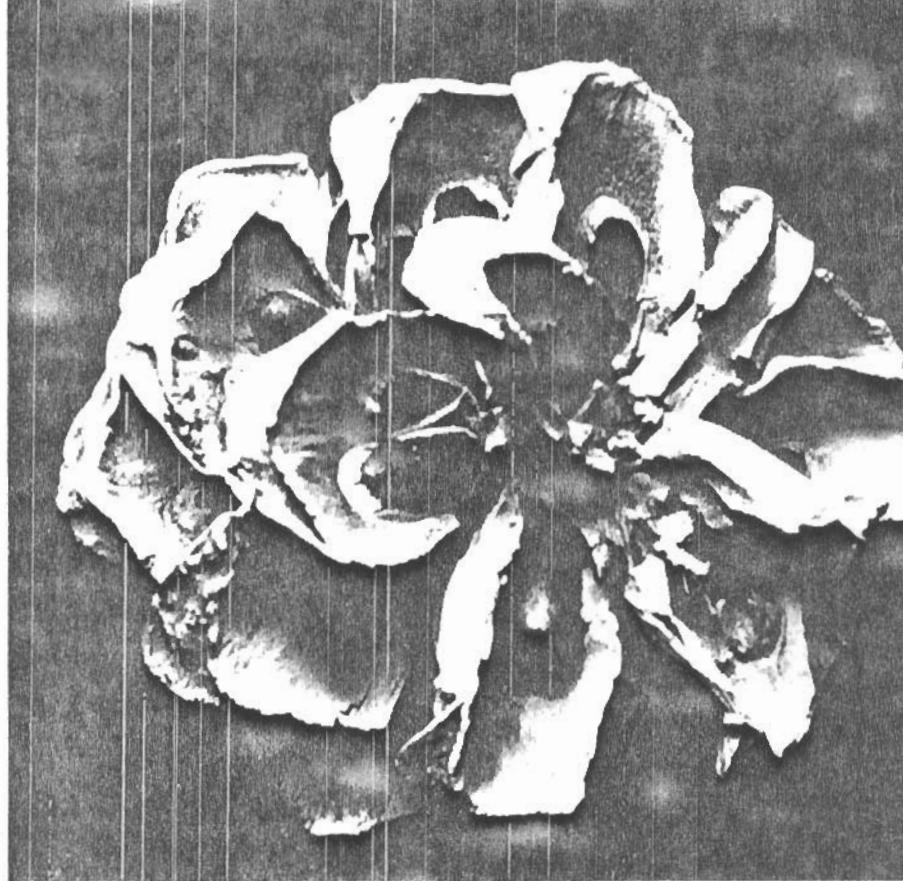
William Wilson was eager to go prospecting in Pine Grove mountains, included in the ranch, but his older brother and family persuaded him to help get part of the land under cultivation and start a herd of cattle. David, however, was just anxious to find out about mineral wealth and allowed his young brother to saddle a horse once in a while and have a look around.

Of the Paiute Indians who came to the ranches begging food, most persistent was a family trio. Hog-or-Die Jim who sometimes chopped wood, wife Hog-or-Die Mary who did the washing, and their son "Bummer Charlie" who "never did anything useful". To this family, Hog-or-Die meant something like "eat high on the hog or starve."

MILL WAS ONCE much more extensive. Fire, bridging weight of snows, vandals and time have all taken toll. Stone walls date from earliest period, cement foundations coming later.



**CONE OF NUT PINE** *Pinus Monophylla*, showing several "nuts" still attached. Cones are formed during summer, remain as small prickly balls until following season when growth is rapid. Late in second summer green cone is solid, hard and dripping with sparkling, clear, fragrant pitch or resin. In September they begin to open and shed seeds. Nuts were once staple article of diet for Indians who beat limbs with sticks to bring cones down. Fire was built over heaps of cones which caused quick opening of scales and release of nuts. Heat also dissipated small quantity of turpentine which made unroasted nuts bitter and inedible.



When they came to the ranch one day, David had no wood to be chopped so brought out a chunk of gold ore showing definite flecks of the yellow metal. He asked Hog-or-Die Jim in a jumble of Paiute and sign language: "Do you know where there is any more rock like this?" The Indian indicated he did and pointed out a location in the hills above the ranch, three and a half miles south of Mt. Etna in the Pine Grove mountains.

David now turned William loose with abandon and after some diligent search he found a gold deposit. The Wilsons then gave their full attention to mining. From the time the find was made in 1866 to about 1871 Pine Grove developed to a population of over 1,000. The three original arrastras owned by Portuguese Joe grew to several power stamp mills using steam from boilers fired by nut pine wood. The ore was known as "free-milling", the easiest type of work, needed only to be washed and crushed in sluices. In later years a mill was built to rework some of the waste, but most of the gold had been recovered by the cruder method.

The town was a boisterous one. (Ed: this information differs sharply from that gathered earlier which declared the Wilsons to be "Blue Nose",

meaning intolerant of drinking or gambling, that miners went to nearby Rockland for diversion). See Pine Grove, WESTERN GHOST TOWNS. Joseph Wilson relates that Pine Grove had two sections, that "there were five saloons in the upper part and three in the lower, with a dance hall in the middle". There were also three hotels, Wells Fargo office and a large general store. The barber shop and shoeshine parlor was operated by a colored man who charged fifty cents for a haircut, twenty-five for a shine. The post office charged three cents for sending a letter in competition with the express company which charged an exorbitant five.

With so many people drawn to an area where a few years before there had been no one, the surrounding hills got a close examination for precious metals. And in 1869 a Pine Grove resident, a Mr. Keene, found a rich vein of silver and gold three and a half miles from his home. As quickly as he could he built a quartz mill in Bridgeport Canyon just below his mine. He called the lively little town that grew up around the mine and mill Rockland, presumably for the fantastic and beautiful red rock cliffs towering over the location.

Keene had trouble keeping his expenses below his money intake. His men were paid irregularly



**LITTLE ROCKLAND LODGING HOUSE**, once painted bright red, is faded but still upright. In back is large sleeping porch open to breezes which at this altitude are considerable and the snows which are deep and long lasting. Nut pines show needle arrangement and bark texture.

and when no money was forthcoming they set up a howl. One in particular, a Mr. Rhodes, trouble maker at best, threatened to get even and when Keene was away raising money for the payroll, Rhodes set fire to the mill. He was arrested, convicted of arson and sent to the state prison. Keene got deeper in debt, finally lost control of the mine and ex-Gov. Blaisedell tried his hand at operating it and also failed. Then C. D. Lane stepped in, got some ore out but he too was unsuccessful. The mine was deserted and Tom Flynn stayed on as watchman for years, at length buying an interest in the claim and running some ore through the mill.

During this period a boulder showing chunks of gold and weighing several hundred pounds was found nearby. It assayed \$500 to the ton and created great excitement. The chunk was definitely a huge piece of float from some rich lode near the area. Hordes of prospectors tried to locate the source but all failed and Rockland settled back to doze again.

The LYON COUNTY TIMES of Nov. 24, 1894, re-

ported this item: **FATAL ACCIDENT AT GROVE.** Last Monday morning between 8 and 9 John Redding, who was working on the Wilsing dump in Pine Grove, was caved upon and buried under tons of dirt. As soon as the accident happened a force of men began to dig for the unfortunate man. After several tons of dirt had been removed the body was found but life had been crushed out of it. The deceased was a native of Missouri 26 and came to Nevada about 5 years ago. He had a father, three sisters and two brothers. The fatal accident took place Thursday at the Grove and was attended."

By 1948 Tom Flynn was thoroughly disconsolate over his property, cleaned his little cabin, headed his old car down the mountain and thought things over in town — maybe raise money to abandon the pesky thing. Just as Flynn drove into the canyon where the road in the defile is extremely steep, rocky and narrow, a torrent of rain he termed as a "water spout" struck the rock. The deluge of muddy water took out all sec-

of road and carried Flynn and the car down into the gulch. He spent fourteen hours, he said, in reaching the town. No mind searching was needed.

The decision had been reached. Tom Flynn kept driving on to leave his now inaccessible perch in the Pine Grove mountains to the buzzards.

**MINER'S CABIN** is typical of most homes remaining in Rockland and other mountain mining camps. This one seemed to belong to bottle collector. Photo was made in August and shows not pine cones in windrows, having fallen during gales of previous winter. All nuts have been harvested by squirrels, birds, mice and other rodents.

