

The monthly newsletter is a service to the community and our members. We welcome requests to research specific topics from the public and accept articles on local history. Please note that the Society reserves the right to accept or decline any article or material at its discretion. The Society is not responsible for the loss of or damage to any submitted material so please keep a copy for your records. Please include a note authorizing Anderson Historical Society to publish the material. We need two things from all members or those interested in local history: please be sure the Society has an updated email address and please spread the word to friends and neighbors about the Newsletter. Please contact us at: www.andersonhistorical.com.

Articles for the month of February 2024 are: 1) Early Photographers of Shasta County, Part 7 Kline to B. F. Loomis, 2) Gold Rush Letter P. B. Reading, Buena Ventura August 29, 1857, 3) Gold Rush Letter Charles Baker, Shasta City, November 10, 1857, 4) Gold Rush Letter H.C. Baker, Bloody Island, August 20, 1858, and 5)

Early Photographers of Shasta County, Part 7

Charles W. Kline – operated in Shasta County in 1897.

Operated with Fred P. Swasey as Swasey & Kline in July 1897. No biographical data was found on Charles W. Kline.

F. M. Le Forge – operated in Shasta County in the 1880s.

No biographical date was found about F. M. Le Forge other than he operated in Shasta County about 1880.

Live Yankee Gallery (Sutton & Cromwell)- operated at Shasta from December 1875 to June 1876.

The Live Yankee Gallery was a partnership of Sutton and Oscar Cromwell that operated at Shasta from December 1875 to June 1876. In May 1876 the partners traveled to Trinity County. Biographical material is provided under each artist' individual name.



Group drinking beer at the Washington Brewery in Shasta taken by the Live Yankee Gallery.

Arthur W. Loomis – operated in Redding in 1898.

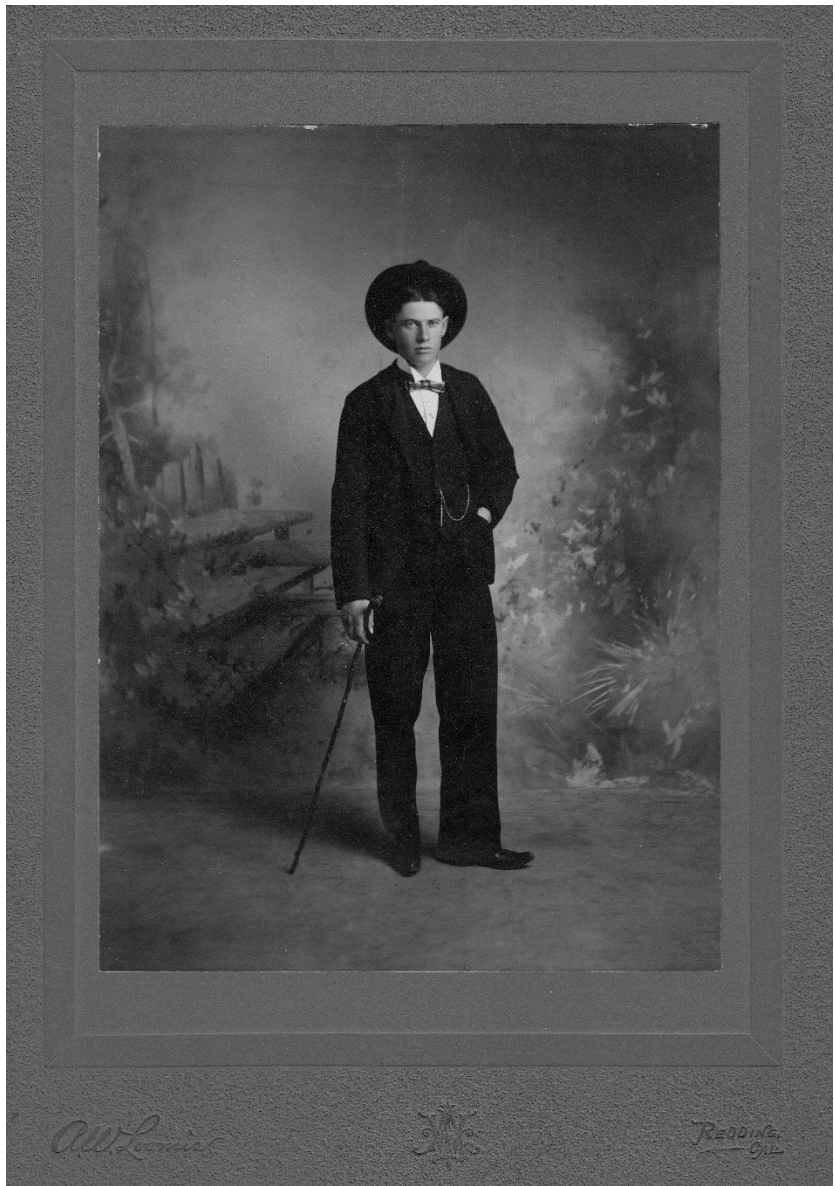
Arthur Whetsel Loomis was born in Nevada in 1867. He was the son of mining engineer Levander Vaness Loomis 1827-1909 and Louisa Whetsel 1839-1912. Arthur grew up in mining towns in Nevada and Utah before his father became mine superintendent at the Sunny Hill Mine near Ono. Arthur was believed to have opened a studio in Redding in 1898 that Benjamin Franklin Loomis of Shingletown used to frequent to further his hobby of photography. Through Arthur and the studio Benjamin met and married Arthur's sister Estella 1870-1953.

In 1900 Arthur was listed as a miner at the Sunny Hill Mine but by 1910 had transitioned to farming at Shingletown. In 1902 Arthur married Anna Belle Wheelock of Ono. In the 1920 U. S. Census Arthur was listed as a farmer at Round Mountain but by the mid 1920s had relocated to Humboldt County where he died in 1946.



All. Loomis. Freda 4 yrs. Earl 2 1/2 yrs. REDDING. CAL.

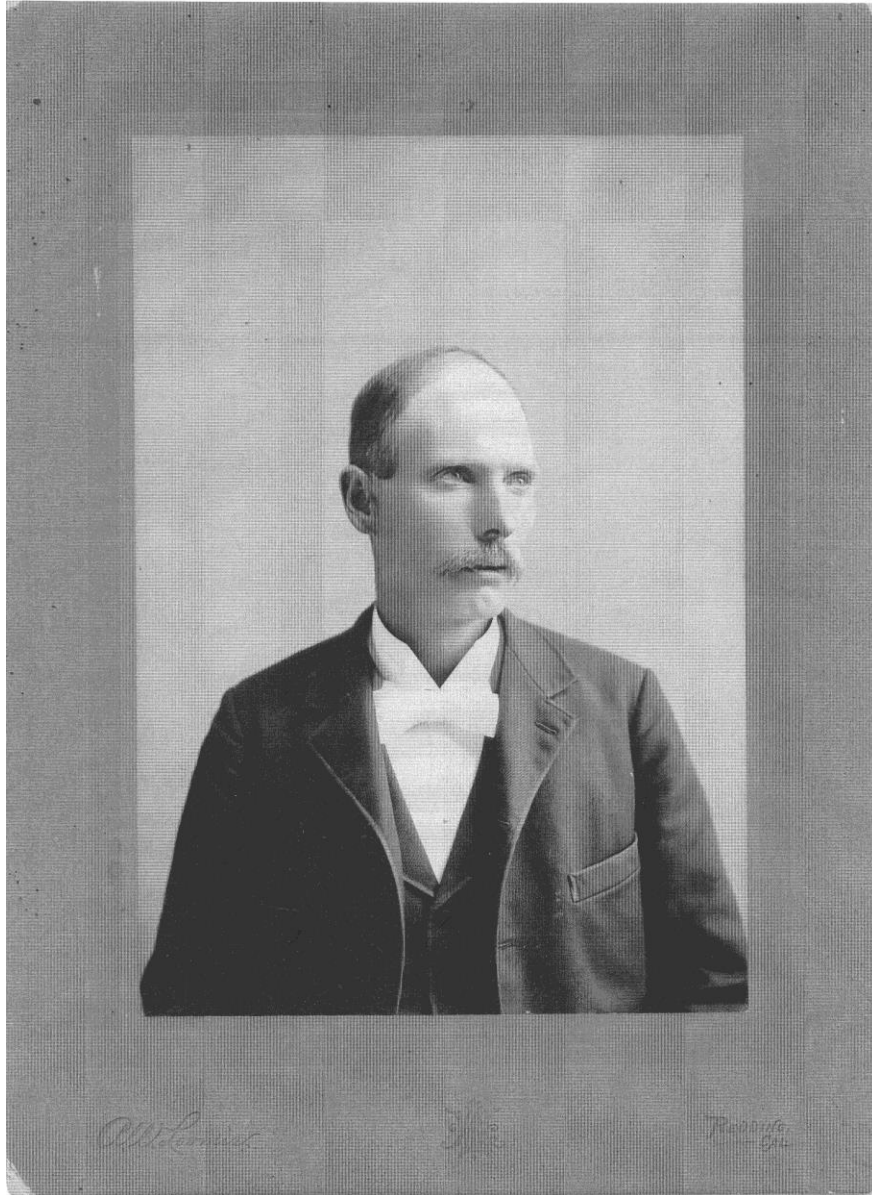
Photograph by Arthur W. Loomis with the subjects identified only as Freda and Earl.



Unidentified portrait of a young man done by A. W. Loomis.



Trademark of A. W. Loomis.



Portrait of I. D. Loomis taken by A. W. Loomis. Courtesy Anderson Historical Society.



Fruit drying at Anderson.

A. W. Loomis,
PHOTO ARTIST.
Redding, Cal.

Trademark for A. W. Loomis from the reverse of the photograph above.

Benjamin Franklin Loomis – operated 1900 to 1929 in Shingletown and Anderson.

Benjamin Franklin Loomis was born in Illinois in 1857 and came to California with his parents. Benjamin grew up in Colusa and Tehama County before moving to Manzanita Lake in 1874 to make shakes. Benjamin spent the summers at his cabin and wintered by working on farms in the valley. Benjamin's cabin became known for having a library. From 1886 to 1887 Benjamin studied phrenology in New York City. After Benjamin's return to the Shingletown area Benjamin became interested in photography as a hobby. There were other changes in 1891 Benjamin homesteaded in Viola and in 1896 built the Viola store. Benjamin also purchased the lumber mill but still had time for his hobby. Benjamin

visited the studio of Arthur Loomis in Redding and met and married Arthur's sister Estella Loomis (1870-1953) in 1897. Estella was the daughter of Leander Vaness Loomis of Ono and although they shared the last name there was no known relationship between the two families. The family built a home and studio in Anderson for the winters and in 1898 Estella became the first postmistress of the new Viola Post Office. After the eruption of Mount Lassen in 1914 both Estella and Benjamin worked to have the small federal holding in the area expanded into a national park. Both Benjamin's photographs and Estella's paintings of the eruption were exhibited at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. In 1916 Lassen Volcanic National Park was created. In 1920 Benjamin and Estella only daughter Louisa Mae Loomis died suddenly and the family created the Mae Loomis Memorial Museum at Manzanita Lake in her honor. Benjamin also built a small studio near the museum. In 1923 Benjamin purchased the Shingletown Hotel and had it moved to Viola. When Benjamin retired in 1929 he donated the museum and forty acres around Manzanita Lake to the National Park Service. Benjamin died in 1936.

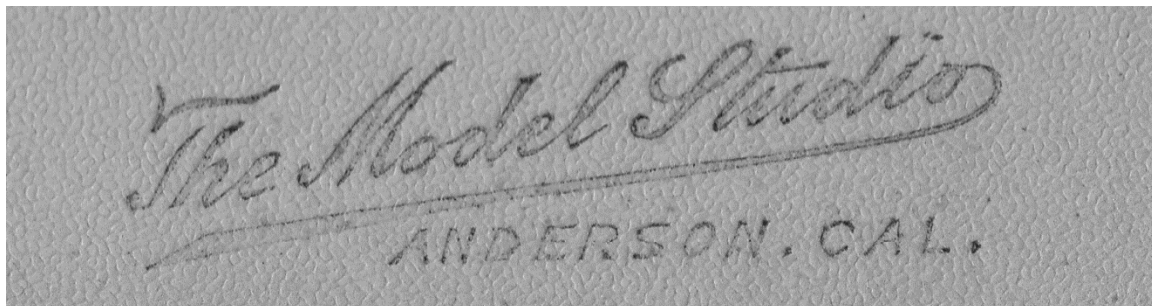
During the research a few photographs taken of the Mount Lassen eruption dated May 22, 1915 are marked "by Myer & Loomis." One account cites the photographs were taken from the ranch of Charlie and Albert Meyer but the credit on the photograph is clearly Myer. The partnership appears to be short-term partnership possibly for the 1915 eruption of Mt. Lassen and the identity of Mr. Myer was not found.



The original photograph had a handwritten Myers & Loomis while the postcards that were produced later had a block letter version.



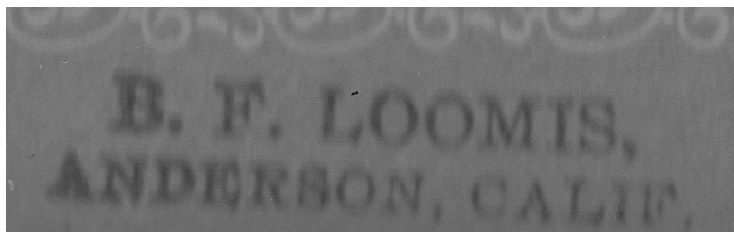
Mount Lassen taken by B. F. Loomis and processed at The Model Studio in Anderson.



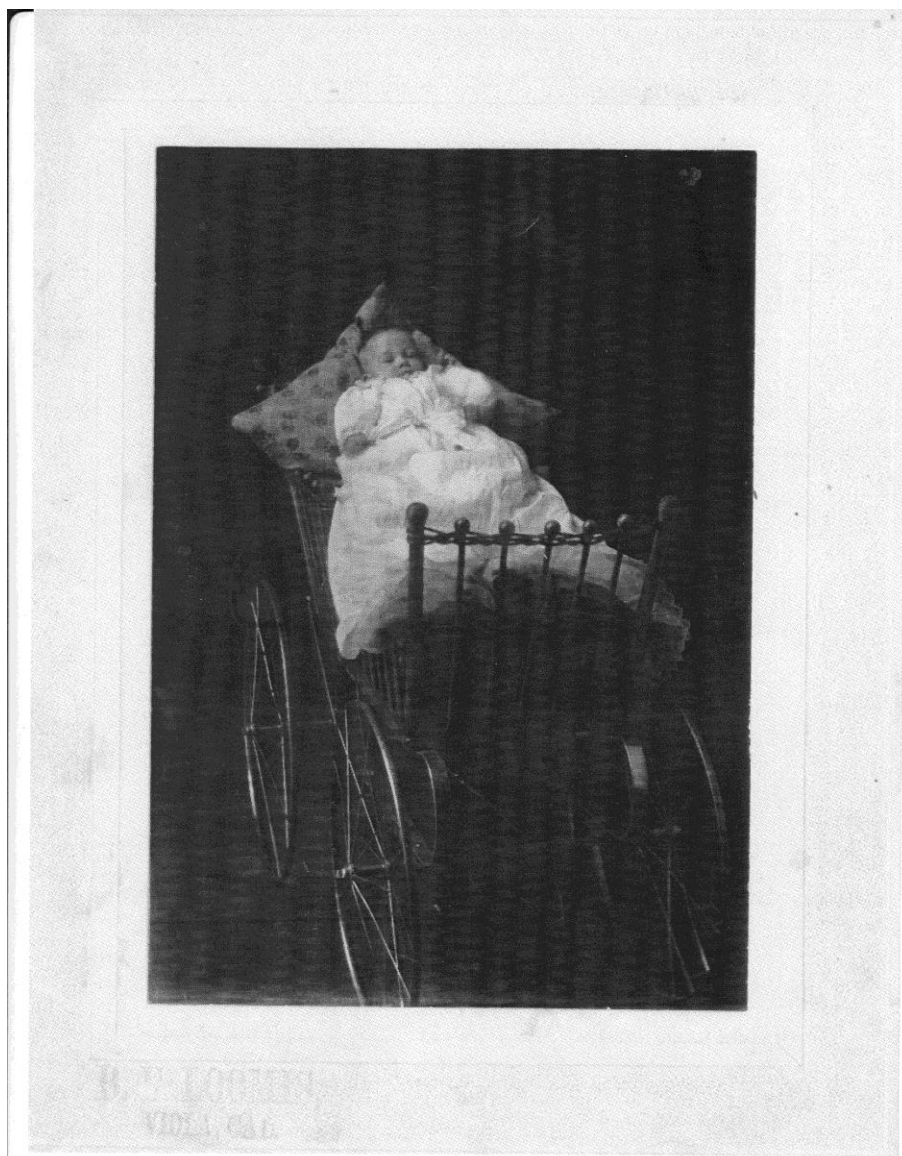
Trademark for Loomis' Model Studio in Anderson.



The Viola Store taken by B. F. Loomis.



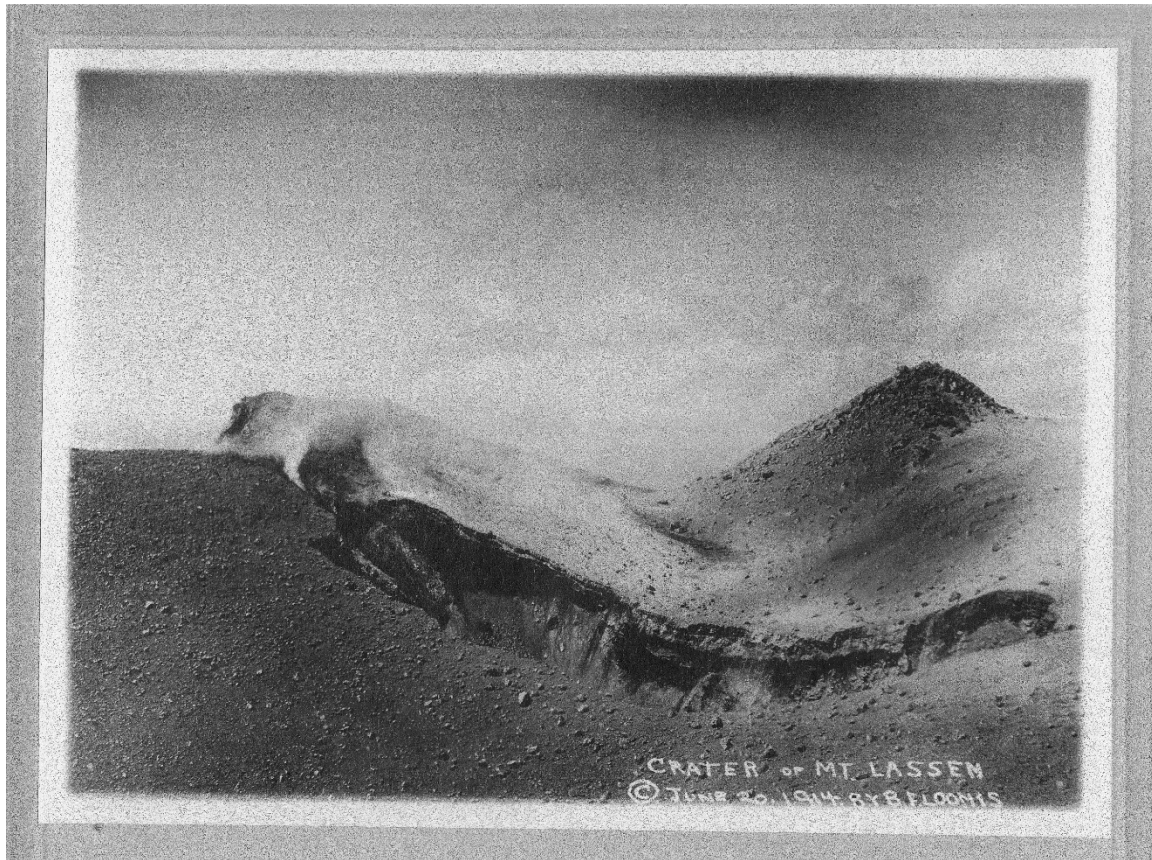
Hand-stamp applied to early B.F. Loomis prints.



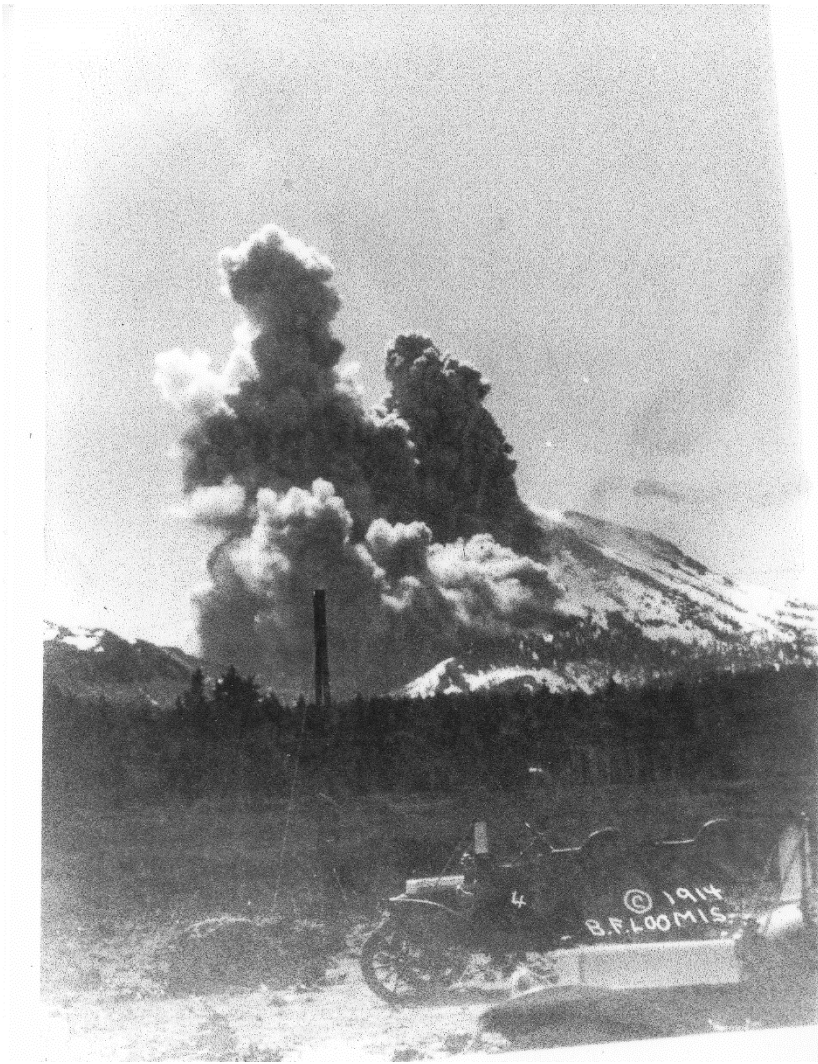
Portrait of Louisa Mae Loomis taken by her father B. F. Loomis. Note the hand-stamped trademark reads "B. F. Loomis Viola, Cal." Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



Portrait of Louisa Mae Loomis taken by her father B. F. Loomis. Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



The crater of Mount Lassen in 1914 taken by B. F. Loomis. Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



Eruption of Mount Lassen in 1914 by B. F. Loomis. Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



After effects of the 1914 eruption of Mount Lassen, titled Hot Rocks, taken by B. F. Loomis. Note the card uses B.F.L. rather than B. F. Loomis. Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



1918 parade in Anderson with handwritten Model Studio Photo. Courtesy of Anderson Historical Society.



The B. F. Loomis photography store at Lassen Volcanic National Park.



View titled palms and snow." The photograph is marked Loomis Photo and the frame The Model Studio, Anderson.

P. B. Reading, Buena Ventura, August 29, 1857

May 23. Reading

Cottonwood, caly
Sep. 2/57



General J. H. Innes
Washington City
D. C.

Broad Bottom August 29th 1857

My Dear General

Your return of form of
the 2^d ulto came duly to hand,
and I can assure you that I
was most happy to receive your
congratulations. As regards the
suggestion I think I'd happy and
and it shall be carried out,
the least undeviation, at the time,
Anna would be of the age you
mention, in a long way in the future,
and I hope that we will all live
to see the day - I cannot refrain
to say that I am most happy
to be the father of such a beautiful
child, as Mother could not wish
without it, she is young fairly, and
I hope before long to have an
opportunity of receiving your opinion
after an ocular demonstration,
I should I hope soon to give you a
personal congratulation - I am sure
the wish is a good one -

Overy

The idea of yours as regards the
 Mission Chain, is certainly very
 interesting, and had you not en-
 tered into the married state, it
 would not have occurred to you -
 So much for having a wife, you
 and getting journeyed, judging
 in a Mission by myself. I am
 free by ten years -

I enter into you a
 long letter as regards affairs in our
 State. Some Office you - but your
 letter touches a subject more closely
 connected with my happiness - and
 you know that I always cherished
 Religion - so I shall not be getting,

I enter the liberty of presenting
 the compliments of Mrs Reading and
 myself to your Lady - and hope for
 the pleasure of an acquaintance,
 Mrs R often speaks of you - and
 desires her kind regards -

I am
 Yours truly
 P. B. Reading

James W. Denver }
 Washington D.C. }

The envelope was mailed at the Cottonwood Post office on September 2, 1857, and addressed to J. W. Denver in Washington City, D. C. James W. Denver had been the U. S. representative from the northern at-large district of California from March 1855 to March 1857. At the time the letter was mailed James was serving as the Secretary for the Territory of Kansas (governor as of December 1857).

To understand the letter requires two facts: Pierson B. Reading had married Euphan "Fanny" Washington in 1856 and their first child Anna was born on June 1, 1857. Second James William Denver

who had been the U. S. Representative at large for Shasta County until March 1857, had just married Louise Rombach on November 26, 1856.

Pierson B. Reading was addressed more fully after James L. Freaner's letter of October 11, 1850 and was also covered in Drury P. Baldwin's letter from Reading's Ranch dated July 26, 1851.

Buena Ventura August 19, 1857

My dear General

Your _____ form of the 2nd instant came duly to hand and I can assure you that I was most happy to receive your congratulations. As regards the suggestion I think it a happy one and it shall be carried out, at least undertaken. At this time Anna would be of the age you mention. It's a long way in the future and I hope that she will also live to see the day. I cannot refrain to say that I am most happy to be the father of such a beautiful child. _____ Mother could not wish me think it, she is growing finely, and I hope before long to have an opportunity of hearing your opinion after an ocular demonstration. General I hope soon to give you a similar congratulation. I am sure the wish is a grand one -

Over

That idea of yours as regards the Mexican chair is certainly very romantic and had you not entered into the married state it would not have occurred to you – so much for having a wife. You are growing younger judging in a measure by myself. I am so by ten years.

I could write you a long letter as regards affairs in our State. Your office _____ but your letter touches a subject more closely connected with my happenings and you know that I always eschewed politics – so I will write nothing.

I take the liberty of presenting the compliments of Mrs. Reading and myself to your lady – and hope for the pleasure of an acquaintance. Mrs. R. often speaks of you and _____ her _____ regards.

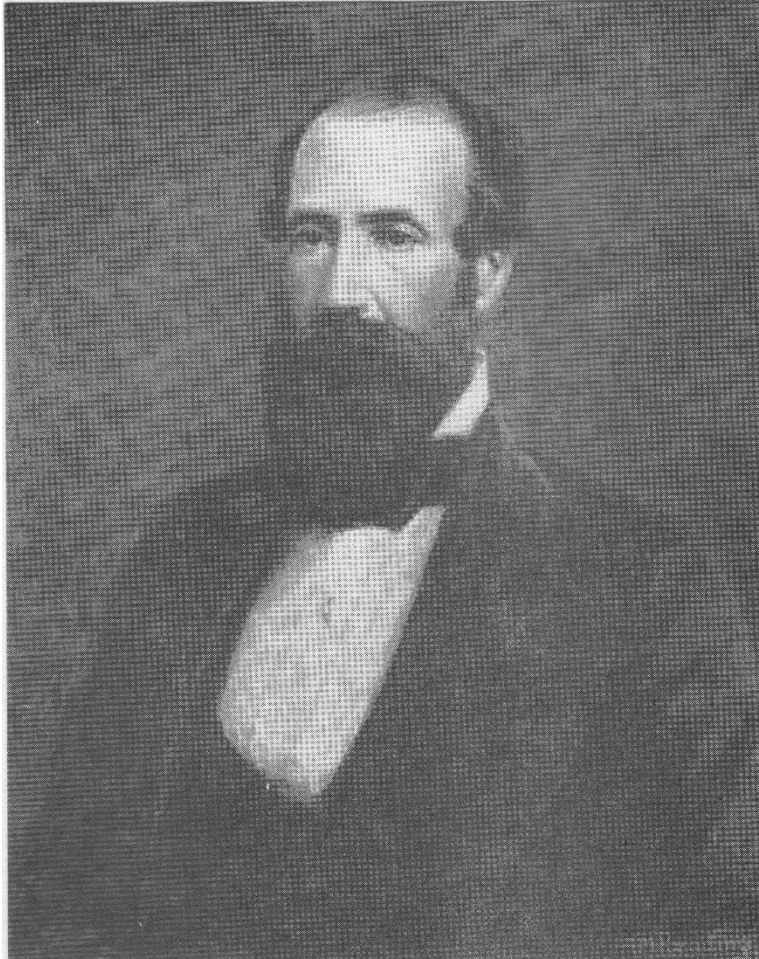
I am

General Denver

Yours truly

Washington DC

P. B. Reading



Major Pierson Barton Reading. Portrait by Alice Matilda Reading. Courtesy of Shasta Historical Society.

Charles Baker, Shasta City, November 10, 1857

Shasta City Nov 10th 57

Dear Brother Charles & Lady,
It has been a long time since
I last wrote to you, but still long
since I rec'd a letter from you
For the last five months I
have made my home under the
shade of my magnificent Oak
tree at home Am. P.O. or indeed
from a shop where I could
be comfortably enclosed in
my dressing and surrounded
with all the luxuries of life with
time and opportunity to write and
yet I have not received a letter from
you for a long months, you
certainly can see the contrast in
our situations and will at once
understand that you should write
at least one letter to my own

Well Charles I heartily felicitate
you upon your happy union with
Miss Beah, I wish you twain

a long, a happy, and a harmonious
life, Huam was here a few
days since with some goods
he has gone after two more Leads
We intend trying the goods this winter
again this winter although we suffered
pretty severely last winter by it, we
will continue to part with all goods
all winter if the Roads are passable
We are now building a house
20 by 30 feet also a Ten foot Alley
80 feet long adjoining. We have
enclosed 20 Acres of land which
we intend farming next season
provided however that it is
not dug up for Gold, they have
declared that it will pay from
two to four Dollars per day and it
may be possible that it will be
taken up by the Miners the Laws
are such that land can not be held
for agricultural purposes in a
Mining district if miners choose to work
upon it, It would be like all
our luck to have it all taken up
I have seen Mining for the

last five months and I have
has been Yearning, We have
not been able to make it Pen
out,

Well Charles Gen can
tell me that Sam talks pretty
strong of starting home soon,
We have been together during
the summer and fall, We yesterday
had the first Rain of consequence
We will expect it pretty steady
now for about five months
then about 8 day, The miners
are not doing much now but
expect after the rains start the
gulches to do very well,

Pretty much all are anxious to
return to the States but thousands
without the means, Saw to Panama
is now three hundred Dollars,

I believe the discovery of Gold in
C.A. has been a curse to the Ameri-
-can people, true many have realized
fortunes, Will many more have been
injured mind in Morals, health and
purses, I will have to draw to
a close for the want of news

You will please remember
me to your Lady also to Father
and Mr Brown & family also
to Sidney & family.

You will please
excuse this hastily written
sheet. I have written three
letters this afternoon and
have three more to write yet
to day. Tell the family when
they write to me or Miami in
future to direct to Shasta City
Shasta Co. C.A. Tell Margaret
I will write to her soon.

Tell Betsy I have never
recd that letter from her. She
is old enough to write to her
Uncle Sol. My love to your
children.

From your Afft Brother

Charles Baker
C. S. Baker

Shasta City Nov. 10th '57

Dear Brother Charles and Lady

It has been a long time since I last wrote to you, but still longer since I read a letter from you.

For the last five months I have made my home under the shade of an umbrageous oak remote from my P. C. as indeed from a shop where I could procure stationary. You have been comfortable ensconced in your dwelling and surrounded with all the luxuries of life with time and opportunity to write and yet I have not received a letter from you for six long months. You certainly can see this contrast in our situations and will at once acknowledge that you should write at least three letters to my one.

Well Charles I heartily felicitate you upon your happy union with Miss Beatty. I wish you a long, a happy, and a harmonious life. Hiram was here a few days since with some goods. He has gone after two more loads. We intend trying the goods business again this winter although we suffered pretty last winter by it. We will continue to pack and have goods all winter if the roads are passable. We are now building a house 20 by 33 feet also a ten-pin ally 80 feet long adjoining. We have enclosed 20 acres of land which we intend farming next season provided however that it is not dug up for gold. They have ascertained that it will pay from two to four dollars per day and it maybe possible that it will be torn up by the miners. The laws are such that land can not be held for agricultural purposes in a mining district if miners choose to work upon it. It would be like all our luck to have it all torn up.

I have been mining for the last five months and Hiram has been farming. We have not been able to make it pan out. Well Charles you can tell Mel that Sam talked pretty strong of starting home soon. We have been together during the summer and fall. We yesterday had the first rain of consequence. We will expect it pretty steady now for about four months then 8 dry. The miners are not doing much now but expect after the rains start the gulches to do very well.

Pretty much all are anxious to return to the States but thousands without the means. Fare to Panama is now three hundred dollars.

I believe the discovery of gold in C. A. has been a curse to the American people. True many have realized fortunes while many more have been ruined in morale, health and purse. I will have to draw to a close for the want of news.

You will please remember me to your lady. Also to father and Mr. Rowan and family, also to Sidney and family.

You will please excuse this hastily written sheet. I have written three letter this afternoon and have three more yet to write today. Tell the family when they write to me or Hiram in future to direct to Shasta City, Shasta County, C. A. Tell Margaret I will write to her soon.

Tell Betsy I have never received that letter from her. She is old enough to write to her uncle Sol. My love to your children. From your affectionate brother.

Charles Baker

S. Baker

(Written vertically on the first page) N. B. you will please tell Sidney that I just received a line from him dated July 30th which I will answer in a few days. Tell C. P. Ober I just wrote him a letter and directed it to lowaville. I will have John forward the same. Yours in haste. S. D. Baker

On page one Solomon is wishing his brother Charles well on his marriage to Miss Beatty. Charles had married Hester Beatty about 1851 and she died in 1857. In August 1857 Charles married Sarah Russell Shaw 1832-1890.

The letter was addressed to lowaville which is in Van Buren County, Iowa. The town is on the banks of the Des Moines River across from the Indian Territory. Solomon's brother John Dodge Baker was postmaster, so the letter was sure to be forwarded.

Hiram was Solomon's Brother with whom he came to California and had earlier been mining in Humbug Gulch in Siskiyou County. Margaret Baker was the daughter of Solomon's oldest brother Seth who had died in 1846 and she lived with Solomon's father. Chambers Perry Ober was Solomon's cousin by marriage who had married his cousin Mary E. Baker. Rowan and family was probably the father in law of his sister Mary Ann and her husband Martin B. Rowan who both died in a Cholera epidemic in Illinois in 1855. The couple had two children Albert and Mary who survived and appear to be living with their grandfather. Sidney and family was Solomom's brother Sidney and his wife Laura Almira Edwards who had two living children at the time of the letter: Sidney and Frank. The Betsy reference seems to be a child of his brother Charles. At the time of the letter Charles had two daughters Elizabeth born in 1836 and Estella born in 1847. The name Betsy fits Elizabeth but she was twenty-one at the time of the letter so he may have meant Estella.

H. C. Baker, Bloody Island, August 20, 1858

Blody Island Aug 26 1858

Dear Niece & Nephew

I take my pen in hand to answer your letter it had ben lying before me some time unanswered but now I will try to answer it I have ben quite sick for the last week with the fever

I am now on my feet & a gain. Brother & wife is gettin well but they are on the mend now I do get very lonely at times as I am living on a Island in the Sacramento river & dont have many visitors only the old backed & they are worse than none at all but I live in hope its wont all ways last I am getting so old that it causes me to think I have now place to lay head it is people that some of the Gents will take a notion to smile on me & that I would take your ad vice in getting a better help or I would like see you all the best in the world it has ben nine years since I last saw you all

in 5 cant say when I will be back I & Wife
will cum next year it my be saw that
I can cum a long with them but nothing
surtin as I am in the hog trad raising
when you susite a gain tell me how
low & betw is getting a long & I send
& all of the rest of my peopel til they to
ancon the letter that I wrote to her
tell broter Charles I will pen him alise
shortly I rot to Geny some time back
I shouldent now the place now I dont
supose there is sow much change
in it all of our folks have left
but if you & yours it dont appear
that I would like to live there
now as there is sow much
chang I mile walk all day with
out seeing any one that I know
I see some papers from that
place by chance hardly ever see an
old Beller more to any thing
except C. Bridly they ment all
left here they I cant think of any
thing to write that will interest
you ut all there is a great many

flocking to Fraser River mines & but
few coming back they are doing
very well there as near as I can learn
I will never go to any new
mines a gain it don't agree
with me to mine in the state
the Government has made very hard
times in money affairs you must
write often and I will try to the
same nothing more pedant I send
your ever devoted Uncle
J. C. Baker

Note: spelling was very much an issue in this letter (Bloody is Bloody, Nefu is nephew) and the typed version has been corrected.

Bloody Island August 26, 1858

Dear Niece and Nephew

I take my pen in hand to answer your letter. It has been lying before me some time unanswered but now I will try to answer it. I have been quite sick for the last week with the fevers. I am now on my legs again. Brother and wife are quite unwell but they are on the mend now. I do get very lonely at times as I am living on an island in the Sacramento River and don't have many visitors only the old bachelors and they are worse than none at all but I live in hopes it won't last. I am getting so old that it causes me to think I have no place to lay my head. It is probably that some of the girls will take a notion to smile on me and that I would take your advise in getting a better half on. I would like to see you all the best in the world it has been nine years since I last saw you all.

I can't say when I will be back S. & wife will come next year it may be so that I can come along with them but nothing certain as I am in the hog trade-raising. When you write again tell me how Lon and Betsy are getting along and how are all of the rest of my people. Tell Ely to answer to answer the letter I wrote to her. Tell brother Charles I will pen him a line shortly. I wrote to Leng some time back. I

shouldn't know the place now I don't suppose there is so much change in it. All of our folks have left but you and yours. It don't appear that I would like to live there now as there is so much change. I might walk all day without seeing any one that I know. I see some papers from that place by chance. Hardly even see an old Beller name to anything except C. Gridley. They haven't all left have they. I can't think of anything to write that will interest you of note. There is a great many flocking to Fraser River mines and but few coming back. They are doing very well there as near as I can learn. I will never go into any new mines again. It don't agree with me to mine in the water. The elephant has made very hard times in money affairs. You must write often and I will try to the same. Nothing more at present. I remain your ever dedicated Uncle.

H. C. Baker

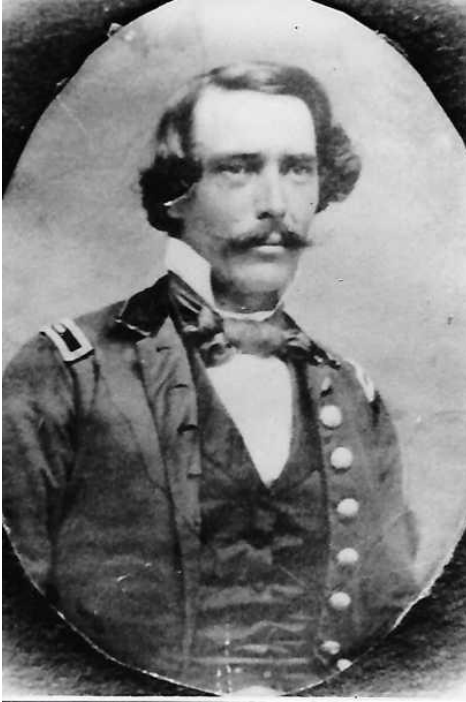
The recurrent fevers were probably malaria that was introduced into Shasta County between 1830 to 1833, by fur trappers. One group, the John Work party, of 1832 wintered here with ninety-four men, women and children and were unknowingly infected. Seventy-two of the party became ill and with the disease passed out into the local mosquito population it is estimated that 75% of the Native American population of the upper Sacramento Valley perished prior to the Gold Rush. The disease remained prevalent in areas such Bloody Island, Gas Point, and Fall River Valley until mosquito abatement programs became prevalent around 1918.

The Fraser River Gold Rush began quietly in 1858 in British Columbia. The Governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island sent a shipment of gold to the U. S. Mint at San Francisco and within a month 30,000 miners flocked into British Columbia. Many of the early California miners who were unable to stake claims due to the summer's high water in the rivers returned calling the rush "humbug" and never seeing the vast wealth extracted as the rust site expanded. The main rush was over by 1860 with depletion of the river sand bars but the boom in the area continued into the 1920s. In 1860 many of the California miners drifted off to the Ft. Colville Rush in Washington or the new gold fields of Colorado.

Hiram C. Baker is absent from most of the data on Ancestry.com and where found his birthday is given as 1825 or 1838 in Ohio. He appears not to have gone home and was thought to have died in 1873 in Monterey County (now San Benito County). Hiram was believed to have married Rebecca Jane Smith in 1863 (buried IOOF Cemetery in San Benito County) and possibly had three children: John William, Annie Lee, George Buchanan. At the time of the letter, he was at Bloody Island which was an island in the Sacramento River to the east of P. B. Reading's home. Bloody Island is no longer a true island. Hiram's hog operation is different than the farm on Bear Creek started by Hiram, Solomon and Stephen Park.

In this letter Hiram states his brother Solomon is married and intimates the marriage was performed in California as Solomon has not been home at this point in 1858. Solomon confirms the marriage in his letter of April 24, 1859, that follows.

Edmund Russel



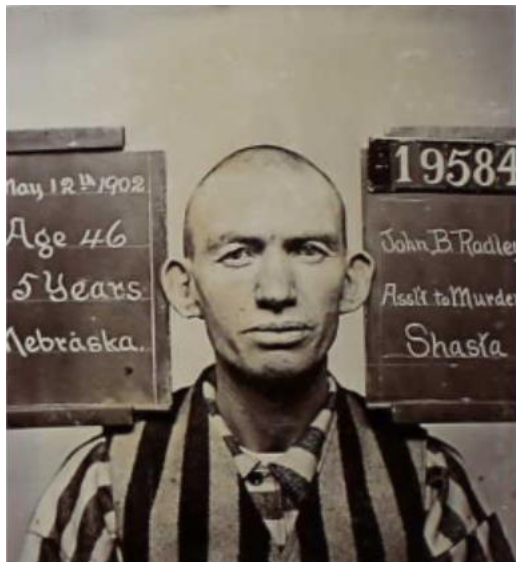
Lt. Edmund Russell

Lieutenant Edmund Russell was the Chief Commissary Officer for the Northern Military District of California, who was stationed at Fort Reading. Edmund Russell was born in Pennsylvania and attended the U. S. Military Academy from July 1842 to July 1846. Edmund was commissioned a Brevet 2nd Lieutenant in the 6th Infantry Regiment July 1, 1846 with his first assignment being Fort Smith, Arkansas. Edmund served in the War with Mexico and was present at the Capture of San Antonio, the Battle of Churubusco, Molino del Rey, and Chapultepec. Edward was promoted to 2nd Lt. in February 1847 in the 4th Infantry. He was wounded at the battle of Churubusco and given a brevet promotion to 1st Lt. for gallantry and meritorious conduct at Molino del Rey.

Following the war Edmund was assigned to Pascagoula, Mississippi and in December was transferred to Fort Gratiot, Michigan on Lake Huron. In August 1849 he was transferred to Fort Brady, Michigan at Sault Sainte Marie across from Canada. In January 1850 Edmund was promoted to 1st Lt. in the 4th Infantry Regiment. Edmund was transferred to Madison Barracks in September 1850 at Sackett's Harbor on Lake Erie in New York. In July 1852 Edmund's next assignment was Fort Columbus in New York City where the 4th Infantry Regiment was to be consolidated for shipment to California. The regiment landed in Panama, then marched across the isthmus before resuming ship transportation to Benicia Barracks. The march lost the regiment one in every ten officers, men and families from cholera. Upon arrival in California the regiment was assigned throughout the Pacific command. On October 2, 1852 1st Lt. Russell joined the command at Fort Reading and was a company commander with the additional duties a Chief Commissary Officer of the Northern Military District of California. As company commander of Company D, 4th Infantry, Lt. Russell was assigned to patrol southward to then Colusa

County after reports of Indian attacks on packers and ranches. While on patrol on March 24, 1853, at Thomes Creek (now Tehama County) Lt. Russell was killed when he became separated from his troops. Lt. Russell was interred at the Fort Reading cemetery although his remains were later transferred to Windham, Pennsylvania for reburial.

John B. Radley



San Quentin Prison Photograph of John B. Radley

Born 1856 in Nebraska. He was the son of Barney Radley 1816-1891. John married Emma Jones 1855-1917 in 1885 in Idaho. In 1890 John was a bartender in Mendocino County and in 1896 was listed as a blacksmith in Redding. In 1900 John was a saloonkeeper in Redding. John was sentenced to San Quentin (#19584) May 12, 1902 on a five year sentence of assault to commit murder. John was discharged on December 12, 1905 and returned to Redding where he died in 1906. John and Emma were not known to have had children.