

Discovery confirmed 'legend'

WARREN — When Jeff Fee found the long-lost Chinese gardens, he dreamed of developing them into an exhibit for the public.

Now, the site has been excavated and opened. And plans are being made to reproduce a Chinese dugout shelter close to the nearby road, with wheelchair access, so everyone can learn about this little-known episode in Idaho's history.

Project coordinator Linda Fitch, an assistant district ranger for the Payette National Forest, credits Fee for convincing the

Forest Service that the site should be excavated and opened.

"Jeff is very dynamic," Fitch said. "It was his idea from the beginning."

Fee, a Forest Service archeologist who grew up in McCall, gives credit to the Chinese, who he says have not been acknowledged for their contribution to Idaho history.

"They were very resourceful and industrious people," he said. "They gave the ultimate sacrifice for their families — their lives."

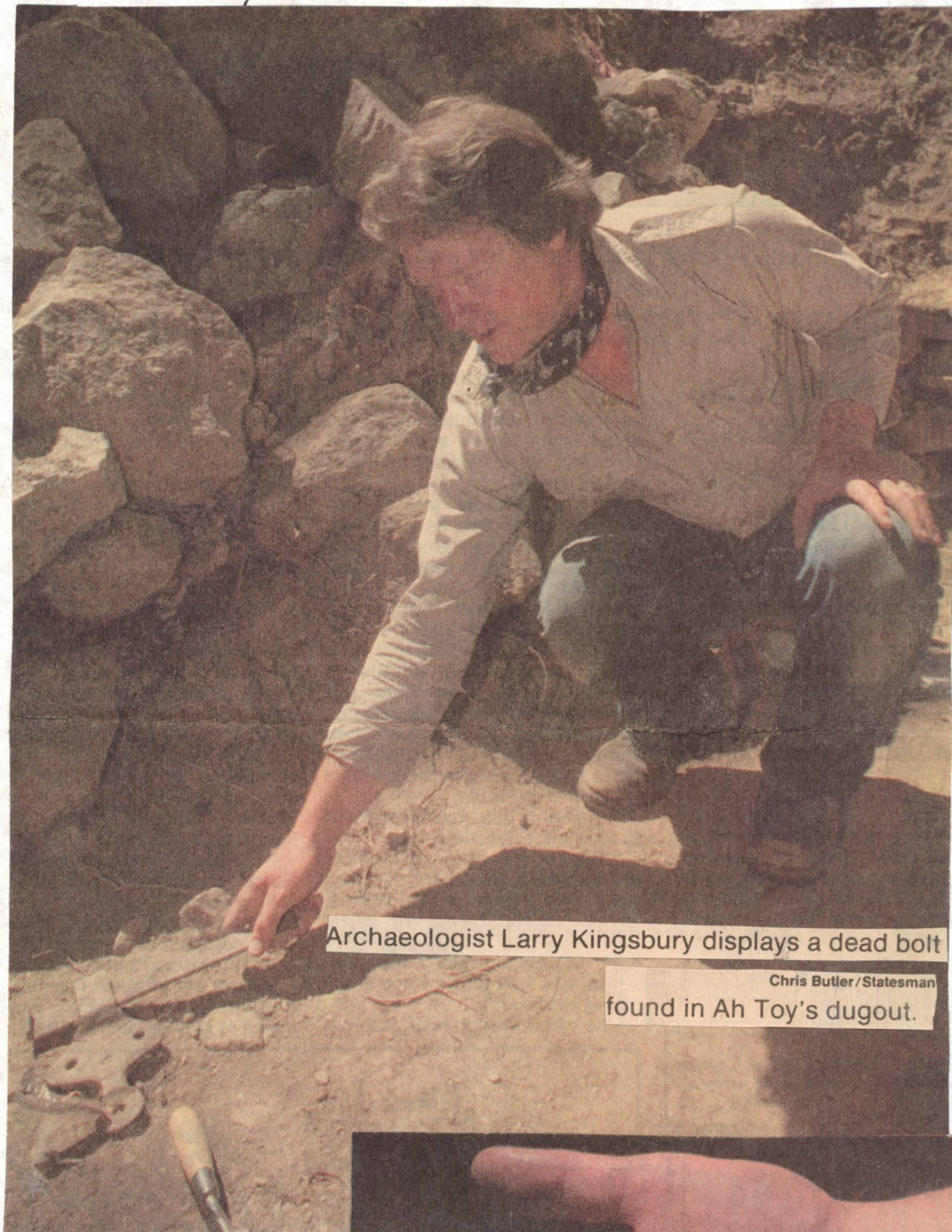
With his battered cowboy hat and speckled horse, Fee, 43, looks as though he stepped out of a Frederic Remington painting, rather than the green Forest

Service truck he uses to commute from McCall.

Growing up in McCall, Fee spent about six months of the year in Warren, where his father was a seasonal forest ranger. He heard tales of the gardens, but dismissed them as legend. But in 1982, he stumbled across the terraces while surveying a proposed timber sale.

After six years of waiting, he finally got the go-ahead on the project. He spent two weeks in June, with other archeologists, exploring and excavating the site.

For the rest of the summer, he will be exploring other Forest Service lands for other peeks into Idaho history.



Archaeologist Larry Kingsbury displays a dead bolt

Chris Butler/Statesman

found in Ah Toy's dugout.



Chris Butle

Larry Kingsbury holds a coin, pieces of ceramic and an old cartridge found at the site.

Dig explores life of Chinese at Warren during mining days

By **NANCY REID**

The Idaho Statesman

WARREN — To find Idaho's newest archeological site, you travel past a sign that warns to watch for moose, past the deserted mining town of Warren, to one of the most peaceful river canyons in Idaho.

Dug into the canyon walls of the South Fork of the Salmon River is a network of the most extensive Chinese terracing outside of China. The terraces, a century-old remnant of the laborers who built Idaho's mining industry, are open to the public this summer for the first time.

The terraces, which were dug to grow vegetable gardens for the community of miners at Warren, were rediscovered in 1982 by archeologist Jeff Fee.

But the location was kept secret by the Payette National Forest until June, when Fee, Larry Kingsbury and 14 volunteers were sent to excavate the site and remove artifacts.

In two weeks, the team moved tons of dirt and uncovered the terraces, a dugout shelter, and bits and pieces of Chinese life.

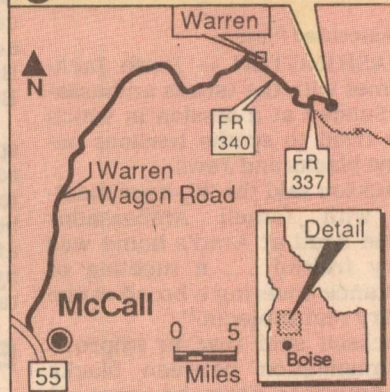
From Warren Summit, Forest Service Road 337 leads down the canyon to the river. The road is so lightly traveled, you are as likely to see deer tracks as tire tracks.

The only building in sight — about halfway down the canyon — is Hays Station, a rundown log cabin that served as a ranger station in the early 1900s. The terraces begin at Hays Station and continue about about half a mile in several plots to within 100 yards of the river.

The terraces are easily seen from the air. But from the ground, to the untrained eye, they melt into the scenery.

While the west side of the canyon is sparsely forested, the east side is covered with tall pines, grasses and wild flowers. The

Chinese gardens



Greg Harris/Statesman

If you go

The route to the Chinese gardens — situated along the South Fork of the Salmon River — leads first to McCall. There, turn north on the Warren Wagon Road and head 51 miles to Warren. The road is paved for 23 miles, but is gravel or dirt the rest of the way.

Continue through Warren, past the ranger station on Forest Road 340, to Warren Summit. Turn left on Forest Road 337 and drive eight miles to Hays Station on a good dirt road.

The trail starts about 100 feet past Hays Station. It is marked by a red flag on the right. Visitors should be prepared for a steep, 1½-mile downhill hike past many terraces. Wear hiking boots and carry drinking water.

Additional information may be obtained from the project coordinator, Linda Fitch, at the Payette National Forest headquarters in McCall. The address is 202 W. Lake St., McCall, 83638. The phone number is 634-8151.

canyon walls are more than 3,000 feet high, descending from 7,000-foot granite peaks to the shimmering blue ribbon of the South Fork.

The canyon was not always so placid. More than 100 years ago, the walls sang as Chinese immigrants built nearly 250 terraces and cultivated produce to sell to hard-working miners in Warren — then a predominantly Chinese settlement of 1,300.

Chinese had been lured to this country by tales of opportunities told by Russian traders. But most of them intended their visits to be temporary.

"The Chinese were everywhere in America. They made their fortunes and returned home to buy land in China," Fee said.

They came to Warren on foot from ports such as Seattle and San Francisco, in search of the gold that had been discovered nearby in 1862.

After the most accessible gold had been taken, Chinese were allowed to rework the mines. The 1870 Idaho territorial census revealed a population of 367 Chinese, 243 whites, three American Indians and two blacks. And an article in The Idaho Statesman in 1879 listed Warren's population at about 800 Chinese and 200 to 300 whites.

Nearly all the Chinese had farmed in their home country. But they had never found agriculture as lucrative as it would be at Warren — a remote town populated by hungry miners with a lot

Chinese coped well in the hard lifestyle of old Warren

BY BEVERLY INGRAHAM
For The Star-News 3-29-89

At one time, Chinese nationals made up almost one third of Idaho's population. According to the 1870 census of Idaho Territory, there were 14,999 residents with 4,274 of those being Chinese.

Many of these Chinese came from Guangdong Province, an especially impoverished part of China. To keep their families alive, these desperate people resorted to a kind of indentured servitude. American businessmen offered the Chinese passage on a ship to America if they would work a specified amount of time for that person after they arrived in America.

Warren was one of the new mining districts begun in 1862, and several Chinese worked there for wages in the 1860s. By 1870, most of the easy gold had been taken out.



1 FOOTNOTES To History

That year, the Chinese were allowed to lease and take over any abandoned mining claims they could find.

For the next 30 years, from

1870 to 1900, the majority of people living in Warren were Chinese, or "celestials," as they were sometimes called. These industrious people worked hard to make money and send it home to their families in China, where one American dollar was worth 10 Chinese yen.

They brought their own customs and culture to that remote mining town in central Idaho. Their speech, clothes and food were exotic, but history shows they got along well enough with the other non-Chinese miners.

By 1882, there were five Chinese placer mining companies in the Warren area plus merchants, pack train operators, a doctor, cooks and gardeners. The closest supply town was Grangeville, a grueling 150 mile trip by horseback on rugged trails.

Bringing in food from Grangeville proved to be impractical,

so the Chinese caught fish in the nearby rivers and raised hogs for meat. Gardens on the west side of the South Fork of the Salmon River were cultivated for about 35 years starting in 1875.

These were terraced gardens on steep slopes at an elevation of 3,200 to 4,700 feet. American citizens had prior rights to the flat farming land so the Chinese had to build their garden spots on the hill-sides. This kind of terraced gardening was very familiar to the Chinese who had practiced it in the mountainous country in China.

In all there were at least five garden sites with a total of 250 terraces on about 22 acres of mostly granitic soil. To water the gardens, ditches were hand-dug to bring irrigation water from creeks. Many kinds of fruits and vegetables were grown and taken by horseback to

(See "Chinese," Back Page)



A Chinese resident of old Warren.

Photo courtesy U.S. Forest Service

Chinese

(Continued from Page A-1)
Warren to be sold to the miners there.

The South Fork gardens and some possible lower Salmon River gardens are the only known Chinese terraced gardens outside of Asia.

The 1880 census listed 394 Chinese living in Warren, but by 1910 most had returned to China. The last Chinese in Warren was Ah

Sam, who died there in 1938. With his death went the last of the celestials, who had brought a unique way of life to the high mountain mining town of Warren.

(Beverly Ingraham is a Long Valley resident who has extensive experience in historical research and preservation.)



Stuart Wong/The Idaho Statesman

8/4/89

A bus carrying a load of firefighters stops in Warren on its way to the fire lines.

Historic town gets reprieve as blaze retreats

By Andrew Garber
The Idaho Statesman

WARREN — Thursday morning broke bright and clear in this historic gold mining town, nestled in a high mountain valley about 50 miles northeast of McCall.

There was no ominous veil of smoke from the 4,244-acre Whangdoodle blaze.

Just three days ago, the fierce fire roared within three-fourths of a mile of the two dozen or so old, weathered, wooden buildings that make up the community.

The fire's retreat was a big relief to town residents. Out of Warren's population of 32, more than 20 ignored a U.S. Forest Service evacuation order to de-

fend their homes.

"I don't feel threatened by (the fires)," said Jan Monson, while eating a danish at The Winter Inn, a gathering point for locals. "We've got a good bunch of firefighters in here. I feel they'll take good care of us."

Fire information officer Leland Singer said crews made good progress since Tuesday in trying to contain the Whangdoodle blaze and two others that make up the 7,000 acre Steamboat group of fires.

About 800 firefighters were in the Warren area constructing fires lines.

"I don't think Warren is as threatened as it was a day or two ago," Singer said.

Even so, some residents kept

casting worried glances at the hills, waiting for the telltale plumes of smoke that would send firefighters running to staff the white fire hoses running up and down the main street. The hoses are hooked up to pumps at a nearby creek and can reach every building in Warren.

The town has weathered monstrous fires before.

All but three buildings in the town, founded in the mid-1800s, were burned to the ground in a 1904 fire. Residents and firefighters want to make sure that doesn't happen again.

"I feel like we've still got a danger" from the Whangdoodle fire, said Ken Davis, who owns two of the buildings that survived the 1904 fire — a one-room cabin and a nearby shed that

was once used as a shelter by residents during Indian attacks.

"With the right wind conditions, we could get in trouble again," Davis said.

The Forest Service has tied pink and white ribbons to homes and businesses in Warren. Pink ribbons, tied mainly to structures occupied yearround, mean that firefighters will put first priority on saving the structures. Buildings with white ribbons are second in priority.

Town historian Cheryl Helmers said if the fires do pick up again, town residents will be ready to fight.

"These are our things," she said defiantly. "They can tell us to go (evacuate) to McCall, but people are going to stay here to watch their houses."

Warren dig still yields treasures

BY JAMES L. KINCAID

For The Star-News

An archaeological search near Warren, at a site known as "The Store," is slowly yielding knowledge about the sizable Chinese population in Idaho during the 1880s gold rush.

The items found at the dig will aid archaeologists in finding clues to fill in the gaps of inadequate or nonexistent historical records on significant portions of Idaho's history.

Seven anthropological and history students, two volunteers and Dr. Roderick Sprague, director of the Laboratory of Anthropology at University of Idaho, recently finished the second year of research at a site known as "The Store."

"This site was probably a Chinese storehouse during the 1870s or 1880s," Sprague said. "To our knowledge, none of the Chinese kept diaries and whites ignored them, so we don't know how they lived, clothed or entertained themselves or how much of their food came from China or the U.S. We'll keep going here for at least five years," he said.

Thanks to a cooperative agreement with the Payette National Forest, Sprague and crew are living an archaeologist's dream.

"This is real archaeology, not salvage", Sprague said. "I would like to spend six to 10 years here because there are several structures, and this is not a fast process."

"Real" archaeology is problem-oriented and seeks to answer questions, Sprague said. You dig where you think you should dig, not where you have to dig. That process is different from salvage archaeology, which is done to stay in front of road or dam construction. Sprague thinks the Warren site will be particularly revealing.

"We have found parts of a scale, medicine and alcohol bottles, tin food cans, ceramics, opium tins, and evidence of the building's structure and methods of construction," he said.

Sprague likes to do slow, careful digging which leads to a more accurate interpretation of the site. The soil is gently troweled into dustpans and hand-sorted on the spot. After sorting, the soil goes from dustpan

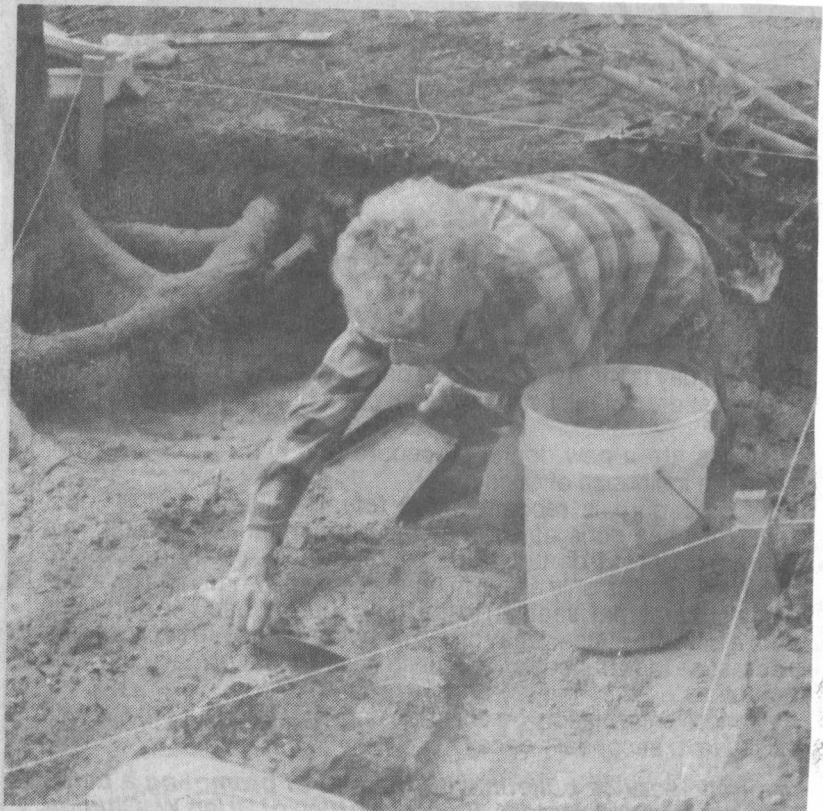


Photo by James L. Kincaid

Worker sifts through remains of store.

to screens, which capture microscopic fragments of evidence, Sprague said. Hopes are that the final result will be a more accurate description of Chinese mining in the Warren area, he said.

Everyone benefits from this project, Sprague said. The Forest Service learns about its resources, the students learn excavation techniques and historical knowledge is gained.

"This is part of our "Windows on the Past" program", said Larry Kingsbury, Payette National Forest archaeologist.

"It allows us, through the U of I archaeological field school, to share cultural resources with the public. It is important that the part the Chinese played in Idaho's history be recognized," Kingsbury said.

'Slave girl' won respect on Salmon

Idaho's Salmon River canyons have had their share of characters through the years, including the likes of the late Sylvan Hart, better known as Buckskin Bill. If given a choice, however, most old-timers would probably agree that the most remarkable resident the river has known was Polly Bemis.

Born Lalu Nathoy near Hong Kong in 1849, the young Chinese girl was sold into slavery by her

**Arthur
Hart**

Idaho history



destitute parents and eventually brought to America. Polly's own version of her past was quoted in a magazine article by Countess Eleanor Gizycka, who had met her while on one of the early float trips down the Salmon River in 1921.

"My folluks in Hong Kong had no grub. Day sellee me ... Slave girl. Old woman she shmuggle me into Portland. I cost \$2,500. Don't looka it now, hmmm!" she chuckled. "Old Chineeman he took me along to Warrens in a pack train. I never see a railroad."

Although many people later told and wrote their own versions of Polly's life story, the few words above are the only direct quotes from her on the subject to have been recorded. There is reason to believe that Countess Gizycka's account is an accurate one, not only because people like Pete Klinkhammer, Polly's neighbor for 30 years, said it was, but because the countess was better known as Cissy Patterson, owner, publisher and editor of the *Washington Times-Herald*. As a principal stockholder in the *Chicago*



Idaho Historical Society

Polly Bemis married a saloonkeeper in Warren.

Tribune and chairman of the *New York Daily News* she was once called "the most powerful woman in America."

The story of how the diminutive and peppy Polly became Mrs. Charlie Bemis is available in several versions. The most popular is that saloon-keeper Bemis won her in a poker game from her Chinese owner at Warren. After he was shot in the face by a poor loser following another poker game, Polly nursed him back to health. The doctor called in had given up the case as hopeless.

Sister Afreda Elsensohn, the tireless and thorough historian of Idaho county, found a number of old-timers who knew Charlie and Polly Bemis well. All doubted the "poker bride" yarn. One thing not

in dispute is that Charlie married Polly on Aug. 13, 1894 at Warren, and that they spent the rest of their lives on the Salmon River on a small farm opposite Shepp Ranch.

Polly won wide admiration from the river people for her humor, hospitality and skill at farming, fishing and needlework. Cissy Patterson described her thus: "She stands not much over four feet, neat as a pin, wrinkled as a walnut, and at sixty-nine is

full of dash and charm." Charlie was an invalid by then and died a year after in 1922. Polly lived alone, in a little cabin that is still standing, until her death in the hospital at Grangeville at 1933.

Arthur Hart is director of the Idaho Historical Society. His column appears on Thursdays.

Warren project proposed

The Payette National Forest McCall Ranger District is proposing a wildlife and historical interpretative trail project for the historic mining town of Warren.

The proposal includes the installation of eight signs with the use of hand tools along an existing trail. The signs would chronicle the hydrological and dredge mining activity in the area in the 1800s and early 1900s, according to an agency release.

Other signs would explain how wildlife adapted to the mining landscape. A Chinese miners cemetery would also be highlighted.

The trail and a nearby parking lot existed before the project was proposed.

Public comment is being accepted by April 29. For more information, call Forest Archeologist Larry Kingsbury at 634-0700.

A map of the proposed project is available at the McCall District Office. Send comments to Larry Kingsbury at P.O. Box 1026, McCall, ID 83638.

Washington in the Wilderness

-By Dick d'Easum

If a schoolboy of 90 years ago had been asked to locate Washington and had said it was a

small place in Idaho he would have been correct. Although it would not be in harmony with precepts of the first President to suggest that Idaho's Washington was THE Washington, it is within the bounds of

Dick d'Easum truth and veracity to say that Washington was a county seat with gold on its streets, loyalty to the Union, and a more imposing record in its brief history than its closest rival, Richmond.

Washington owned it, beginning, but not its name, to Jim Warren, a prospecting gambler. He staked claims in the wilderness south of Salmon river in the summer of '62. The area later bore his name, sometimes as plain "Warren," sometimes as "Warrens," and often as "Warren's" with the apostrophe. Which is correct depends upon the whim of the individual and the supply of letters and punctuation marks he happens to have on hand.

The first community in Warren's camp was a sprawl of buildings thrown together on Slaughter creek. Because most of the original inhabitants were of Southern persuasion they called the place Richmond. Staunch supporters of Abraham Lincoln set up camp down the creek. They came right back at the Southerners with Washington. The two communities glared at each other but got along rather well most of the time, which is to say they did not blow each other off the face of the earth or engage in violent battle. Richmond fizzled first, strangely enough not because the pay dirt ran out, but because the gravel was too rich. The miners of Richmond dug the town's grave with placer equipment. The ground on which Richmond stood was too valuable so they knocked the town down and dug into its roots.

Washington survived. Its foundations were less valuable. The history book, "Pioneer Days in Idaho County," by Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn, says Washington "was just off the pay streak, and its growth was augmented by the decline of its rival until it reached the climax of its glory when it succeeded Florence in becoming the county seat."

That point of distinction was attained in 1868. Washington gained stature at the expense of Florence, a boom town of the early sixties from whence drifted many of the settlers of Boise basin and around whose mouldering remnants lingers the ready mist of violent history. Idaho county favored optimis-



tic Washington with its legal attraction until 1875 when things got so slow in the Warren's district there were more Chinamen than Irishers. The mines hibernated. In the midst of the lull an election came along. Washington put up a fight, but the voice of the waning settlement was thin and reedy. Mount Idaho won the county seat. After that there wasn't much time left for Washington. Presently it slouched down with the flotsam of Richmond. The amalgamated leftovers evolved into Warrens.

Even before the county seat got away, Washington had a hard time hanging onto its name. The outside world took to calling the whole kaboodle "Warrens." So did the most articulate residents. Correspondents for newspapers wrote from Warren or Warrens Camp. They seldom mentioned Washington. Under the dateline of Warrens, Dec. 12, 1874, this paragraph appeared in The Statesman: "The election has come and gone. After the ball come soda water and headache. The Republican ticket was too laden

with bad whisky to succeed under any circumstances. As a consequence only the assessor was triumphant. Wm. Rhett was also elected as representative, but the canvassers saw some sort of informality in returns from Slate Creek and rejected them, giving the election to Mr. Shearer by one vote. But as Mr. Rhett received almost unanimous support along the Salmon river so as to attempt the removal of the county seat to Slate Creek, a remote trading post near one corner of the county, the success of Mr. Shearer is not lamented outside the Salmon river."

It turned out that both Rhett and Shearer went to Boise to claim the legislative seat. Shearer took office, Rhett appealed. The legislature seated him. Everybody got pretty mad. Both representatives drew mileage and spent the winter in Boise.

Few men wintered that year at Warrens. A published letter set the figure at about 80 white men, mebbeso twice as many Chinamen. "The mail from Indian Valley," the letter said, "comes once in a while from Lewiston fitfully. It is the bounden duty of American citizens to growl whenever they have the chance, and having little else to do we are going to send up a roar."

One of the stories that goes with Warrens as ham goes with eggs is the romance of Polly Nathoy and Charles Bemis. It usually comes out that Bemis won the Chinese girl in a poker game. The best evidence reveals nothing of the kind. Bemis was shot in the eye over a poker debt. Polly nursed him back to health. He married her and they lived together many years in a ranch near the Salmon river. The poker business may be the result of confusion with the

equally doubtful story of the Indian bride allegedly sold at Warrens in the eighties, soon after the Sheepstealer war. The story related to Mrs. Eva Hunt Dockery of The Statesman in 1916 says three miners and an Indian went on a spree. The Indian sold his squaw for \$300. The miners pooled their money to buy the bride and played poker for her. A chap whose name was given as Pony Smeed won the girl after three days and nights of cards. The story said he married the lady. They lived happily and raised six children.

The Warlick excitement of 1886 gave what was left of Washington and Richmond an occasion to sit up and take nourishment. It was a nasty case, as murders have a habit of being. Theodore Warlick was a mining partner of H. C. Savage, an old-timer of Warrens although still young in years when he scratched out his last claim on the South Fork. The mine didn't amount to much, except to put the area back in the limelight of mysterious manslaughter.

Warlick and Savage worked their claims several months. They were far back in the nowhere with nobody else to talk to. Cabin fever set in. Warlick packed up and left. At least that's what he said when he staggered, wild-eyed and mumbling, into Warrens. Friends of Savage expected violence at the claim. They could not find Savage. The cabin was a shambles. The mine was caved. They were about to give up the hunt when they were attracted to the diggings of small animals. The burrow led to a body. "Poor Savage," said Warlick when advised of the discovery. "The mine must have got him." It wasn't a very good story. There was a bullet in the skull and several more in the torso.

Warlick talked again. He said it had been a terrible winter. He didn't get along with Savage. They quarreled about who should get up in the morning and start the fire. They jawed over whose turn it was to shoot venison. Things got so intolerable, he said, Savage built another shack and moved all his plunder.

"The last thing he had to move was his gun," Warlick continued in his confession. "I took it and slung it in the river. When he saw his gun was missing he took his ax and came at me. I had my gun standing at a tree and I went for it. Savage ran away and I fired a shot after him and he stopped. And then I seen that one of his legs was sort of off and I shot him another time, and he fell to the earth. I fired again and he lay on the ground. I tried to take flight and the rest you know."

Warlick said he got lost in the mountains and had to come back to keep from starving.

Under armed escort consisting largely of friends of the slain man, Warlick went to Mount Idaho for trial. He was not a popular prisoner. Terms such as "brute" and "cold-blooded wretch" were almost compliments among the terms printed with relation to his crime and stay in the county lockup. A jury found him guilty. The court sentenced him to hang.

The Nez Perce News of May 11 observed: "The man Warlick, now lying in the jail at Mount Idaho under sentence of death is totally indifferent to his fate and eats as heartily as though he were sure of holding high office in kingdom come."

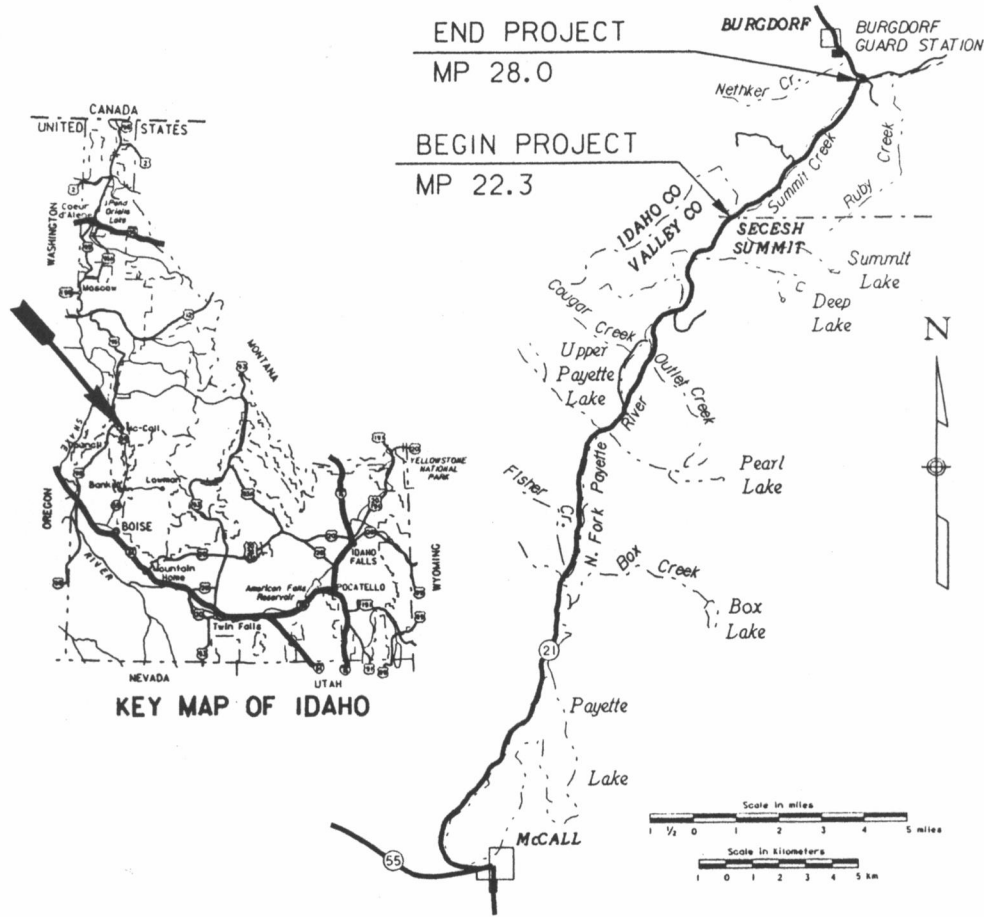
The execution was June 9. The account in the Nez Perce News said:

"Theodore Warlick hanged today at 1 p.m. at Mount Idaho in a shed adjoining the jail. He was hanged by Sheriff A. W. Talkington for murder Jan. 28. He was buried at Grangeville.

"Violent temper was displayed almost daily during his incarceration. He declined spiritual consolation. In a violent passion he refused to accept a suit of clothes for his hanging. He made no statement."

Federal Highway Administration
610 East Fifth Street
Vancouver, Washington 98661-3898

WARREN-WAGON ROAD ID PFH 21-1(6) IDAHO COUNTY IDAHO



Phone service a hit in

Warren and Burgdorf

"It's made life a lot simpler. You don't have to make so many snowmobile trips into town."

- Shirley Winter

BY ROGER PHILLIPS

The Star-News

Winters are still long and cold in Burgdorf, Warren, Secesh and along the South Fork of the Salmon River, but it is not as quiet as it used to be.

The backcountry hamlets located north of McCall have received telephone service for the first time in more than three decades, and residents there give the new phone system rave reviews.

Midvale Telephone ran the underground phone lines to the areas last summer and fall, and most of the 33

phones now in service came on line in November. More phones are expected to be added in the spring.

The telephones are not completely new to the hamlets. Most had telephone service in the 1940s and 1950s, when the Forest Service ran telephone wires into McCall from the backcountry to maintain communications with fire lookouts and guard stations, said Mike Busby, a long-time Burgdorf resident who now lives in McCall.

When the Forest Service made the transition to radio telephones, they discontinued the wire system. However, the wire telephones, which were powered by hand cranks, were used within the Warren area until the 1989 forest fires burned the wires, according to Shirley Winter, owner of the Winter Inn in Warren.

The new phones have made backcountry living more convenient, said Winter, whose new telephone number is 636-4393.

There have been a few minor problems with the new system, which is powered by solar panels and propane generators since none of the areas have electricity. But residents reported only a few outages so far this winter. Some of the new numbers also haven't found their way to directory assistance computers, and all calls outside of those four areas are long-distance calls.

Winter said a few people have grumbled about the telephones, but "if they ever need it, they'll be real glad it's here," she said. "Everybody who actually lives here is thrilled to death with it."

Burgdorf resident Tuney Guches agrees. "It's so convenient; it's the nicest thing," she said.

The Burgdorf phone (636-3036) allows visitors to call ahead and arrange transportation to the hot springs or make reservations for a cabin.

Tuney said they have received calls from many people outside the region seeking information about Burgdorf. "We've had people from Colorado call, and I wondered how in the world did they get our number?" she said.

Tuney's only complaint, other than long-distance fees to McCall, is that some people don't realize their phone is a residential number as well as a business number, so sometimes they get calls late at night.

"That's probably our biggest beef," Guches said.

The phone system has boosted business to the back country this winter because people can call ahead to check trail and weather conditions, according to Pat Owsley at the Secesh

Stage Stop (636-6789).

Owsley said 250 snowmobilers visited the Stage Stop last weekend, and they have had steady business since the snow arrived.

Owsley also said the phones make contact between neighbors in the outlying areas more convenient.

"Everyone back here is very happy and glad we've got them," she said. "I don't see how we did without them."

Residents of the Yellow Pine and Warm Lake areas east of Cascade should be feeling similar emotions within the next year. The Boise National Forest has authorized Midvale Telephone to start laying telephone lines to those remote communities this summer.

MEMORANDUM

November 26, 1997

TO: Winston Wiggins, AD F & F

FROM: Sharon A. Murray, MLS

SUBJECT: Date of Construction of Roadway Between Warren and Big Creek

Letta - here is the memo we talked about in Spokane as well as some additional info extracted from the Long Valley Advocate and the Idaho Co-Free Press - Sharon Murray

There appears to have been some type of "roadway" between Warren and the South Fork of the Salmon River around 1900. This "roadway" was used to transport supplies between Warren and Thunder Mountain during the rush to Thunder Mountain.

Because Warren was the supply point for both the Thunder Mountain and Big Creek Mines during the "rush" years around the turn of the century there was a big demand for a passable wagon road connecting these areas.

The 1905 Idaho legislature passed House Bill 184 authorizing the establishment of a Wagon Road Commission (Bill is in 1905 Session Law). They also "set aside" \$50,000 to construct wagon roads. One of the provisions was that any section of the state desiring a wagon road be built needed to contribute \$1 for every \$1 paid by the state (Long Valley Advocate 4-13-1905).

Originally three routes were surveyed to connect Warren to the Big Creek and Thunder Mountain Mines. The route chosen for construction went from Warren via Elk Creek to the Werdenhoff Mine. The July 6, 1905 *Idaho County Free Press* noted a contract had been let for the construction of the road to Whiteway and Hicks of Boise. The cost was \$25,000. The state put up \$11,000 and the citizens of southern Idaho County subscribed \$11,000. This included \$5,000 from the Werdenhoff Mine, \$2,500 from the Independence Mine, \$1,000 from the citizens of Warren as well as an unknown sum subscribed by additional unnamed contributors. Residents of Warren, Thunder Mountain and Big Creek asked the Idaho County Commissioners to contribute \$2,000.

Work commenced on the road sometime after July 6, 1905. By September 7, 1905 the road was within 2 miles of the South Fork. By October 5, the road had been completed over Elk summit and camp was moved so work could progress in the lower country where there was no snow. By November 9, work was discontinued. By this time all but 8 miles of the approximately 35.5 mile road had been completed.

During the winter of 1905 arrangements were made to construct a bridge over the South Fork of the Salmon River on the line of the Big Creek road. I. N. Frier of the Pueblo Mining Company was to supervise the work. According to the December 7, 1905 edition of the *Long Valley Advocate*, The Pueblo and Penn-Idaho companies undertook to complete the bridge for \$3,000, the amount set aside by the road commission. The total estimated cost of construction was \$3,500, the extra was to be paid by the two companies.

Work continued on the road in the spring of 1906. On September 13, 1906 the LVA noted the bridge over the South Fork was nearly completed. On November 11, 1906 the LVA reported the Warren - Big Creek wagon road had been completed and accepted by the state.

It would appear this road was constructed with state and private monies prior to the establishment of the forest reserve in this area.

Bemis, Smead knew hard times, good times in early central Idaho

(Note: This is the third in a series of articles to note National Women's History Month during March.)

BY BEVERLY INGRAHAM

For The Star-News

Two interesting women in Idaho's history lived in the same remote area of Central Idaho at about the same time. One came from China as a slave girl to work in a saloon. The other was an Indian girl bought from a band of Indians to cook for some miners.

Polly Bemis was born in 1853 in a northern China province. Her real name was Lalu Nathoy. Her family fell on hard times and she was sold to a slave trader to help save the rest of the family from starvation.

At the time Chinese women could not legally enter the United States, so she was smuggled into Portland, Ore., and sold to a Chinese man, Hong King.

He took her to Warren via a pack string along with two other Chinese girls. Polly was 19 years old when she arrived in Warren where Hong King put her to work in his saloon.

According to legend, Charlie Bemis, another saloon owner in Warren, won Polly in a poker game. Whether or not that is true, she did leave Hong King to work in Bemis' dance hall as a hostess, where she remained for many years.

At about the same time Polly traveled to Idaho, one of Idaho's most unusual pioneer women arrived in the South Fork area near Warren. Not very much is known about Mollie Smead including where she was born, exactly when she was born, to which tribe she belonged or even when she died.

It is known that she was an Indian and that as a girl she was sold to "Pony" Smead for a horse and some flour in 1872. Smead and three other miners owned a ranch on the South Fork and they wanted her to cook for them. She was probably either an orphan or a slave because Indians would not usually sell their own children.

"It is known that she (Mollie) was an Indian and that as a girl she was sold to 'Pony' Smead for a horse and some flour in 1872."

Later Smead married Mollie who was about 15 years old at the time. In 1880 Smead was 50 years old and Mollie was 22 according to government census reports. By then the couple had three children—the oldest was seven years old.

Mollie and Pony eventually had eight children. Sometimes the family spent the summer and fall in Warren so the children could go to school. Four of them are listed out of the 17 students enrolled in the 1887 school year.

The Smeads were in and out of Warren on a regular basis during their time on the South Fork Ranch. It seems probable that Polly Bemis and Mollie Smead knew each other and over the years must have had some contact with each other if only casually at one of the stores in Warren.

While Mollie was busy raising a family on the South Fork ranch Charlie Bemis was having serious troubles in Warren.

In 1890, Johnny Cox, in a fit of anger over a card game, shot Charlie Bemis in the cheek, just missing his eye. A doctor came from Grangeville, but did little to help the injured man. Polly then took over, cleaning the wound and caring for Bemis until he recovered.

Even before Bemis' shooting Polly was the "official" nurse in Warren for anyone who was injured or ill. She was also reported to be an excellent cook, seamstress and learned the art of goldsmithing. From nuggets of gold she fashioned small gold trinkets and even buttons for a dress.

Four years later Charlie and Polly were married in Warren. A justice of the peace in Warren, Pony

Smead performed the wedding. Quite likely, Mollie Smead attended the wedding. The Bemises soon moved to a ranch on the Main Salmon River where Polly raised all kinds of fruits and garden produce. She sold fruits and vegetables to prospectors and others going up and down the river.

Polly and Charlie Bemis continued living on their Salmon River ranch until one day in August of 1922, their house caught fire. Polly and Charlie got out but could save nothing from the house.

Charlie had been in failing health before the fire and died only two months later. Polly spent that winter back in Warren. The next spring her neighbors, Charles Shepp and Peter Klinkhammer, built a new log house for Polly at her ranch. They also continued helping her with the heavy chores. Before the fire the two men had strung a telephone wire across the river between their two places. Polly liked to talk on the telephone and called her neighbors almost every day.

In 1923 Polly took a trip to Grangeville with some friends. At the age of 70 she had her first automobile ride, saw her first movie and a train and went shopping for new clothes.

Shepp and Klinkhammer looked after Polly until she became ill in 1933. She was taken to a nursing home in Grangeville where she died a few months later.

Polly was first buried in Prairie View Cemetery in Grangeville. In 1987 her remains were transferred to her ranch on the Salmon River.

The Smeads were still living on their ranch when Pony died in 1899 leaving Mollie and seven children alone. Mollie was 39 at that time. Although Mollie's death is not recorded she probably died at the ranch on the South Fork sometime before 1910 because she is not listed on the 1910 or later census reports. Mollie, Pony and their baby daughter Ella, were buried next to the river in the little family plot.

Polly Bemis: Pioneer

Born in China in 1853, Polly Bemis overcame slavery and the rigors of pioneer life to become one of Idaho's most popular historical figures.

When she died in Grangeville at age 80, she was known far and wide for her great sense of humor, gracious hospitality and hard work.

"She's a role model for any women who are faced with difficult circumstances," said Priscilla Wegars, volunteer curator for the Asian-American Comparative Collection in the Laboratory of Anthropology at the University of Idaho.

A 1991 movie, "Thousand Pieces of Gold," based on an earlier fictional biography, chronicles much of her life.

Bemis arrived in the boisterous, booming mining town of Warren when she was 19.

She had been sold by her starving family in China, then purchased by a Chinese man in Portland, perhaps to be his concubine, which was a legally recognized relationship in China at the time, Wegars said.

Because she spoke a different language from other Chinese workers in the mining camp, Bemis overcame isolation and separation from her family and culture by adopting a new way of life.

"She was a very smart woman who didn't have book learning, as such, and didn't read or write, but she learned English quickly and adapted to American ways," Wegars said.

In 1894 Polly, married Charlie Bemis, a gambler and saloon keeper, after nursing him back to health from a serious gunshot wound in the face.

Polly used her crochet hook to remove the bullet, according to writer and historian Sister Alfreda Elsensohn of St. Gertrude's Convent in Cottonwood.

Looking for a quieter life, Charlie Bemis bought 15 acres along the Salmon River, about 40 miles from Riggins, and the couple settled there for the rest of their lives.

Polly Bemis took care of many day-to-day chores.

She raised fruit trees and vegetable gardens, kept chickens and a cow and learned to hunt and fish. Charlie died two months after their house burned to the ground in 1922. A second house was built on the site, where Polly enjoyed visiting with early river-runners.

An Eastern newspaper publisher described Polly Bemis as "five feet tall ... and wrinkled as a nut" and "at 69, full of dash and charm."

"People were drawn to her," Wegars said.

Bemis lived in her house along the Salmon River until she became ill in 1933. Her home has been restored and her remains are buried there, near Polly Creek.



Courtesy of the Idaho State Historical Society



Idaho Statesman file photo

Looking for a scenic drive for the weekend? Head out to Warren, 45 miles from McCall. Get help getting there from the McCall Ranger District, which offers a free audio tour to the gold-mining town. One of Warren's attractions is old wooden buildings that line the main drag. It's hard to tell the abandoned buildings from the occupied ones.

Visitors take tour of Warren

Forest Service
creates an audio
guide to old town

By Wyatt Buchanan
Lewiston Morning Tribune

WARREN — Steve Schulman thinks if gangsters from a big city were shipped to this remote town, they would probably die of boredom.

"There's nobody to mug and nothing to shoplift," said Schulman, a Manhattan resident visiting this once-booming mining town with friends from McCall.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, though, there was plenty to take from the land.

Placer miners gathered more than \$15 million in gold from 1862 to 1935.

Forty-five miles northwest of McCall, Warren now sits quiet-

ly, a historic site that draws curious tourists like Schulman from around the country.

To help guide travelers from McCall to Warren, the McCall Ranger District of the Payette National Forest offers a free audio tour that takes visitors from Payette Lake up the winding road to Warren.

Travelers pick up a booklet and compact disc or cassette tape from the ranger district office, where the tour begins.

The road to Warren is paved for about 30 miles, with the last 15 miles gravel and dirt. Most vehicles should be able to handle the road.

From McCall, the audio tour mixes history, geography, sociology and all sorts of other information over one to two hours, with short stops at marked sites.

The first stops are along Payette Lake and the Payette River, with details about the glacial formation of the area, as well as

information on fish and other creatures, like the legendary Sharlie, that inhabit the waters.

Then it's a steady climb through burned areas from 1994 and 2000 fires to Secesh (pronounced "sea-sesh") Summit at 6,434 feet.

The summit's name is rooted in the word secessionist, a common term in early years, when many Confederates flocked to the area after the Civil War.

After Lewiston prospector James Warren discovered gold in what became Warren Creek, word spread like an Idaho wildfire and many Yankees and Confederates relocated to the area.

The conflict between these two warring factions is another interesting blip in Warren's history.

Southerners settled together and named their area Richmond, while Yankees grouped and called their town Washington, both picking their respective capital cities.

Unfortunately for the Confederates, prospectors found gold in Richmond's soil.

Gold seekers razed the town and mined the building foundations.

After Richmond was destroyed, settlers gave the area back its original name of Warren.

From Secesh, the road winds past Echo Mine and Secesh Meadows, an area dotted by cabins. After another climb up Steamboat Summit, the road brings travelers to Warren.

Just outside the town sits the Chinese cemetery, where miners were interred until their remains were returned to China.

The Chinese had quite a presence in Warren, with a population peaking at nearly 400 in 1880.

At the end of the long road, New Yorkers Schulman and Louise Metzger reflect on the little town.

"It's fabulous, just fabulous," Metzger said.

1860s Warren mining camp music to be played Wednesday

Vivian Williams, a well-known national champion fiddler, teacher, composer, and fiddle music historian, will visit Riggins on Wednesday to play music from a lost time.

Together with her husband, Phil, Williams will present a program of interest to lovers of vintage fiddle music, especially featuring dance music as it was played in the tavern in Warren in the 1860s.

The concert will take place in the Odd Fellows' Hall in Riggins at 7 p.m. Wednesday. A group of local dancers are preparing to perform a typical dance of the 1860s as well. Admission is free but donations will be accepted.

A little-known manuscript of Warren music, hand-written by flutist Peter Beemer, director of a small orchestra in Warren, found its way to the Idaho Historical Museum in the late 20th century.

In 1997, Fran Caward of Riggins copied the manuscript of nearly 100 tunes, and eventually sent them to Williams to be transposed into modern notation.

This body of music was popular in the mining camp then known as "Warren's Diggins."

"A group of gentlemen and ladies, who had come there for the gold, but who were accustomed to dancing the formal ballroom or 'cotillion' dances, persuaded the tavern owner to occasionally convert the building into a place where they could enjoy dancing as they had known it in the towns and cities of the Midwest and elsewhere," Caward said.



June 6, 2007

(Continued from Page B-1)

"However, no printed music for such dances existed in the camp," she said.

The Williamses plan to visit Warren during their visit to this area, and possibly play some of the old music as it was heard there 145 years ago.

For more information, call Caward at 628-3212.

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Company wants to mine for gold near Warren

High gold prices make exploration affordable

BY MICHAEL WELLS

The Star-News

The Shoshone Silver/Gold Mining Company is looking for pay dirt at the Rescue Mine near Warren and has asked the Payette National Forest for permits to use 170 acres for its operations.

With gold prices hovering between \$1,330 to \$1,350 per ounce, the Shoshone Silver/Gold Mining Company hopes it can extract a half-ounce of gold per

ton of rock it mills at the Warren site, Vice-President of Mining Operations Don Rolfe of the Shoshone Silver/Gold Mining Co. said.

"This is an exceptionally good price right now for gold," Rolfe said.

When the mine reaches an expected full production in three years, the company would mill 120 tons of rock per day in the hopes it yields 60 ounces of gold or about \$81,000 per day at current trading prices for gold.

The Couer d'Alene company wants to mine for gold and silver at the underground Rescue Mine, located 1/2 mile southeast of Warren near Warren Creek.

Increased Capacity Sought

The proposal seeks to increase the capacity of the mine's existing tailings pond in two phases, construct a new waste rock dump, build three new water infiltration basins and conduct exploratory drilling and trenching.

"Our development plans hinge on these permits," Rolfe said. "If we do get to do everything we want this summer, we would not be in full production this summer."

Rocks would be hauled out of the mine either by rail or by small vehicles to the mill where the gold is extracted in the milling process.

See **MINE**, Page A-2

Mine

Continued from Page A-1

The area has "very narrow ins" of "fairly good grade" gold and silver, he said.

The concentration of gold and silver vary widely. The company is primarily seeking gold, but they generally find small amounts of silver along with gold, Rolfe said.

Most of the areas the company plans to disturb have already been disturbed during past mining ventures, said.

"Some will look better than they look now," Rolfe said.

The rock waste dump area would be used to store underground rock from the mine. Water for the milling process would be recycled, he said.

New Road Planned

One new road 600 to 700 feet long would be constructed to a new drilling site in two to three years, under the application.

Rocks from the trenches and drilling would be tested and veins photographed before the areas are reclaimed.

In addition to the tailings pond expansion, water basins, rock dump site and exploratory drilling and trenching, the company would also fix a leak on its processed water infiltration pond with a clay seal.

A flat pad would also be built to hold two 5,000-gallon water tanks on the site.

More detailed descriptions of the proposal can be obtained from Jeff Huntman at the McCall Ranger District Office at 102 West Lake St. in McCall or by going to the Payette National Forest's web site at www.fs.fed.us/r4/Payette and clicking on the land and resources management tab and then the projects tab.

Comments on the proposal should go to Huntman at the McCall Ranger District, 102 West Lake St., McCall, ID 83638 or comments-intermtn-payette-mccall@fs.fed.us.

Warren Crab Feed serves 108 dinners

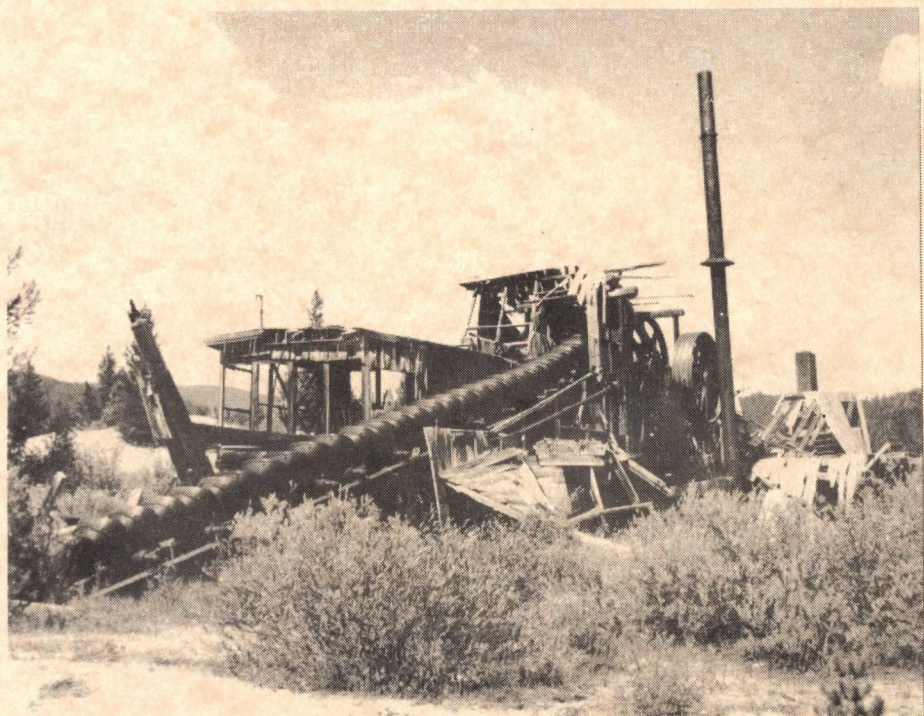
A total of 108 dinners were served at the recent Warren Crab Feed at the historic town of Warren north of McCall.

A total of 50 racers also took part in snowmobile speed races. Winners were Pete Hughes in the 500 class, Jake Parsons in the 600 class, Steve Burak and Luke Forsberg in the 700 class, Chuck Seubert 800 class and Cortney Bennett in the 1000 class

Owen Mott was the youngest racer in the event. Home towns of entrants were not available.

Proceeds will be used to restore historic buildings in Warren, which once served gold miners of the surrounding area.

WARREN HISTORIC WALKING TOUR

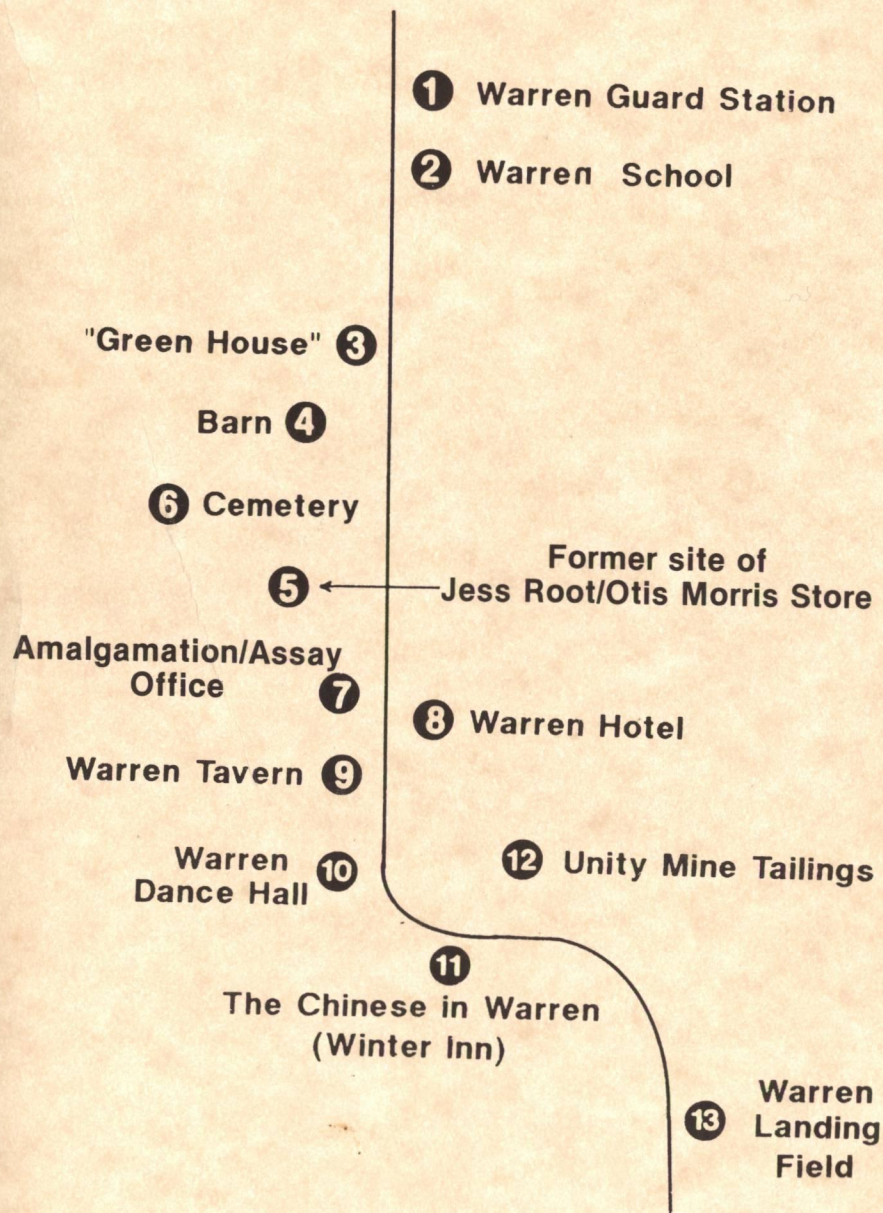


TIME—WORN DREDGE NEAR WARREN

Payette National Forest
McCall, Idaho



Walking Tour Map



HOW TO GET STARTED

Now that you have arrived at the Warren Guard Station, it is time to begin the walking tour. With the exception of the cemetery, which sits atop a small hill, the tour stays on the main street of Warren so it is easily accessible to foot traffic, wheelchairs, baby strollers, etc.

The walking tour starts at the Guard Station and then leads back up the main street on which you arrived. With the Guard Station at your back, turn left on the main street and as you walk, match the historic site numbered on the map to its corresponding interpretive text contained in this pamphlet.

Please remember many of these buildings are privately owned, and respecting the rights of the owners is appreciated.

IF WARREN'S WALLS COULD TALK

by James L. Kincaid

INTRODUCTION

As you look down Warren's main street, imagine the history that has occurred here. After the gold discovery in 1862, the town held over 2,000 people. By 1870 many whites had moved out but about 1,200 Chinese had replaced them. During lulls in mining activity the population plummeted but soared again as dredging started in the 1930s.

Many have trod Warren's streets: Sylvester "Three-Fingered" Smith, Indian fighter; the hunter "Cougar Dave" Lewis; Madam Saux, born of French nobility; Polly Bemis, a Chinese slave; and Ah Khan, "honorary mayor" of Warren.

Warren winters promised skiing, horse-drawn sleigh rides, Chinese New Year celebrations and temperatures as low as minus 41 degrees. Current residents claim that minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit is confirmed when the old buildings "talk to you" (the logs snap due to the intense cold). Summers offered good mining weather (about 80 degrees), Fourth of July horse racing and the Fat Mans' Race.

Except for occasional bar fights, Chinese tong wars, highway robberies and a huge 1904 business district fire, Warren was considered a relatively calm mining camp.

In 1989, the "Whangdoodle" fire threatened the entire town. The fire started in the Whangdoodle Creek drainage. During the fire, burning twigs and ash rained on the town. Whangdoodle was so named because a miner and a schoolmarm were said to have had a "Whangdoodle" of an affair near the creek.

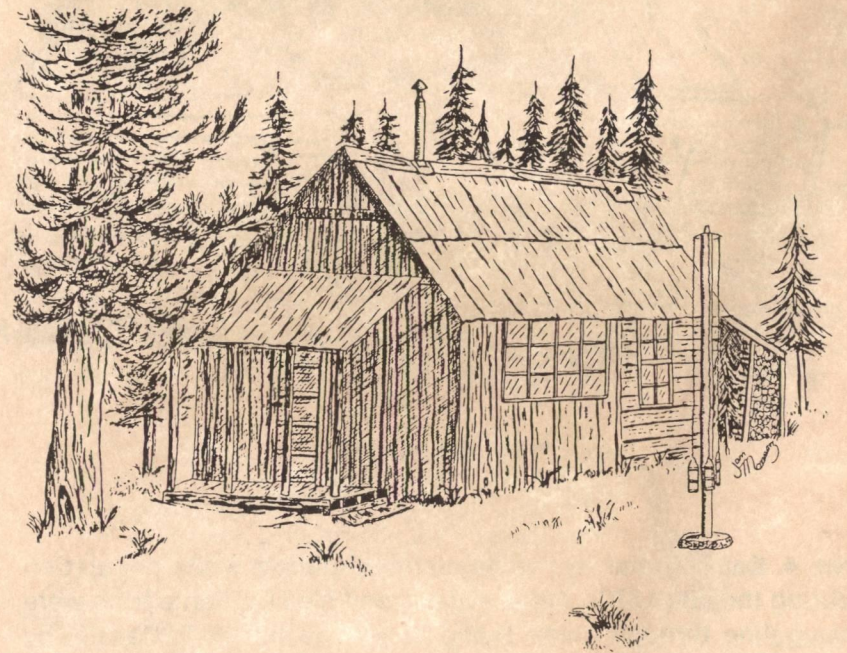
Many of Warren's buildings are over 100 years old. If only the walls could talk, what stories they could tell.

POINTS OF INTEREST

No. 1. Warren Guard Station - In 1918 the Forest Service moved its Guard Station from Hays Station, near the Salmon River, to Warren. Construction dates at the Station site range from the barn built in 1909 to the 'modern' 1959 frame house. The other facilities were built by Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

The water cannon, or "hydraulic giant," now in front of the station, washed the hillsides through sluice boxes as part of the placer mining process. The Guard Station offers information and exhibits on the history of the area.

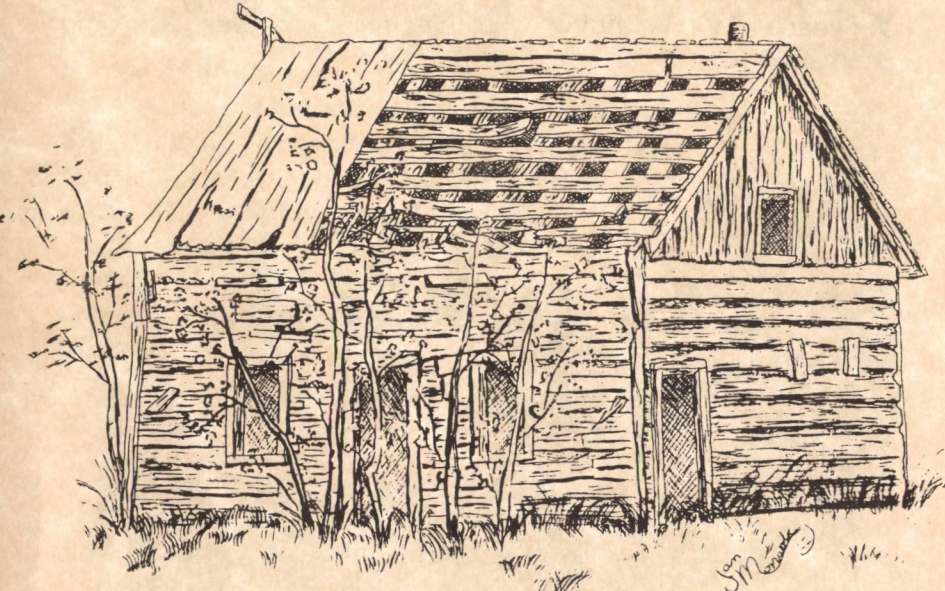
No. 2. Warren School - In 1868 Warren had the first public school in Idaho County and boasted four students. In 1887, \$180 was collected to build a new school house signaling a banner year in 19th century education. Subjects included spelling, penmanship, reading and singing. Books for the entire school cost about \$27 per year and the institution was sustained on between \$100 and \$150 each year.



WARREN SCHOOL

The front one-room portion of the building is over 100 years old. The back half was added to accommodate increased attendance during the 1930s dredging. In this century there was a debate in town about correction of the backwards 'N' on the sign over the school's entrance. Correction was defeated because "that was the way it had always been and there was no reason to change it now."

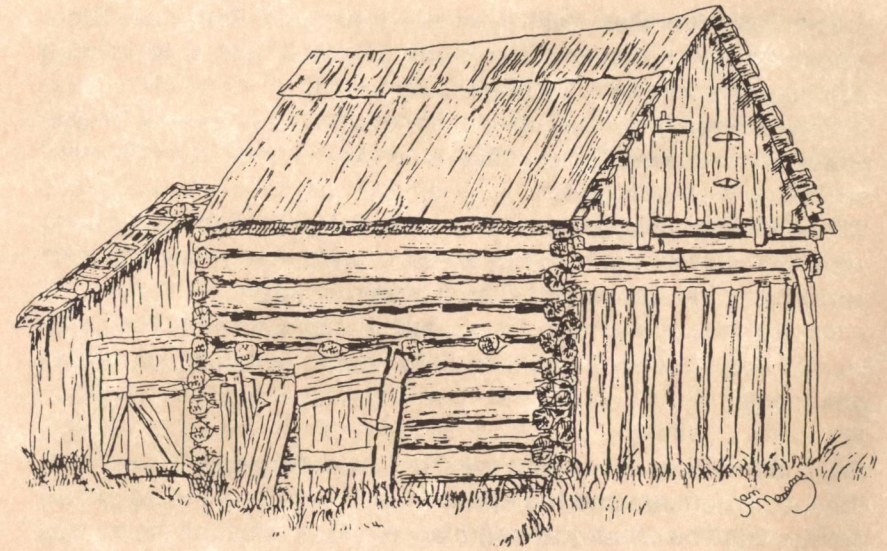
No. 3. "Green House" - The office/residence for the Justice of the Peace was the "Green House." Andy Kavanaugh assumed the office in 1895 and was distinguished by never rendering a verdict. Kavanaugh threw all his cases out of court on the basis of "hearsay evidence" because "it made a lot smoother living in the community." After selling his two-thirds of the Warren Meadows to a dredge company, Kavanaugh left town and was never heard from again.



"GREEN HOUSE"

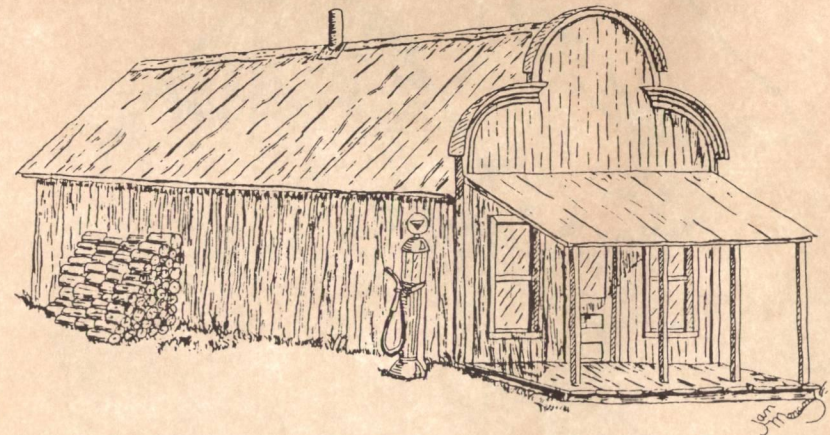
No. 4. Barn - Indian activities alarmed Idaho's white population during the late 1870s. Chief Joseph and his Nez Perce tribe were struggling through Idaho trying to escape the U. S. Cavalry by reaching the Canadian border. Closer to Warren, the Sheepeater Indians attacked ranchers living on the South Fork of the Salmon River.

This barn, probably constructed by Warren merchants Kelly and Patterson in the early 1880s, was a reaction to the threat of Indian attack. The gun ports (small openings in the walls of the barn) allowed defenders to fire from protected positions. The Indians never attacked Warren, but the barn would have been a stout defense.



OLD BARN WITH GUN PORTS

No. 5. Business district - Businesses have come and gone during Warren's long history. In the early days, the town boasted a boarding house, butcher shop, blacksmith shop, hotel, general store and several bars. The 1904 fire destroyed many commercial establishments. It has never been established whether the fire was accidental or arson-caused.



JESS ROOT/OTIS MORRIS STORE (not standing)

The 1904 fire also destroyed the Kelly and Patterson Store whose inventory (everything from personal items to mining equipment) came to Warren on pack trains.

The distinctive domed store belonged to Otis Morris who purchased it from Jess Root in 1926. It collapsed under the weight of snow and was removed.

"Hocum Felta" was a mens' club. One entertainment was telling jokes while everyone tried not to react. Getting even a smile from performer or listeners signalled a coup de grace.

As the Chinese arrived, they kept to themselves, using their own stores, butcher shop, gambling house, saloons, doctor and pharmacy.

No. 6. Cemetery - Like many gold rush cemeteries, this one holds the locally famous and the unknown. About half of the 90 graves are named. The other graves are anonymous. Most of the infants died of childhood diseases. Causes of adult deaths include illness, old age and violence.

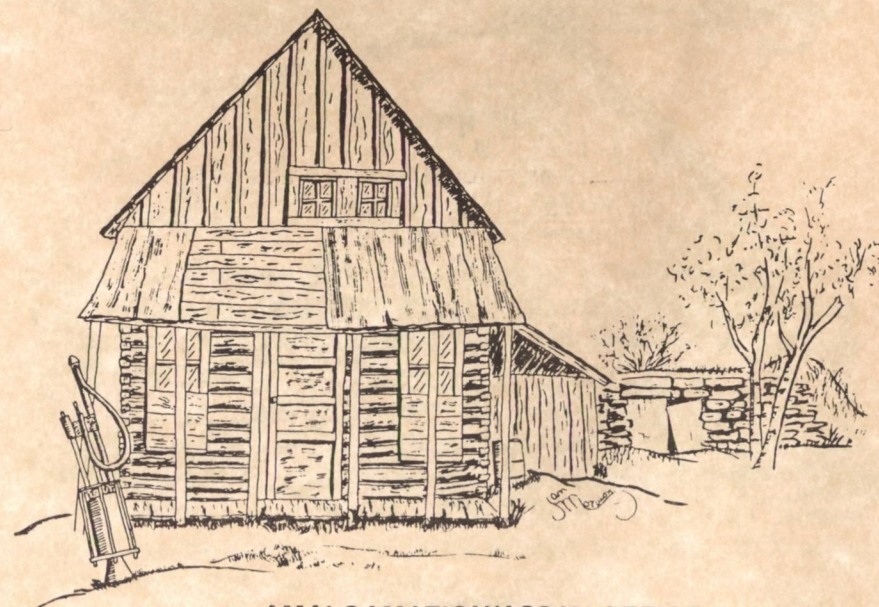


CEMETERY

James Rains, the Warren pioneer killed by the Sheepeater Indians, was buried here in 1879. John "Tow Head John" Babion arrived in Warren in 1863 and lies buried here. Babion got his nickname while mining the "Tow Head" claim, a gold-bearing ledge of rock. Richard (Dick) Hambley was buried after losing a 1908 duel over the ownership of a mining claim. Steve Winchester shot Hambley with an Iver-Johnson .38 caliber pistol. Winchester was acquitted of the slaying because Hambley fired the first shot. Ah Sam, a long-time Warren resident was buried here in 1933. Sam was the "honorary mayor" of Warren because he was well-liked and respected by his fellow residents.

During Chinese festivals it was customary to offer their dead elaborate meals of barbecued pork and chicken. After the Chinese left the gravesite, whites would steal and eat the food. There are few Chinese graves here because, according to custom, as these workers returned to their homeland they disinterred the bodies and took them back to China.

No. 7. Amalgamation/Assay office - The front portion of this building was built in the 1890s. The back portion, with the unusual chimney, was added in 1931 by the Baumhoff and Fisher Dredge Company.

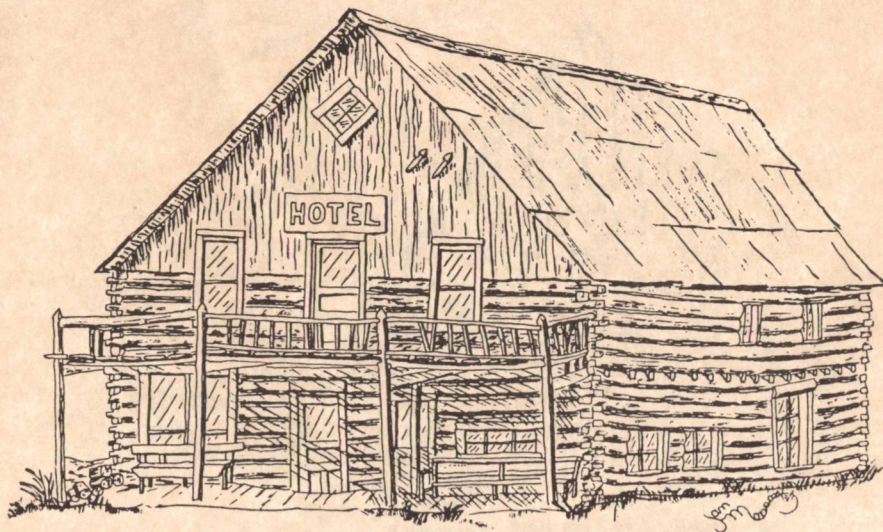


AMALGAMATION/ASSAY OFFICE

The Baumhoff and Fisher dredge, the largest producer in the district, mined thousands of ounces of gold. Mercury, used to capture the gold in the dredge's sluice boxes, was removed before the gold was sent to an assay office. The amalgam (the mercury and gold mixture) was taken to this office and retorted. Retorting used heat to turn the mercury to a gas, leaving the gold as the final product. The highly poisonous gas was vented out the small chimney on the back of the building. The gold was cast into bricks, each 8 inches long, 4 inches wide and one and one-half inches thick. The bricks were wrapped in brown paper and shipped to the Boise assay office by parcel post. Each brick was worth \$10,000 when gold sold for \$35 per ounce. At this rate, the Warren dredges recovered about \$4 million worth of gold.

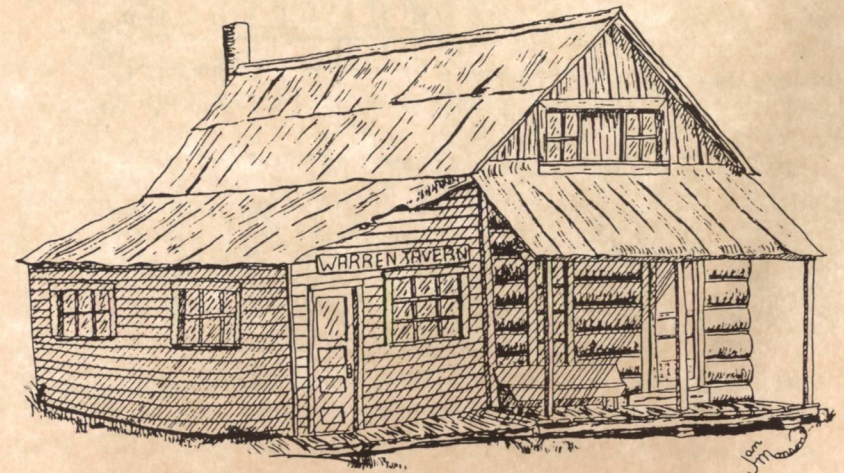
The office sold gold scales and weights and evaluated ore samples for local miners. Dredge company trucks were serviced by the gas pump in front of the building.

No. 8. Warren Hotel - Previous hotels and boarding houses have been destroyed by time and the 1904 fire. This structure, known as the "new Warren Hotel," was built about 1912. Proprietors Ed and Ethel Roden offered rooms and food. During the 1930s the hotel was home for many dredge workers.



WARREN HOTEL

No. 9. Warren Tavern - This tavern, and the Last Chance Saloon, now a private residence, represent Warren's historical watering holes. Less than a year after the 1862 gold discovery, several saloons were operating. In 1890, Charles Bemis was the proprietor of the Warren Saloon (no longer standing) which offered "Pure Whiskeys, Wines, Liquors and Cigars." Bemis occasionally held dances, closing the bar so ladies could enter. Between 75 to 100 people danced to a flute, banjo, accordion and two violins. Dances included schottishes, quadrilles, polkas, mazurkas, minuets and waltzes. Including a midnight supper buffet, festivities often lasted till dawn.

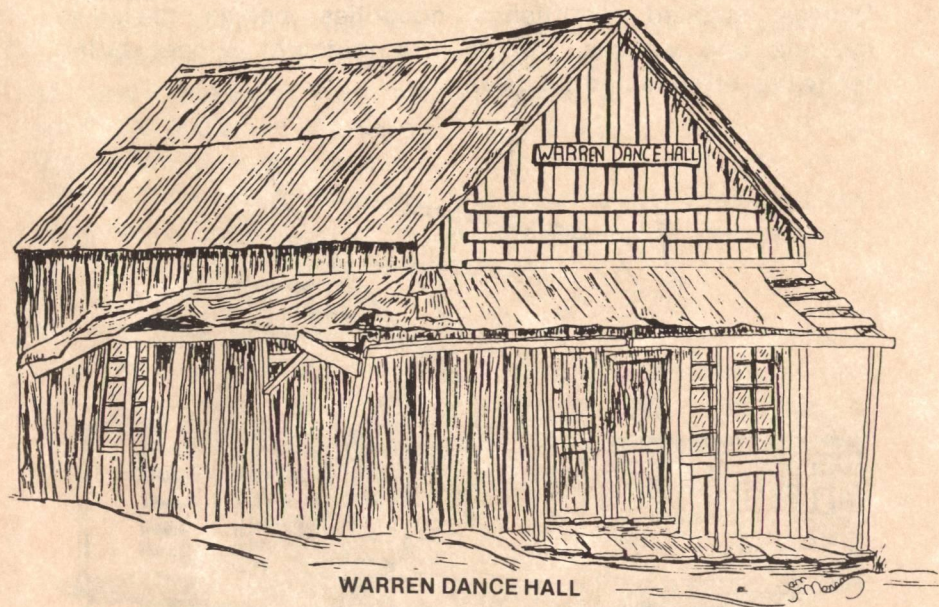


WARREN TAVERN

The Last Chance Saloon was primarily a card room/gambling parlor. The building originally straddled Warren Creek and when mining activity threatened the site the whole building was picked up and relocated.

In the early 1900s, the bars were temporarily closed because no liquor was allowed on Forest Service land. Idaho County voted to "go wet" in 1911. Bars reopened with hours from 5 a.m. to 12 p.m., closed on Sundays and election days. "Prohibition" briefly closed the bars during the 1920s though Warren's strict compliance with that law is arguable.

No. 10. Warren Dance Hall - This hall was owned by local merchant Otis Morris. From 1905 to the start of World War II, Saturday night dances lasted until 2 a.m. Local musicians played violin, trumpet and a bellows-powered organ that was transported to Warren by pack mules. Dances included fox trots and waltzes, as the "Jitterbug" had not yet become a craze in Warren.



No. 11. The Chinese in Warren - A display of local Chinese artifacts may be viewed at the Winter Inn, Warren Guard Station and the McCall Ranger's Office.

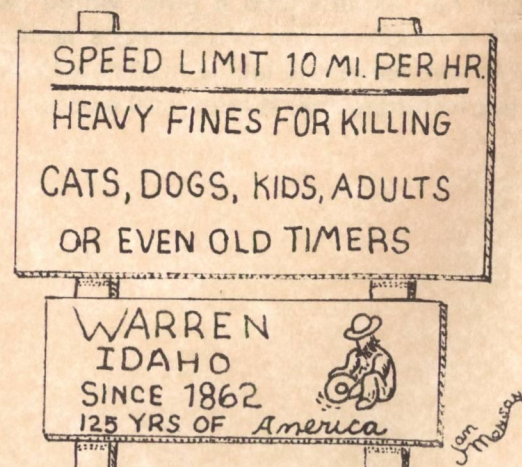
Most of the Chinese came to America to build the transcontinental railroad. In 1869 the Central Pacific (built by Chinese labor) and Union Pacific railroads were united with the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah. Upon completion of the railroad, Chinese laborers came to mining camps in the Northwest. As the majority of Warren's population during the late 1800s, they found work as highly organized work gangs constructing ditches, local roads and trails and working in the mines.

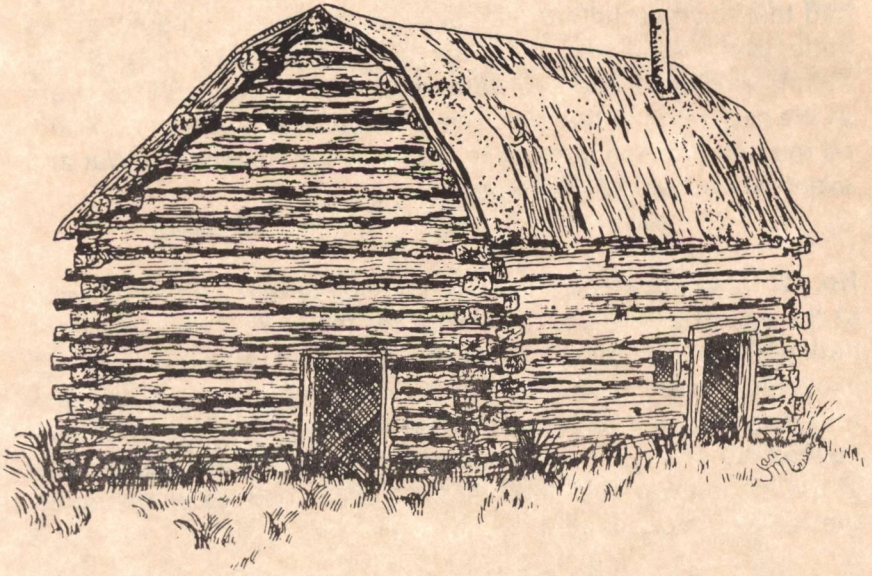
They ran pack trains, supplied Warren with fresh fish from the Salmon River, vegetables from the terraced gardens and created their own business district. Though great in number, the Chinese were considered a minority because they could not obtain U. S. citizenship. As a result, theirs' was a society within a society.

Their celebrations and calamities were apart from Warren's traditionally white structure. The Chinese had considerable trouble among themselves in the form of tong (gang) wars. Each tong had their own particular type of weapon, usually a personalized knife, which accounted for many murders. Other Chinese died in mining accidents and five were reportedly killed by Sheepeaters at the beginning of the War. There is speculation that whites killed the five Chinese in order to facilitate the Sheepeater War and eventual removal of the Indians.

No. 12. Unity Mine Tailings - The Unity Mine tailings can be seen at the end of the landing field nearest the town. Waste material (tailings) from the mine formed this long, rectangular mound. As excavation extended further into the granite mountain, discarded rock was loaded into track-mounted ore cars. The cars were then pushed out of the mine and dumped, forming the mound. The top of the mound was kept level so the tracks could be extended as the tailings accumulated.

No. 13. Warren Landing Field - The original landing field was built in 1931 by Baumhoff's Idaho Gold Dredging Company. During Idaho's severe winters, trails and roads are blocked by snow, and to this day, airplanes transport Warren's supplies and mail. Dredging destroyed the original field. In 1937-38 the dredge company, Forest Service and local citizens leveled the dredge tailings and the field became usable again.





100 YEAR OLD DWELLING

SUMMARY

Warren, Idaho has experienced a long, varied past. That it stands today is a tribute to the community's resilience. Many gold-rush towns have vanished, taking history with them as they decayed. We are fortunate that Warren still exists.

For more information on Warren, see:

Elsensohn, Alfreda M. (Sister). **Pioneer Days in Idaho County.**
Vol. 1 and 2. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1965.

Helmets, Cheryl. **Warren Times - History of Warren, Idaho
1862-1942.** Wolfe City, Texas: Henington Publishing Company,
1988.

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Return to:

WARREN DRIVING TOUR

