

SAVE OTT'S COMMITTEE

529 East Broad Street
Nevada City, California 95959



Dear Glen:

Such a pleasure to see you again and Turpy and meet Miss Amy I never fail to be impressed by all the time and effort you people are willing to give Nevada City. The session last evening was informative to me — many comments that can be filed away for future use ..and here and there a springboard for an idea ..

I can think of no great benefit to the community than the PR generated by a joint hosting of the Nov-Dec seminar - or not only including GValley people on the planning group but include their town as one of the subjects .. Thus unification will come eventually .. GValley has always been overshadowed by the belle of the ball Nevada City - their ego needs support and actually it isn't all just personal relationship for there is much history in GValley and much that merits preserving. I have long known whatever success I have had on the theatre was partly due to the strong support GValley has always given ..Oddly enough in the beginning it was done only from politeness but eventually I realized they have some splendid historical homes and buildings and their whole history offers the very core of mining in virtually the whole of Nevada County ..

Right now we are laying the ground work to try to get the Empire Mine developed as a historic park. There is 12 acres with perfectly fabulous buildings - the Bourne mansion (designed in Willis Polk) the old mining office expansive ground and formal gardens ..I am told they have 50 to 60 visitors each month -and there is not only no advertising but everything is closed and posted yet visitors come from all the state and country to see the famous Empire Mine ..Last March the major headframe was destroyed - we just got home from Sacramento folating on clouds because the assay office was officially ordered saved and here was the evening paper reporting the demolition of the major headframe of the major mine ..but always good things for THIS got us off our duff and under way ..we have been able to get the order cancelled to destroy the remaining headframe - LMCCommission may not be the agent who will handle it all but only the sower of seeds .. Grass Valley could have a historical project and tourist attraction that would be outstanding anywhere ..they just need to be poked a bit ..

In addition to the subtle benefit of helping to draw the two towns together - I also believe another potential will be to program to attract a wider base than that of history and historical preservation. Three divisions are apparent - the historic preservation - the business community and market place - and county government with emphasis on city and planning county planning.

Endorsed by Nevada County Historical Society, California Heritage Council, Placer County Historical Society, Western Mining Council, Inc., and the California Historical Society

Empire Mine Park

488 Westridge Drive
Portola Valley, California 94025
12 December 1974

Allen Wells
State Park Historian, III
Cultural Resources Section
Resource Management & Protection Division
Box 2390
Sacramento, California 95811

Dear Mr. Wells:

In preparing a nomination for the National Register I found correlated facts which should be significant to the Parks Dept. Mrs. Sally Altick spoke to someone in the department this morning and was assured that the 70 acres of the Empire Mine property with eight residences -- one of which was the Bourn house -- is to be Parks property. I

I am concerned that the Empire Cottage built for William Bowers Bourn, II, should be on the National Register. This is the first of three residences which Bourn commissioned Willis J. Polk to do. When this was built in the mid-1890s Polk was just beginning to be recognized. In designing the house Polk used the features which Richardson had introduced and popularized, that is using rough boulders and stones with stone arches. The house fit well into its natural setting. This was confirmed in a photo shown to me by a nephew of Bourn.

Harold Kirker, California's Architectural Frontier, p. 120, emphasizes the importance of the structure: "...A more interesting structure is Bourn's stone cottage in Grass Valley. Designed by Willis Polk with walls of roughhewn granite trimmed with brick, it was described in the San Francisco Chronicle of May 2, 1897, as 'without parallel in California.'

Mrs. Altick said the only information known by the Parks person to whom she talked was that the house was supposedly copied from a Scottish estate which Bourn had admired. I do hope that the Empire Cottage is soon nominated for a place it rightfully deserves on the National Register.

Sincerely,

Dorothy F. Regnery
(Mrs. David C.)

Dear Mrs. Lewis,

I feel like I know you -- Kathy Kaiser has told me many nice things about you.

I hope you don't think I'm out of my territory -- I just happen to be enthusiastic about Polk & Bourn.

Dorothy

488 Westridge Drive
Portola Valley, California 94025
23 February 1975

Dear Sally,

I regret that I have not found the time until now to answer your lengthy response to my question. I showed your letter to William Bourn's nephew and grandson. The latter immediately laughed and exclaimed, "My grandfather was never in Scotland." Obviously different events have become woven as one in re-telling.

Wm. Bourn had wanted his daughter to marry a European title. When she married an Irish clerk whom she met aboard a cruise ship, Bourn purchased the vast Muckcross Estate of approximately 10,000 acres to properly establish the couple in Ireland. After his daughter's death Bourn gave the property which includes the Lakes of Killarney to the Irish Government to be used as a National Park. The Muckcross House was built in 1843 by a member of Parliament for County Kerry, a descendant of the Guinness clan. There is also an ancient abby ruins on the estate. The Empire Cottage was not copied from any inspiration in Europe. It is definitely W. Polk's interpretation of Richardson.

Bourn Hayne recently gave to Richard Longstreth at U. of C. Berkeley some of Polk's drawings of the Empire Cottage. He has considerable material and information on the house, much of it from the same source.

Vincent also said that so many people attempt to make his grandfather an Irishman, etc., which is also very incorrect. The Bourn genealogy is strictly American back to early colonial days, and British before that.

I asked both Mr. Allen W. Welts and James M. Doyle for a copy of the portion regarding the Empire Cottage which was in the National Register nomination. I have never received same from either. The relatives of the Bourns would very much like to see it also. As they said, once some of these errors get in print it is very difficult to correct them. Would you perhaps share the National Register nomination with us?

Not to sound patronizing, but you are mistaken when you assume any State Historical Landmark is automatically listed on the National Register. Generally if the landmark is owned by the state, they will do the necessary paper work. Otherwise, individuals, communities, etc. must submit the nomination. I have been involved in one situation in which an advisory committee member proposed that a state landmark

EMPIRE MINE BUILDINGS

Condition: good unaltered original site

These comprise the Mansion, surrounded by a fine garden, Office Buildings and other secondary buildings in a loosely organized group placed amongst fine pine and cedar trees near the shaft and shops of the mine. The grounds of the Mansion are enclosed by a high stone wall along the road.

The buildings were designed by Willis Polk in a free Tudor style and are built of native grey rubble stone.

The offices are still used and the Mansion has been kept in excellent condition.

COUNTY OF NEVADA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Ralph Buchanan, 1st District
Thomas L. Turner, 2nd District
Fred J. Conway, 3rd District
Lawrence Filer, 4th District
William Curran, 5th District

Theo. A. Kohler, Jr.
Ex-Officio Clerk of the Board



201 Church Street
NEVADA CITY, CALIFORNIA 95959
Phone: Area Code 916 - 265 - 2461 Ext. 210

July 11, 1974

Mrs. Sally Lewis, Chairman
Historical Landmarks Commission
529 East Broad Street
Nevada City, California

Dear Mrs. Lewis:

At their meeting held July 9, 1974, the Board of Supervisors referred the attached letter along with a brochure to the Historical Landmarks Commission for their comment upon the significance of the Empire Mine and its submission for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

It is the request of the Department of Parks and Recreation that any comments be submitted within fifteen working days of their letter, which is dated July 2, 1974.

It would be appreciated if you would kindly furnish this office with a copy of your reply to the Department of Parks and Recreation, if applicable.

Sincerely,

THEO. A. KOHLER, JR.
Co. Clerk & Ex-Officio Clerk
Nevada County Board of Supervisors

BY: *Jeanette Hillman*
Deputy Clerk to the Board

/jh

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

P.O. BOX 2390
SACRAMENTO 95811*Communications*

RECEIVED

JUL 5 1974 cc

NEVADA COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS*Board
to Council
A-C*

July 2, 1974

Nevada County
County Courthouse
Nevada City, California 95959

Gentlemen:

Under new procedures established by the State Historic Preservation Officer, Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr., we are requesting the comments of local governmental bodies in historical organizations regarding sites submitted for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

By this letter, we are affording you the opportunity to comment upon the significance of the Empire Mine, located at 338 East Empire Street, Grass Valley, California.

We would appreciate receiving any comments you wish to make within fifteen working days of the date of this letter. If comments are not received by that date, we shall assume "No Comment" response.

For your information a brochure describing the National Register program is enclosed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James M. Doyle".

James M. Doyle, Supervisor
History Preservation SectionEnclosure
K-2/4339