



# The Bullet Hole

 November 2021 

Next Match December 19, 2021 - Shooters' meeting at 9:30 a.m.



## SILVER STATE SHOOTISTS TURKEY SHOOT



### November 21, 2021 Turkey Shoot Match

It was a beautiful day for the nineteen shooters that came out for our annual Turkey Shoot match. Fanner Fifty, Big Hammer Steve, Jackpot Jerry, and Redeye Hull had clean matches. Derringer Dan shoot his 22 to put his five rounds in the ten spot to win the \$100 first prize. Justice took second with a score of 49. Four shooters had a 48 which required a shoot off for third place. Wylie Fox put all five shoots in the 10 spot to take third.

Dirk



### From Jackpot Jerry –

It was another great shoot in the Gulch with a lot of really great support to get this match done. It was a lot of fun and Georgia Blue did a great job with the Turkey Shoot.

We still have a lot of work to do to get the shotgun targets working properly but the new plates were much better than what we had in the past. I am certain that we are on the right path to get all of our targets working properly in the very near future. Thanks for all of the input and support.

This month I found a tale of what a Thanksgiving was like “back then.”



# Remembering a fiery Thanksgiving Day at a long-forgotten ghost town

Amy Alonzo

Reno Gazette-Journal

**November 26, 1863**

“Thanksgiving day was but little observed...we had an oyster supper — they had one or two quarrels and fights at McCumbers saloon & pistols were drawn ... no one hurt — The telephone poles were set and wires put up from Daniels hotel to near Palmyra today — evening, I was in at assay office awhile — Terrill & his guitar—Lindsay & fiddle- I on the banjo ... Old Solomon treated to wine — his son sung several very pretty ballads...”

This Thanksgiving Day memory piece was written by pioneer journalist Alf Doten when he lived at the Nevada mining town of Como in 1863. So, when local history buffs today talk about settling the wild, wild West, they usually are not exaggerating and when Doten wrote the paragraph in his journal, it read like shootings were an every day occurrence.

Doten’s quote regarding a pioneer Thanksgiving sounds violent but in those days, especially in towns being as newly settled as Como, its sister cities, Palmyra and Georgetown, law and order was hit or miss.

Palmyra, Georgetown and Como are now ghost towns located in the Pine Nut Mountains around 12 miles south of Dayton. Quite a few years ago, a fire burned a large section of the Como site. The hills remain laden with rusty tin cans, and there’s little existing memorabilia or structure remnants at Como except a continuing failing stone structure that long-time residents call “Martin the Wizards Bar.” A typical tale of what was often left of Nevada mining towns that were bustling with miners, hotels, saloons, brewery, post office and newspaper. The Como mining boom fizzled about as fast as it began with no big bonanzas found. For Doten, a greenhorn from the northeastern U. S., it had represented an opportunity to strike it rich.

## **Doten arrives in Dayton and Como**

In March 1849, Doten left his Plymouth, Mass. home via steamer to seek his fortune in the gold country of California. From that day until 1903 he documented his exciting journeys and life out West. His hand-bound leather journals and handwritten manuscripts were later edited and published by Nevada novelist Walter Van Tilburg Clark. Consisting of three large volumes, they are worthwhile reading. I recently heard that Nevada historians today are rewriting Dotens' original journals to be published without any editing at all. I am looking forward to reading them.

Getting back to Doten's Dayton and Como days, Doten mentioned on Nov. 24 that the weather was "clear & cool ..." He was working at a number of mines and also selling stock to run them. He wrote, "...this evening Frank Spinning arrived – friend of Brier's-ate & slept with us – two men eating supper at Cross's got into a quarrel – one drew pistol – 5 shooter - & shot...the steward caught his arm just in time to turn his aim aside, so he missed his man. He was from Rabbit Creek, Cal – arrived this evening - the other was the recorder of Indian Springs Dist. – they were friends but got into a small bit of dispute over claims – both a little tight, hence the difficulty – the fuss was stopped at once, no arrests made – the first shooting scrape in Como." He also noted that the Solomon assay office from Dayton had been moved and set up in part of the Daniel's Hotel.

The Thanksgiving weather that Doten reported reminds me of most of the Nevada Thanksgivings in my life when days turn chilly and the nights are cold. Doten noted that from "Nov. 15 through 18 there were heavy winds and snow with no outside work possible" and he mentioned that Cross's "new hotel is well furnished, carpeted and has the best arrangements & all conveniences one could wish – emphatically a first class hotel."

On November 19, Doten said, on the Sunday prior: "Mrs. Hawkins, wife of Thos. R Hawkins, was delivered of a baby – first white child ever born in the District... " (The Palmyra Mining District.) And this news becomes Dayton history.

Thomas Riley Hawkins' great grandson, Ray Walmsley, born and raised in Dayton, married to high school sweetheart, May Cadwallader, remains a prominent resident of the community. In an interview for Lyon County Reflections in 1988, Ray said his great grandmother, Nancy, gave birth to his grandmother Georgetta on Nov. 15, 1863 in Georgetown, the small forgotten mining camp a few miles northwest of Como.

And then, Como residents traveled via stage to Dayton frequently while Doten often walked to Dayton, noting there was a trail and it took him nearly three hours.

Doten wrote for the Como Sentinel until it was moved to Dayton, July 9, 1864, where on July 17, the Lyon County Sentinel published its first issue in Dayton. On Sunday, Oct. 2, 1864, Doten left Como (due to hard times) to become editor of the Virginia Daily Union in booming Virginia City. He wrote, “Put all Swain’s & my tools into box, packed my trunk, put fiddle and banjo into my bedding bundle, & wheeled all down to Witherells & left in care of Welton – went round & bade the ladies all good bye – at 1 o’clock left afoot for Dayton with carpet bag in hand . . . slept at Sentinel office – “ (I do not know if Welton’s a name or a place.)



The gulch is just south of the Gold Hill train depot and west of the Gold Hill Hotel.

If you have a problem finding the location, or if you would like more information about the information in this newsletter, call Jackpot Jerry. My cell phone number is: 310-990-6482