The Discovery of Silver in Nevada

copy of first draft - along with pp. in same writing in *

The materials for the present paper are derived from three sources. 1. Memory - The writer having known the two brothers who are the subject of this article, and having taken part in many of the scenes and incidents in their eventful lives and deaths. 2. Notes made years ago soon after the occurrences which are now related, and 3. all the letters written by both S. A. Grosh and H. B. Grosh to their father from the time they left home in 1849, until their deaths toward the end of 1857.

The writer can claim a special knowledge of the closing act of the drama in which, after the death of Hosea Grosh, Allen Grosh met with uncongua-

Insert five Mems '85

In the Summer of 1857 Allen and Hosea Grosh, people I knew, and the writer were living in Gold Canon

fortitude his terrible fate in the Sierra Nevadas, since he was the sole companion of Allen Grosh during the four or five weeks of ~~extreme~~ exposure, starvation, and illness which ended his life.

Ethan Allen Grosh was born in Marietta, Penn. Nov 7th 1824 and Hozea Ballou Grosh was born at the same place August 23rd 1826. Their father (who is still living) was a universalist clergyman. The boys lived at home with their father at first in Marietta, Penn., then for a good many years in Utica, N.Y., and afterwards in Reading, Penn., until they left the Eastern States in 1849 for the Pacific coast. They were of medium height, slight figure, good looking, fairly well educated, very quick of observation, ready with expedients in

difficulty, gifted (especially Allen) with exceptional power of original thought, thoroughly honest and honorable in small things as in great, absolutely devoted to one another, industrious, of indomitable perseverance, chaste and sober, and above all religious. not apt to talk about it, not wedded to any special dogmas, but filled with ~~that genuine religion~~ of the heart which is the salt of the earth and which keeps whoever possesses it, as it kept them fearless, earnest and pure. ¶ Early in 1849 they associated themselves with a company of men forty in number to go to California by way of Mexico. The party paid J. R. West a certain sum each to take them through. They sailed from

Chesnut Street wharf, Philadelphia on 28th of ~~February 1849~~ in the ~~schooner~~ "Newton" Capt. George W. Smith for Tampico, Mexico. They had fine weather and light breezes until within sixty miles of Tampico, then on 21st of March they were caught in a violent storm which drove them a long way out to sea again, the next day however the wind lulled and on the 26th of March they landed in Tampico. Here Capt. West bought mules, horses, ~~&c &c~~ provisions, and after a good deal of delay he got the party started inland on the 10th of April. The journey across Mexico from Tampico to San Blas seems to have had nearly all the unpleasantness and drawbacks that such a journey could have and be finally accomplished. There

was a scarcity of water, especially of good water, heat, a great part of the way a barren country with few trees and them almost leafless, stampedes and strayings of mules and horses, poor provisions, insects of all kinds day and night including unlimited mosquitoes, sandflies and fleas, bad roads and in places no roads, illness especially malarious fevers and dysentery, and finally when some sixty or eighty miles from the Pacific ocean, failure of the man who had contracted to take them through to California and for which service he had been paid in advance. As their passage was paid through and as they were going to a land where money was supposed to be plentiful and leaving a land where with

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almost impassable. the town full of gambling houses which were liberally patronized. shooting and stabbing seem to have been of almost daily occurence. Prices judging from the samples given must have been enormous, thus potatoes were 35c per lb. onions $1.25c per lb. Cabbage, turnips, and radishes hardly to be got and then only limit to the prices of them the conscience of the seller and the means of the buyer. Eggs $6.00 per doz, sweet potatoes and squashes $2.00 to $5.00 a piece. the commonest boots $32.00 a pair. good boots $60.00 to $90.00 a pair, this is taken from a letter of Allen's dated Dec. 1st 1849, and under date of Jan. 12th 1850 Rozea writes, "our ideas of dearness are very different here from what they are with you. we pay 25c per lb. for common potatoes, 25c for fresh beef, 50c per lb. for veal, 75c for pork, $2.50c to $4.00 a

quarter for lamb and mutton, 25c a loaf for bread (5c loaves with you), they have been as high as 50c, butter $1.50 per lb, cheese $1.00, dried peaches 75c to $1.00, apples the same, raisins 50c to $1.25 per lb, all other necessaries of life in proportion, these prices will seem enormous to you as they did to us on our arrival here, but in a short time we became used to them. The difference between wholesale and retail prices is very great, retailers have to make large profits to enable them to pay their enormous rents - a small store toward the outskirts of the city rents for $250. a month, and as you approach the business centre rents run up to thousands of dollars a month. I speak within bounds when I say that there is not any other city in the world in which property and rents are as high

as they are here, some frail light houses on a small plot of ground often bringing as much as 70, 80, or even 100 dol.= a day. I write this to you though I would not to anyone else as I do not suppose they would believe me, I would not have it published there=fore, though I assure you it is strictly true". They worked by the month as clerks in stores and at other jobs until June '50, when they went to the mines in the neighbourhood of Coloma, Eldorado County. Their first year in the mines (1850) they did for a time fairly well. They made a couple of thousand dollars. Afterwards they lost it all building a dam in company with some other men. The dam was built to turn a river out of its ~~course~~ bed so that the ground which had been covered by the water might be

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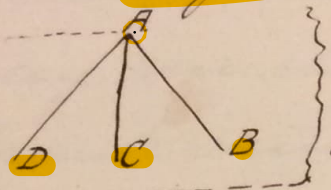
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They worked at goldmining in Gold Canon this winter and all the spring and summer of 1854 making nothing more than a bare living, which is all that any one ever did make there as the present writer knows very well, for he once mined there a year himself. In the autumn they went back to California, and mined and prospected for quartz veins at a place called Little Sugar Loaf in Eldorado County. In 1855 they mined at Little Sugar Loaf. They had very bad luck and made nothing more than a bare living. Their bad luck continued in 1856. In fact they do not seem even to have had any other kind of luck all their lives. They still just made enough to keep them alive. This year they again had bad health. They were troubled

a great deal with vertigo, so much so that they could sometimes hardly walk. On the 31st of March of this year they write (and this is the first time silver is mentioned in their correspondence). "ever since our return from Utah we have been trying to get a couple of hundred dollars together for the purpose of making a careful examination of a silver lead in Gold Canon." *** "Native silver is found in Gold Canon, it resembles thin sheet lead broken very fine - and lead the miners suppose it to be." *** "We found silver ore at the forks of the canon. A large quartz vein shows itself in this situation". In spite of the greatest exertion they are at this time $100. in debt. They went to Utah for the second time in September 1856. and stayed until the end of October.

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sure that there is a fourth. The two shoots we have traced give strong evidence of big surface veins. xx The following is a diagram of the set of veins.



A seems to be the centre from which all seem to radiate. B we have traced by boulders. C. we have struck the end of. D the same. E is uncertain in its existence though the evidence is tolerably strong. BAC may be the true vein and the shoots DAE may be superficial spurs. We have pounded up some of each variety of rock and set it to work by the Mexican process. xxx. The rock of the vein looks beautiful, is very soft and will work remarkably easy. The show of metallic silver produced by exploding it in damp gun=powder [so in the letter, the present writer does not know what the expression means] is very promising. This is

the only test that we have yet applied. The rock is iron and its colours are violet blue indigo blue, blue black, and greenish black. It differs very much from that in the Frank vein, the vein we discovered last fall. The Frank vein will require considerable capital to start. The rock is very hard and the vein very much split up. The present vein lies very compact as far as we have examined it, not a leaf of foreign rock in it." Aug 16th. Allen writes from Gold Canon. "Our first assay was ½ oz. of rock, the result was $3500.00 of silver to the ton by hurried assay, which was altogether too much of a good thing. ××××. We assayed a small quantity of rock by cupellation from another vein, the result was $200. per ton. We have several other veins which are as yet

untouched, we are very sanguine of ultimate success." At this time the present writer was mining in Gold Cañon and knew the Groah brothers pretty well Allen Groah showed him just about the date at which my narrative has reached a button of silver extracted by himself and Rozea from rock in the neighbourhood of Gold Cañon. Allen Groah also showed him this same summer where one of their veins crossed Gold Cañon and he told him of others but without indicating their exact location. While examining their silver veins they had to make a living by gold mining and on Wednesday 19th August of this year (1857) as they were gold mining in a little cañon which comes into Gold Cañon just below its main fork, Rozea struck his left foot on the inside

just below and in front of the ankle with his pick making a deep and painful wound. It was not however thought to be at all dangerous for the first few days. Soon however, Hozea became very ill, he got worse and worse and on the 2nd of Sept. he died probably of septicaemia. On 11th of Sept. Allen wrote to his father. "By Hozea's death you fall heir to his share of the silver claims. we have so far four veins - three of them promise much" The rest of the letter is taken up with a most pathetic account of Hozea's accident, illness, death and burial. The Grosh brothers had been for some years (as the miners used to say and as I have said before) "in bad luck" - they had barely made a living - and had found it very difficult to get as much time for "prospecting"

as they actually used for that purpose, little as that was. At the time of Hozea's accident they were about even with the world, were not in debt, and had nothing in hand. When Hozea was buried Allen found himself some $60 in debt. He did no more at the silver veins but worked at gold= =mining to pay this off. By the middle of November he had paid his debts. His plans now were to go to California and if possible get money from some capitalist or capitalists to open the silver veins. The writer of this paper was at that time living and working in the mines in Gold Canon and he also was desirous of crossing the Sierra Nevadas to California to pass the winter there. It was agreed therefore between these two that they should go to California together. Allen

Gooch had a donkey which we packed with Allen's books and papers, our clothes and blankets, some few cooking utensils and a few days provisions. On 15th of November we loaded the donkey and started, we passed up Gold Canon, crossed the mountains at its head and descended into Washoe Valley. That night we camped on the shore of Washoe Lake in Washoe Valley. 16th In the morning the donkey was missing. We searched for him all day and a little before sundown found his track leading towards Eagle Valley, which lies directly south of Washoe valley. Allen went back to the camp to look after the baggage and I went on to Eagle Valley. I reached there about 8 P.M., found the donkey and stayed till morning. 17th I got back to camp by noon. Had dinner, packed up, crossed the valley which is ten miles wide and camped in an old

house just at the foot of the Sierra Nevadas. 18th. Donkey gone again. We looked about the valley for him all day, but could not find him. We saw a great many Indian tracks which had evidently been made the night before, so we concluded that the Indians had taken the donkey. 19th We followed the path that the Indians had taken into the mountains about eight miles, hoping to find them and make them give up the donkey. We found no Indians so turned back determined to leave the donkey to his fate. But as we had many more things than we could carry we took some of them to a house about a mile off, where there lived a man that we knew, intending to leave them with him. At this house we found a man who said he had seen

the donkey in Eagle Valley the day before. So Allen took the things back to camp and I went again after the donkey. When I reached Eagle Valley I found that the donkey had been there, but that a man who knew Allen and that the donkey belonged to him, had taken the donkey with him to Gold Canon thinking that Allen was still there. Gold Canon is twelve miles from Eagle Valley. I went on and arrived there about 10 P.M.. I found the donkey and started back at once. I reached the first house in Washoe Valley at 3 A.M.. I stopped here and slept some hours for I was very tired, having walked sixty miles in twenty three hours. 20th I got back with the donkey to our last camp about noon this day. Allen was there waiting for me. As soon as we had had

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~~some dinner we loaded the donkey and started up the mountains. That night we camped within a few miles of the eastern summit, and though in Washoe Valley the weather was warm and even at night there was but little frost, this evening we had to chop through ice more than half a foot thick to get some water from a small~~ lake ~~creek~~. Here the mining will be spoken of in this place to give some description of the Washoe Trail by which we were now about to attempt the passage of the mountains: This trail it was used by Indians and by occasional travellers on foot or horseback. It was not practicable for wheeled vehicles. From Washoe valley going west it ascends the eastern summit, which has an elevation of there about 9000 ft. high. then runs down this summit to the shore of Lake Tahoe. From the last ~~place~~

see page 5-5-5-1 and four years after

The Discoverers of Silver in Nevada.

Twenty five Years Ago

In the summer of 1857 Allen and Hosea Grosh, George Brown, the writer and myself were living in Gold Cañon

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The writer can claim a special knowledge of the closing act of the drama in which, after the death of Hosea Grosh, Alan Grosh met with unconquerable fortitude his terrible fate in the Sierra Nevadas, since he was the sole companion of Allen Grosh during the four or five weeks of exposure, starvation, and illness which ended his life.

Ethan Allen Grosh was born in Marietta, Penn. Nov. 7th, 1824 and Hosea Ballou Grosh was born at the same place August 23rd, 1826. Their father (who is still living) was a universalist clergyman - The boys lived at home with their father at first in Marietta, Penn., then for a good many years in Utica, N.Y., and afterwards in Reading, Penn., until they left the Eastern States in 1849 for the Pacific coast.

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Early in 1849 they associated themselves with a company of men forty in number to go to California by way of Mexico. The party paid J. R. West a certain sum each to take them through - They sailed from Chesnut Street wharf, Philadelphia on 28th of February 1849 in the Schooner "Newton" Capt. George H. Smith for Tampico, Mexico. They had fine weather and light breezes until within sixty miles of Tampico, then on 21st of March they were caught in a violent storm which drove them a long way out to sea again, the next day however the wind lulled and on the 26th of March they landed in Tampico. Here Capt. West bought mules, horses & provisions, and after a good deal of delay they got the party started inland on the 10th of April.

The journey across Mexico from Tampico to San Blas seems to have had nearly all the unpleasantnesses and drawbacks that such a journey could have and be finally accomplished. There was a scarcity of water, especially of good water, heat, a great part of the way a barren country with few trees and these almost leafless, stampedes and strayings of mules and

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As their passage was paid through and as they were going to a land where money was supposed to be plentiful and leaving a land where with many of them no doubt the common medium of exchange was rather scarce, the party as a rule do not seem to have been at all well supplied with cash. However they faced the difficulty and made the best of their circumstances. They took possession of course, of the horses, mules and harness, wagons, &c. &c., that belonged to J. R. West, and in the first place journeyed on to San Blas where they arrived on the evening of Saturday the 23rd of June. Some days after that a Pacific mail steamship called at San Blas on her way up the coast to San Francisco. One or two of the party were rich enough to pay their fare in the steamship and they went with her, a few stayed in Mexico, some got chances to work passages in various directions, but the most part including the Grosh brothers stayed in San Blas until the 12th of July and sailed on that day in the barque Olga of Boston for San Francisco. They had enough money between them to pay about half the charge for a

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Their first year in the mines (1850) they did for a time fairly well. They made a couple of thousand dollars. Afterwards they lost it all building a dam in company with some other men. The dam was built to turn a river out of its course bed so that the ground which had been covered by the water might be got at and washed for gold. Sometimes immense sums

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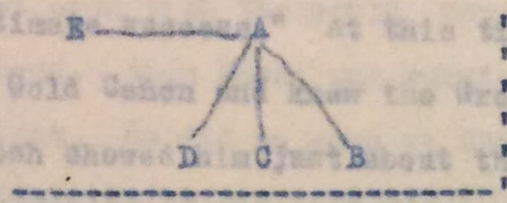
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Copy of first draft - along with pp. in same writing in ~~x~~

Twenty five Years Ago

In the summer of 1857 Allen and Hosea Grosh, George Brown, the writer and myself were living in Gold Cañon

The materials for the present paper are derived from three sources. 1. - Memory - The writer having known the two brothers who are the subject of this article, and having taken part in many of the scenes and incidents in their eventful lives and deaths. 2. Notes made years ago soon after the occurrences which are here related, and 3. All the letters written by both E. S. Grosh and H. B. Grosh to their father from the time they left home in 1849, until their deaths toward the end of 1857.

The writer can claim a special knowledge of the closing act of the drama in which, after the death of Hosea Grosh, Alan Grosh met with unconquerable fortitude his terrible fate in the Sierra Nevadas, since he was the sole companion of Allen Grosh during the four or five weeks of exposure, starvation, and illness which ended his life.

Ethan Allen Grosh was born in Marietta, Penn. Nov. 7th, 1824 and Hosea Ballou Grosh was born at the same place August 23rd, 1826. Their father (who is still living) was a universalist clergyman - The boys lived at home with their father at first in Marietta, Penn., then for a good many years in Utica, N.Y., and afterwards in Reading, Penn., until they left the Eastern States in 1849 for the Pacific coast.

They were of medium height, slight figure, good looking, fairly well educated, very quick of observation, ready with expedients in difficulty, gifted (especially Allen) with ex-

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ceptional power of original thought, thoroughly honest and honorable in small things as in great, absolutely devoted to one another, industrious, of indomitable perseverance, chaste and sober, and above all religious - not apt to talk about it, not wedded to any special dogmas, but filled with that genuine religion of the heart which is the salt of the earth and which keeps whoever possesses it, as it kept them fearless, earnest and pure.

Early in 1849 they associated themselves with a company of men forty in number to go to California by way of Mexico. The party paid J. R. West a certain sum each to take them through - They sailed from Chesnut Street wharf, Philadelphia on 28th of February 1849 in the Schooner "Newton" Capt. George H. Smith for Tampico, Mexico. They had fine weather and light breezes until within sixty miles of Tampico, then on 21st of March they were caught in a violent storm which drove them a long way out to sea again, the next day however the wind lulled and on the 26th of March they landed in Tampico. Here Capt. West bought mules, horses & provisions, and after a good deal of delay they got the party started inland on the 10th of April.

The journey across Mexico from Tampico to San Blas seems to have had nearly all the unpleasantnesses and drawbacks that such a journey could have and be finally accomplished. There was a scarcity of water, especially of good water, heat, a great part of the way a barren country with few trees and these almost leafless, stampedes and strayings of mules and

horses, poor provisions, insects of all kinds day and night including unlimited mosquitoes, sandflies and fleas, bad roads and in places no roads, illness especially malarious fevers and dysentery, and finally when some sixty or eighty miles from the Pacific Ocean failure of the man who had contracted to take them through to California and for which service he had been paid in advance.

As their passage was paid through and as they were going to a land where money was supposed to be plentiful and leaving a land where with many of them no doubt the common medium of exchange was rather scarce, the party as a rule do not seem to have been at all well supplied with cash. However they faced the difficulty and made the best of their circumstances. They took possession of course, of the horses, mules and harness, wagons, &c. &c., that belonged to J. R. West, and in the first place journeyed on to San Blas where they arrived on the evening of Saturday the 23rd of June. Some days after that a Pacific mail steamship called at San Blas on her way up the coast to San Francisco. One or two of the party were rich enough to pay their fare in the steamship and they went with her, a few stayed in Mexico, some got chances to work passages in various directions, but the most part including the Grosh brothers stayed in San Blas until the 12th of July and sailed on that day in the barque Olga of Boston for San Francisco. They had enough money between them to pay about half the charge for a

steerage passage and they handed over to the Captain their wagons, harness, &c. as security for the rest. They had fair weather and light winds up the coast and reached San Francisco on the 30th of August.

When they reached San Francisco Hosea was ill with dysentery and malarial fever, and it was some weeks before he was able to do any work. The condition of San Francisco at that time is given in letters written in that city during the last four months of 1849. It is described as being built of boards and canvas - unpaved - the streets in the rainy season almost impassable - the town full of gambling houses which were liberally patronized - shooting and atabbing seem to have been of almost daily occurrence. Prices judging from the samples given must have been enormous, thus potatoes were 35¢ per lb. onions $1.25 per lb. Cabbage, turnips, and radishes hardly to be got and then only limit to the prices of them the conscience of the seller and the means of the buyer. Eggs $6.00 per doz., sweet potatoes and squashes $2.00 to $5.00 a piece - the commonest boots $32.00 a pair - good boots $60.00 to $90.00 a pair, this is taken from a letter of Allen's dated Dec. 1st 1849, and under date of Jany 12th 1850. Hosea writes, "our ideas of dearness are very different here from what they are with you. We pay 25¢ per lb. for common potatoes, 25 ¢ for fresh beef, 50¢ per lb. for veal, 75 ¢ for pork, $2.50 to $4.00 a quarter for lamb and mutton, 25¢ a loaf for bread (5¢ loaves with you), they have been as high as 50¢ butter

$1.50 per lb., cheese $1.00 dried peaches 75¢ to $1.00, apples the same, raisins 50¢ to $1.25 per lb. all other necessaries of life in proportion, these prices will seem enormous to you as they did to us on our arrival here, but in a short time we became used to them. The difference between wholesale and retail prices is very great, retailers have to make large profits to enable them to pay their enormous rents - a small store toward the outskirts of the city rents for $250. a month, and as you approach the business centre rents run up to thousands of dollars a month. I speak within bounds when I say that there is not any other city in the world in which property and rents are as high as they are here, some frail light houses on a small plot of ground often bringing as much as 70, 80, or even 100 dol. a day. I write this to you though I would not to anyone else as I do not suppose they would believe me. I would not have it published therefore, though I assure you it is strictly true".- They worked by the month as clerks in stores and at other jobs until June '50, when they went to the mines in the neighbourhood of Coloma, Eldorado County.

Their first year in the mines (1850) they did for a time fairly well. They made a couple of thousand dollars. Afterwards they lost it all building a dam in company with some other men. The dam was built to turn a river out of its course bed so that the ground which had been covered by the water might be got at and washed for gold. Sometimes immense sums

were made in this way, the earth in the river bed proving enormously rich. In the case in question no gold of any consequence was found and the money expended in damming the river was lost. After this they made a few hundred dollars on a small claim, and then spent it prospecting. They spent some time too looking for gold bearing quartz veins but this search resulted in nothing. Their letters at this time, and indeed all the time they were there show intense enthusiasm for California and especially for mining. But it is no use to speak or write about life in the mines to those who have had no experience of it. No words can give an idea of its peculiar and wonderful charm. This charm as their letters show they felt intensely. In the course of this year Hosea was offered three hundred dollars a month as clerk in a store, and Allen was offered a position on the "Pacific News" worth from seventy five to one hundred dollars a week, but they could not give up mining.

During the year 1851 they still lived in the neighbourhood of Coloma. They worked at surface mining sufficiently to supply their wants and spent all the rest of their time prospecting for quartz veins.

In 1852 they lived in the same place. They did not do well mining and found no quartz veins that were worth anything. In the summer of this year they were out of health and were not able to continue the hard labor of mining so they gave this up for a time and started a ranch. They proposed to

farm, garden, raise stock, and keep stock for drovers.

In the course of 1853 they gave up their ranch, it did not turn out as well as they expected. They lost some of their stock; also they anticipated a general failure of the mines in that part of California. which would have made their ranch valueless. In July of this year they crossed the Sierra Nevadas for the first time. They prospected for gold for some months in the mountains and streams in and about Lake Valley to the south of Lake Tahoe. They found nothing. Gold in paying quantities has never been found in this valley. They then crossed the eastern summit into Utah (now Nevada) and settled down for the winter to mine in Gold Cañon.

They worked at gold mining in Gold Cañon this winter and all the spring and summer of 1854 making nothing more than a bare living, which is all that any one ever did make there as the present writer knows very well, for he mined there a year himself. In the autumn they went back to California, and mined and prospected for quartz veins at a place called Little Sugar Loaf in Eldorado County.

In 1855 they mined at Little Sugar Loaf. They had very bad luck and made nothing more than a bare living.

Their bad luck continued in 1856. In fact they do not seem ever to have had any other kind of luck all their lives. They still just made enough to keep them alive. This year they again had bad health. They were troubled a great deal with vertigo, so much so that they could sometimes hardly walk.

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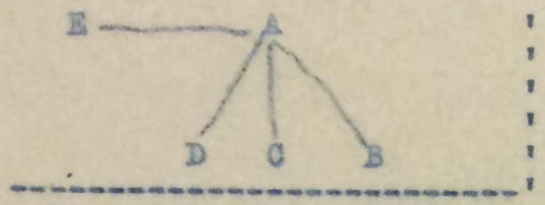
On the 31st of March of this year they write (and this is the first time silver is mentioned in their correspondence) "ever since our return from Utah we have been trying to get a couple of hundred dollars together for the purpose of making a careful examination of a silver lead in Gold Cañon".

xxx "Native silver is found in Gold Cañon, it resembles thin sheet lead broken very fine- and lead the miners suppose it to be".xxx "We found silver ore at the forks of the cañon. A large quartz vein shows itself in this situation". In spite of the greatest exertions they are at this time $100. in debt. They went to Utah for the second time in September 1856 and stayed until the end of October. On Novr 3rd they write "We found two veins of silver at the forks of Gold Cañon xxx one of these veins is a perfect monster". Novr 22nd "We have hopes, almost amounting to certainty of veins crossing the cañon at two other points". They intended to return to Utah to pass the winter of '56 and '57 in Gold Cañon but the winter came on earlier than they expected it and they were unable to cross the mountains. They therefore mined during the winter in their old neighbourhood in Eldorado County.

On the 2nd ef of March 1857, Allen writes from Sugar Loaf - "Our mining this winter (at Sugar Loaf - Eldorado Co.) has proved an utter failure xx we have had very bad luck". June 8th he writes from Gold Cañon - "We struck the vein without difficulty, but find some in tracing it. We have followed two shoots down the hill, have a third traced positively and feel pretty sure that there is a fourth. The two shoots we have

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traced give strong evidence of big surface veins. xx The following is a diagram of the set of veins:-



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