



Sketches of Levi and Charles

Tower House Historic District



Levi Tower



Charles Camden

A Field Trip Journal

TEACHER'S EDITION

Today on your tour through the Tower House District, you will hear stories of friendship, love, wealth, and death. These stories will all have their base in the discovery of gold right here on Clear Creek. Join us now as we walk back in time to 1850 and follow the adventures of two friends, Levi Tower and Charles Camden.

The Story Begins in 1850.

INTRODUCTION:

This is the story about the two men on the cover, Levi Tower & Charles Camden.

- Met in San Francisco in 1850 & became best friends.
- Lives go in 2 very different directions. One ends up successful and the other loses everything.
- Levi was 30 years old from Cumberland, Rhode Island, Charles was 33 years old from England.
- They were older than most miners that came to CA (15 years old – 25 years old).
- Sail to Arcata (which was known as Unionville) and pick up food & supplies.
- Food: biscuits, flour, salt, coffee/ pick shovels, blankets, rifles.
- They pan for gold along the Trinity, Salmon, and Klamath Rivers following Indian paths and blazing trails.



Student activity: Match the following lists together that are at the bottom of the page.

Pick, shovels, blankets, rifle

Gold

Levi Tower and Charles Camden

Best friends

Biscuits, flour, salt, coffee

Miner's supplies

Shipped into

Food for miner's

Best friends in pursuit of

Unionville(Arcata)

Extra information can be given after the matching activity

While Levi is in Unionville getting supplies, Charles comes to Clear Creek and meets John Schneider who lives about 1 mile west of this area. By November 1850, Camden builds a cabin & constructs reservoirs to control streams and flows.

For a short time the partners sell mining supplies in Yreka in 1851, but return to Clear Creek by 1852.

Toll Bridge



Student activity: Sketch the toll bridge on this page.

Start with the sketching activity first.

Have students look at Exhibit 2 and sketch a picture of the covered bridge. Make sure they put TOLL BRIDGE on their bridge. While students are drawing, tell them the following facts.

- 1865 covered bridge built by Charles Camden
- \$20,000.00 spent to improve road from Old Shasta to Clear Creek, plus building a bridge at Whiskey Creek, and improved & covered this bridge over Clear Creek.
- Original bridge was just upstream, later moved to this location. Today's footbridge rests on the same stone piers used for the second bridge.
- Discuss what a toll bridge is:
 - \$0.10 walk
 - \$0.25 horse
 - \$1.25 wagon
- 50 years Charles Camden collected tolls – tolls were paid at the Tower Hotel.

Student Activity: at the bottom of the page

Write what the numbers mean and answer the math problem.

Crossing a Bridge Costs Money

What do the numbers mean:

1865

\$20,000.00

\$0.10

\$0.25

\$1.25

50

What was the cost for 3 wagons?

Tower House Hotel

Walk across the footbridge past the Camden House. Staying on the paved path, go a little ways up the hill towards Hwy 299. Point out to your students - between where you are standing and the



shed across Hwy 299 on the corner is approximately where the Tower House Hotel stood. Nothing remains of the hotel due to a fire in 1919.

Imagine the road you are on full of horses, pigs, chickens, miners, and stagecoaches.

Student Activity: Sketch the road to the hotel - include stagecoach, pigs, chickens, orchards. While students sketch the road, tell them the following facts.

- In 1852, Levi buys the property for \$575 & builds the hotel incorporating into it a log house called the Free Bridge House.
- While he builds the hotel, Charles mines.
- Was 3 stories tall and had 21 rooms.
- Levi – well liked, great host, cordial and friendly.
- Entertainment at the hotel was lavish (abundant), known for its high standard of service and graciousness.
- Levi's brother Jason Tower helps with hotel.
- Social Center of Shasta County –miners could get a meal, a drink, and companionship.
- Extensive orchards of around 1000 trees (cherry, apple, peach, pears) plus huge vegetable gardens.
- 100's of pigs, chickens, and sheep
- Spring of 1852 Philena comes to visit her brother Levi, meets Charles & falls-in-love.
- 1859 Levi lost hotel due to business losses – Charles buys it and leases it to Levi to run.
- 1861 Levi declares bankruptcy & fades from the local area.
- 1869 Charles sells the Tower House.

Additional facts if time is available:

- Tower House complex included a dance hall, store, barns, carriage & blacksmith shop.
- CA Stage Company had a station here, stopping before going to Yreka and Weaverville.
- Water carried to hotel from springs in a lead pipe.
- Levi charges a toll on the bridge across Clear Creek, and replaces it in 1858. In 1865, Charles builds a covered bridge.

Camden House

Student sketching activity: Have students sit outside in the front yard or for shade sit on paved path looking at the Camden House.



Yesterday - circa 1930s

Explain that the original house was only 1 room, the front door and where the windows are on either side. **They can sketch what the original house looked like or sketch the house the way it looks today.**

The family grew and by 1867 two rooms and a 2nd floor was added plus a summer kitchen, servants and caretaker's quarters, storage for tools and wood. Later the 2nd floor was continued across the entire length of the house. Flower beds lined the walkway, ivy grew on the house.

- Charles began building his cottage in the garden, close to the Tower Hotel.
- Double wedding at the Camden House on November 11, 1852. Charles and Philena plus Levi and Mary Shuffleton. The two weddings were one of the first recorded weddings in Shasta County.
- For a wedding gift, Levi Gave Philena the land and water rights where her new home stood.
- Most miners at this time were single and there were few women in the gold fields.
- Charles and Philena had 3 children – Ada, Grace, Mary

Student sketching activity: Walk inside the house and sit down on the carpet in the living room. Sketch the inside of the house.

- Camden – mined gold, dug water ditches, built a toll road, operated a sawmill. Main business interest was in placer mining. Owned a total of 119 acres.
- Friends said: He did double the work of an average man his entire life
- Panned for gold every day for 18 years – averaging \$10.00 a day- He made \$80,000.00 in 18 years.
- Proud of his physical and mental ability. *“Hard and continuous work and prudent habits gave me what I have.”*

Additional facts if time is available:

- Luxury: one of Shasta County's first indoor toilets protrudes from the second story at the back of the house. Sewage drained down the pipe into Willow Creek.
- Croquet and archery court close to the house – family gathers for tea in the gardens.

Charles Camden: Lucky or Hard Working?

Permanence
(home & family)

Perseverance
(continue in spite of difficulties)

Patience
(no complaints)

Levi Tower's Gravesite

Walking from the Camden House out to Levi Tower's grave, note the old apple tree beside the carriage house. You will see another apple tree along the trail. Point out how the trunks have holes in them. These trees are approximately 150 years old. They are living and do produce apples – some had large apples. One measured 12 ½ inches in circumference.



Levi Tower with peaches

Student sketching activity: Stop and have the students sketch the apple tree beside the carriage house.

Watch your time at this point: Try to get your group out to the grave site quickly.
Student sketching activity: Have students sketch the tombstone - Tread Lightly!

Buried Under The Trees

Mason

- Levi Tower: Death - November 13, 1865 at age 45
- Died in San Francisco – went to see doctor about a lingering illness (typhoid fever).
- Masons bring Levi home and bury him beside Willow Creek a short distance from the Camden lily pond.
- Masons: they were the law enforcement during the gold rush, and also a charity to help widows, orphans, and new emigrants. Many had lost stock, had a broken down wagon, or ill family members. With cash reserves depleted, resources gone, the Free-Masonry in CA was a group to turn to. Meetings were held, and only in later years did the program become a fraternal organizational gathering.
- Levi's life never was a smooth one.
- Mary Shuffelton left Levi after one year of marriage (perhaps with a stagecoach driver) and never returned.
- Lost the hotel, all his other properties and money.

TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid Fever - Salmonella Typhi - lives only in humans and is carried in the blood-stream and intestinal tract. It is caused by eating food or drinking beverages that have been contaminated by a species of salmonella know as Salmonella Typhi or sewage that gets into the water supply. Currently 21.5 million cases each year. Antibiotics will cure.

Wintu - The People



Kate with Camden family

Information:

Before Charles Camden and Levi Tower made their homes and livelihood here, the Wintu and their ancestors resided in this territory for thousands of years. At the confluence of Willow, Crystal, Mill and Clear creeks were a number of Wintu settlements, including a village called *Soo 'yeh —choo 'pus*. Establishing their tribal communities along rivers and creeks, the Wintu lived a resourceful lifestyle harvesting the bounty of the forests and streams.

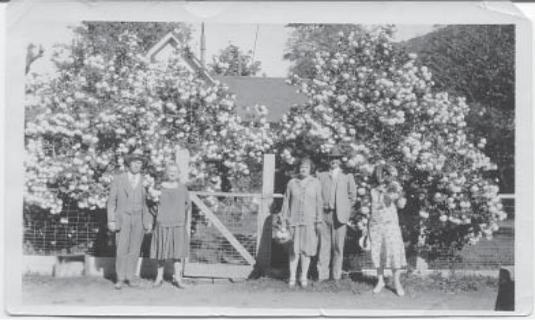
The arrival of gold rush miners and settlers in the late 1840s and early 1850s devastated the Wintu subsistence food supply. Warfare, disease and environmental degradation nearly destroyed native lifeways.

Student Activity: Identify and discuss what feelings Wintu Tribal members have regarding the California Gold Rush.

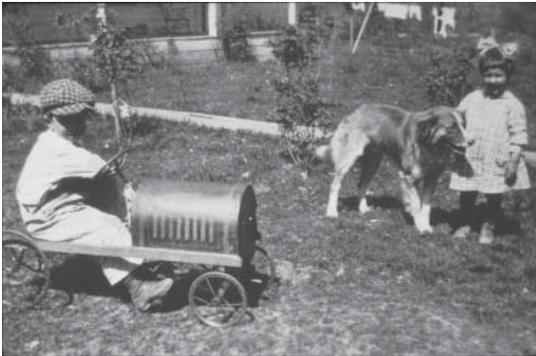
Additional Facts:

Charles and Philena brought Kate a local Indian girl into their family. She was 8 to 10 years older than Ada. She was treated like one of the family, participating in family events and celebrations, including a trip to Europe. When Charles was away, he would return home with gifts for all the girls. She may have been a playmate for the younger two children, but she was also described in one journal as a nursemaid. Kate died at the age of 27 in 1871 and is buried on a hill to the north of the Camden House.

Tenant House & Barn



The Pontí family (caretakers) posing in front of Tenant Farm House



Children playing in front of Tenant Farm House.



Barn

No planned activity here for students to do. Timing will be tight due to the gold panning and getting up to the El Dorado Mine.

Information only.

As the Camden family spent less and less time on the banks of Clear Creek, they realized the need for a caretaker. Not only did the buildings need maintenance, but the land needed care as well.

By 1913, and perhaps as early as 1909, this tenant farm house and barn had been built to accommodate a caretaker who, in exchange for his services, was given the right to work, and profit from the rich agricultural land.

Today, this house has been restored and serves as quarters for a National Park Service ranger to provide protection, much as the caretaker himself did.

Additional Information:

- By 1868, Camden's spend winters in Oakland so the girls can go to school.
- Education was extremely important to Charles – never had any formal education and felt this was a weakness he carried throughout his life.
- Philena died in 1893.
- Charles Camden died at the age of 95 in 1912.
- Daughter Grace Richards continues to live in the Camden House after the death of parents with her husband. Philena Hubbard (Charles only granddaughter) inherits the ranch when Aunt Grace dies. Lives in the house until 1940. House was sold to the National Park Service in 1969.

Finding Gold Leads to Sawmill

Student activity: Have students draw a line or a path from what came first all the way to what came last



2. Sawmill

For the teacher:

By the summer of 1852 Charles Camden decided to expand his mining operations beyond using a gold pan, there was a need to carry water. Lumber was needed to build flumes, sluices, and long toms. Charles thought it would

be more economical to build his own sawmill than to buy lumber in Shasta, twelve miles away.



4. Miners with long tom



1. Goldpanning

By February 1853 he had finished the mill and begun operations. Lumber he did not need for himself; he sold for \$50 per thousand feet. That same quantity today would cost approximately \$1000. By 1860 Camden had excavated a system of ditches that measure 5 – 6 miles in length – any extra water was sold to the miners. The sawmill operated only during the winter due to insufficient water flows in the summer.

The following is a great quote that shows the character of Charles Camden and his amazing strength and work ethic. Even though he only operated the sawmill part-time, he had frequent problems with mill hands. “Often they would go off on Saturday”, he wrote, “and not come back for several days; orders would come in for sizes not cut and it was imperative for me to take their places and cut the logs in the woods, haul them into the mill and saw them into lumber.”

Sold mill in 1860.

3. Water flume



El Dorado Mine

Information:

- As placer mining plays out, the need is to find gold deep in the ground.
- To find gold veins beneath the surface tunnels are dug, ore is brought out and crushed at the stamp mill, an example of hard rock mining.
- 1885, William Paul found gold here – the shaft he dug eventually reached 500 feet in length (which is 1 and 2/3 football fields)



Explain how the stamp mill works:

A large iron pestle, weighing over a ton was lifted by pulleys and then smashed the rock until it was powder. This stamp would pound about 90 times per minute, rattling the whole building and deafening the miners.



Stamp mill - crusher

Water was mixed with the powdered ore washing along the metal apron at the base of the mill. This metal sheet was treated with mercury which attracted the gold, pulling it out from the worthless rock.

At the end of the day, the mercury and gold were scraped up and retorted- heated to drive off the mercury and leave the gold. The poisonous mercury vapors were trapped in a tube, condensed, and used over again. The worthless rock dug out of the tunnel was dumped on the ground as tailings.

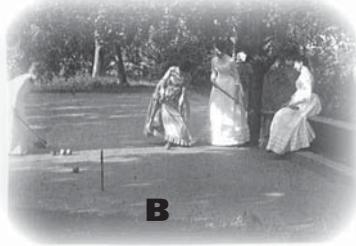
Student Activity: Notice the equipment in the sheds: hammers, drills, ore carts rails, timbers. Have students sketch some of the equipment you see in the sheds.

- Miners had to know how to use dynamite, needed expertise in geology, engineering, and hard-rock mining & milling.
- It was expensive to set up a mining company.
- Miners were paid \$2 to \$4 per day to work in the mines

Several thousand of dollars worth of gold was removed, but it was never a big operation. The mine was actively worked until 1967 when it was acquired by the National Park Service from the Bickford family.

A Living History of the Past

Match the title to the lettered picture



F El Dorado Mine

D Camden House

E Tower Hotel

H Tenant Farm House

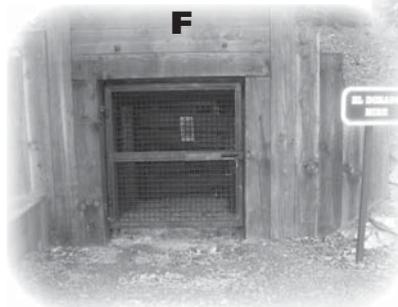
G Gold panning

I Girls sitting on Camden Sawmill

B Playing croquet

C Camden Family & Friends

A Stagecoach between Shasta & Weaverville

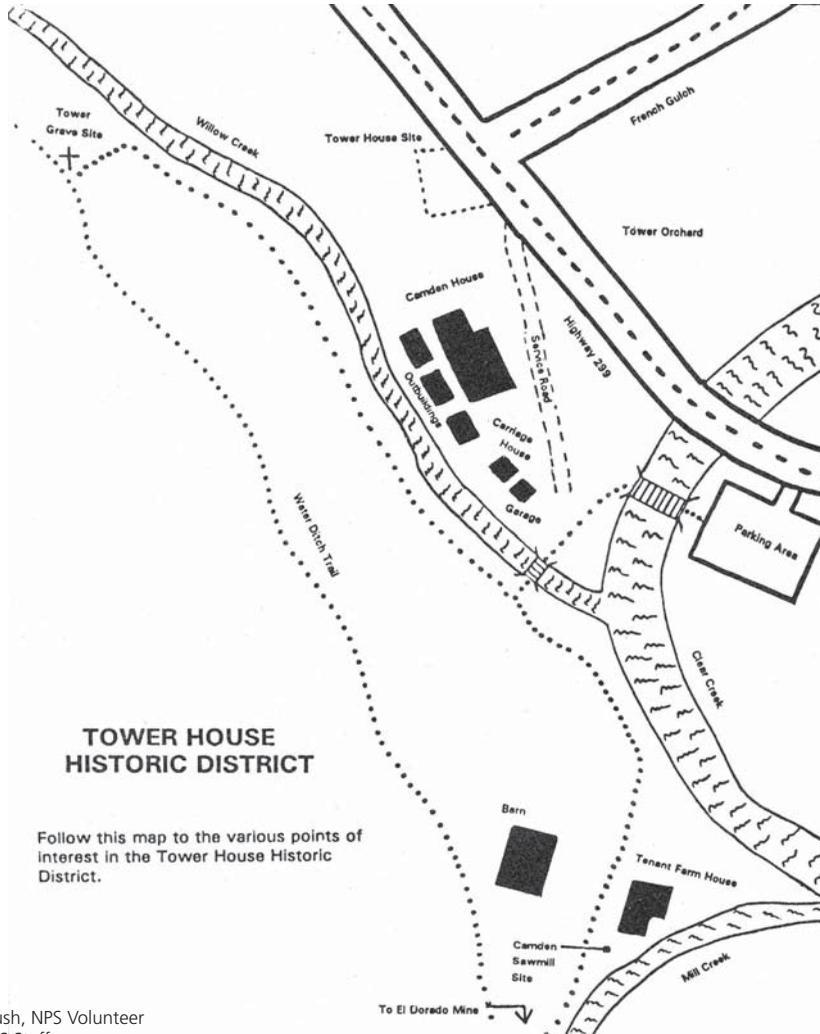




Whiskeytown National Recreation Area

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Thank you for spending a couple of hours with us today. Our mission as the National Park Service is to preserve and protect today for future generations the story of this special spot in Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.



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