



TOLLGATE

If Yogo City had little gold, it had more than its share of colorful characters. One 1879 arrival noticed that access to the camp was limited to a single winding road coming in from the north. A much easier trail came in from the cow town of Utica, eighteen miles to the east, but terminated abruptly three miles below Yogo City at the base of Yogo Gulch. The obstacle was a narrow cleft in a limestone cliff only a few feet wide. Dudley Hawkins, seeing a better way to make money than shoveling gravel from morning until night, blasted away the limestone to make room for the passage of a wagon. Feeling such civic improvement warranted remuneration, Hawkins erected a moveable tollgate - a trimmed pine trunk - across the new road. His symbol of authority as a toll collector was a Colt revolver. Collecting tolls of \$.50 per horse and rider and \$1.00 per wagon, Hawkins did much better than most Yogo City miners. The high ground above the tollgate became known as Tollgate Hill and the Tollgate cliffs became a local landmark.*

*(Stephen M. Voynick, *Yogo the Great American Sapphire*, Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1985 p. 12.)

YOGO CITY

Prospectors first discovered gold in Yogo Creek in 1866 but their stay was short. "We leave here afoot," an inscription engraved upon a tree, describes their encounter with local Indians.

Yogo City sprang up in 1879, a typical gold mining boom town. It boasted over 1000 miners, 100 cabins, two saloons, a store, and a boarding house. Claims lined Yogo Creek and tunnels burrowed into the hills to the north. But typical of many boom towns, the promise wore thin. Most miners had moved on by 1881 and Yogo City was busted.

Jake Hoover, a popular man in the mining district, was elected recorder, an important job that kept track of mining claims. For a short while, Yogo town was referred to as Hoover City. Another colorful character was Millie Ringgold, an ex-slave who lived in Yogo City for the last 27 years of her life. She established a restaurant, saloon and a small hotel.

