

# Noted Pioneer Woman of Alpine County Buried in Woodfords

Funeral services were held today in Woodfords for Mrs. Mary Merrill, a resident of Woodfords 60 years and virtually a human landmark of Alpine County.

Mrs. Merrill died Sunday at the home of her son, Grant Merrill, in Mojave, where she had gone for Christmas holidays. She also is survived by a daughter Mrs. Bernice Danberg, chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Alpine County.

Mrs. Merrill was one of three white children born in the Rogue River Stockade in Oregon Territory during the Indian uprising of the late "50s." Following tentative peace it was thought best for the families that had helped in the suppression to leave the territory.

## HALTED BY SNOW

The pioneer woman's parents and others decided to try to reach the Yuba River in California by way of the settlements of Peter Lassen and Isaac Roop. However, on reaching Crystal Peak on the Truckee River near the present California-Nevada line, progress was halted by snow on the Heness Pass.

Winter shelter was constructed from the adjacent forest and the party domiciled for the long winter months. Men made trips over snow to the west for supplies and information. Before spring thaws had opened, the word trickled in of the discovery of gold in Gold Canyon.

## IN LEGISLATURE

This turn in events prompted Mrs. Merrill's father, Felix O'Neel, to cast his lot with the Nevada

Territory and taking part in draft of the proposed Constitution. He served several years in the State Legislature of Nevada and was one of the rediscoverers of the famous Reese River Mines, where he laid out the town of Austin.

Later the family moved to Alpine County where Mrs. Merrill married W. P. Merrill, merchant and civic leader, in the '80s. During her nearly 60 years residence in Woodfords Mrs. Merrill became noted for her pioneer hospitality and a trip to Alpine County was not considered complete without a visit to Mrs. Merrill.

Not only was Mrs. Merrill noted for her hospitality but she also became noted as an Angel of Mercy of the snows. She became an expert on skis and it was not long before she was reaching the sick and distressed on skis. She was on hand to lend aid at the birth of many citizens of the county.

## County Firemen Seat New Set of Officers

ANTIOCH, Dec. 29. — Contra Costa firemen assembled here last night to attend a demonstration showing the latest methods of fire-fighting, and to install new officers of the County Firemen's Association.

Assistant Fire Chief Charles Sweeney, president of the group and host at last night's session, handed over his symbol of office to the new president, William Klaus, assistant chief of the Concord department.