

John Fullen

John Fullen was born in 1816. Like Andrew Kennedy, he was a native to Ireland. He came over to America in 1853. Fullen was one of the owners in the Kennedy Mine and a partner in the Kennedy Mine and Milling Company as well. He let Andrew dig the first shovel fulls and then he let his crew finish the rest. He was also an owner of the Oneida Mine. He named the Kennedy in favor of Andrew because he was the one to "christianize" the mine. Fullen had no idea that this mine would become one of the richest mines in the world. In all, it produced about seven million. In 1856 Fullen, Kennedy, James Berrigan and James Fleming started the Kennedy mining claim on "Humbug Hill." In 1859 Fullen bought the Oneida Mine from William Hicks with Fleming and Berrigan. In 1866 it became a law that you had to file your mining claims with the state. The Kennedy Mining and Milling Company was late of hearing this so they filed their mining claim for the Kennedy just several days after the law was passed.

Fullen had a ranch up above New York Ranch road. He was married to Catherine Fullen and had several children. James Fullen was his eldest. His other son lives in the East. He had two daughters Annie and Elizabeth. Elizabeth married N. Radovich and Annie, having known to have never been married, had a clerical position at the Vallejo Navy Yard.

John had two brothers as well. George Fullen and James Fullen. George was divorced and had two sons. His first was John Henry Fullen and he was born in Massachusetts in 1858. He died on October 5, 1910. He had a son W.T. Fullen who married Lina Fullen in 1884. According to the marriage deeds, W.T. Fullen's mother was Della Fullen so it is assumed that John H. Fullen was married to Della. No record of this could be found. She was born in 1862 and died, aged 90 years, on June 7, 1953. No records could be found on the other brother James.

On November 22, 1869 Fullen, Fleming, and Berrigan sold the Kennedy Mine, all three parcels, over to Michael Geagan and others for one dollar. This is said to be because they were having financial difficulty at the time and had no other choice.

After selling the Kennedy, Fullen and others kept the Kennedy Mining and Milling Co. alive. With the death of Andrew Kennedy in 1874, Fullen, Berrigan, and Fleming, on December 22, 1886, filed a Certificate of Incorporation and sold shares. Altogether there were five trustees and sixteen shareholders.

On October 13, 1895 John Fullen died, aged 79 years and 7 months. His obituary was found in the Amador Ledger Dispatch. "John Fullen, who died last week and was buried by the Masolic fraternity, was a pioneer resident of Amador County, having come here in 1853. Mr. Fullen was one of the progressive citizens of early days in Amador and, in fact, was the first man to put out a peach orchard and raise peaches here. He was also, in early times, interested in mining, being one of the original owners in the Oneida and Kennedy properties. Of late years Mr. Fullen has made his home above New York Ranch on a piece of property which he sold to the U.S. Government for a home for native Indians, about six months ago. He was still living there at the time of his death."

What is interesting about this is that Fullen selling that property to the Indians probably had something to do with the Jackson Indian Bingo and Casino existing today. This fascinating trademark of Jackson is located right on New York Ranch road. Today, it is one of, if not the biggest, tourist attractions in Amador County. To think that it was all started by one of the owners of the richest mines in the world.

“Mr. Fullen commenced to fail but a short time after his death and Dr. Schacht was called and informed his relatives that he had better settle up his unfinished business and prepare for the worst as the disease was certain, in a short time, to result in death.

There survives Mr. Fullen, besides a brother who lives at the Onieda mine, two sons, two daughters, and a widow.”

John Fullen was truly an extraordinary man. He helped create one of the largest and deepest mines in America. He had a family who cared and loved him. He had friends and a business that, if it and he had still been around, would be thriving right now. He was indeed one of the Kennedy mine notables during the 1800s.