

1-2-1954

## Isaiah's 'Jimmie The Greek' Is Sought in Canyon Slaying Case

An aged Isaiah cabin dweller known only as "Jimmie the Greek" was sought for questioning today by the Butte county sheriff's office as investigation of the death of one Isaiah recluse and the disappearance of another continued.

"Jimmie the Greek" locked his cabin and departed from Isaiah around the time Ernest Bauman dropped from sight. The "Greek", thought to be around 60, told friends he was going to San Francisco for a visit. He is said to have been Bauman's closest friend.

Still held at the county jail for investigation of murder was Martin Tunny, the escaped mental patient who is suspected of being the "phantom sniper" who fatally wounded John C. Rohrer last Saturday near Isaiah.

### Seek New Evidence

Tunny was found living in the missing Bauman's cabin. He had in his possession at the time of his arrest two .22 rifles identified as property of Bauman, which are being held as possible murder weapons. The bullet that wounded Rohrer passed through his mouth and was not recovered, making identification of the murder gun difficult.

Two search parties headed by Undersheriff Bert Lucas and Capt. Fred Preston combed the murder scene again New Year's Eve for new evidence.

Two heavy rifles that Bauman had reported stolen from his cabin a month ago were discovered hidden in and near a vacant cabin not far from the missing man's home.

Tunny, meanwhile, remained firm in his story that he knows nothing of Rohrer's death or Bauman's disappearance.

### Mysterious Hunter

Tunny claims he found a mysterious hunter living in Bauman's cabin, and that the hunter invited him to remain. He claims he was given Bauman's keys and personal possessions by the hunter.

The suspect was committed to Napa State hospital from Isaiah two years ago after he had threatened other members of the isolated community and fishermen who chanced into the Feather River Canyon's fastness.

He fled the institution nearly a year ago, and has told deputies he made his way back to Isaiah some three weeks ago.

Sheriff's officers developed a new theory on Rohrer's shooting following the New Year's Eve search of the canyon area.

### New Theory

The blood trail from the point where Rohrer was picked up by a Western Pacific freight train leads back nearly a mile to the head of a trail down to Bauman's cabin. Other stains were found nearer the cabin.

With this evidence, the sheriff's office is considering the possibility that Rohrer actually was shot at or close to Bauman's cabin, and not on the railroad right of way as he told deputies in a note written before his death at the county hospital.

Preston cited the possibility that Rohrer, knowing Bauman had not been seen for several days, approached the missing man's cabin to investigate, and was wounded then.

1-14-1954

# Body Found In River May Be That Of Missing Prospector

The body of a man answering the general description of Ernest Bauman, the missing Isaiah prospector, was found lodged on rocks in the Feather River 1½ miles above Hansel's shortly after noon today.

The body had been in the water at least 30 days, Capt. A. L. Christensen, chief deputy coroner, estimated.

Ravages of the long exposure prevented immediate identification and sheriff's officers brought the body into Oroville for closer examination.

Bauman, believed to have been in his sixties, was found to be missing from his Feather River Canyon haunts when a sheriff's posse went into isolated Isaiah Dec. 27 to investigate the ambush slaying of John Z. Rober, another canyon recluse. Martin Tunney, an escaped mental patient was discovered living in Bauman's cabin.

The body was found on the west

bank of the river today by Carl Olson, who lives in a cabin nearby. Olson said it was not there a few days ago.

The dead man's only clothing was a white undershirt and a denim outer shirt both pulled up about his shoulders, brown low-cut shoes, and light rayon socks.

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# Oroville Mercury

1-15-1954

## Autopsy Shows Man Found In River Was Victim Of Assault

Sheriff Larry Gillick today is attempting to identify the body of a man — apparently the victim of foul play — that was found in the Feather River, about six and one-half miles east of Oroville shortly after noon yesterday.

Whether it is the body of Ernest Bauman, missing Isaiah prospector, could not be ascertained immediately, Gillick said, and added that the investigation is continuing with the aid of the Criminal Investigation and Identification Bureau in Sacramento. It is hoped that experts in the CII will be able to produce fingerprints that may lead to positive identification of the corpse.

There seems to be little doubt that the man was a victim of a severe beating, Gillick said today. After the body was removed from the river, Dr. K. J. Poppin, Chico pathologist, conducted an autopsy at the Hamilton and Riley Funeral Chapel. During his examination the doctor found that the man had suffered a severe bruise on the upper right side of the face, a broken nose, a severe bruise on the back of the head and a brain concussion.

### May Be Murder

Because of the condition of the body — it had apparently been in the water for 30 to 60 days — it was not possible to immediately determine whether death was due to drowning. However, the doctor reported that the bruises could only have been received before the man went into the river and that fact indicates that he may have been murdered.

According to Gillick, the man appears to have been between 35 and 45 years of age, was in good physical condition, had all of his teeth and had black hair. In view of that description, it is hardly likely that it could be the body of Bauman who was a man of about 60. However, pending a more positive identification, Gillick has not discounted the possibility that it could be the body of the old prospector who has been missing for over six weeks.

Bauman's disappearance first came to light on December 26 when John Z. Rohrer, 61-year-old Isaiah prospector was shot from ambush near Bauman's cabin. Rohrer died the next day in the Butte county hospital and officers who investigated the shooting found Martin Tunny, 58, an escapee from Napa state mental hospital, living in Bauman's cabin.

### Need Identification

Tunny was held for two weeks in the Butte county jail and questioned at length about the shooting and about Bauman's disappearance, but divulged no information that would help solve the mystery.

Should the body found in the river yesterday turn out to be that of Bauman, it would prove Gillick's theory that Bauman was slain, and his body concealed.

According to the sheriff, the ultimate solution to the mystery must await positive identification of the body that is now being held at the funeral chapel pending burial arrangements.

1-16-1954

## Body In River Sheriff Fears New Not Identified Killing, Seeks Clues

The body found in the Feather River above Oroville Thursday was not that of Ernest Bauman, missing Isaiah prospector, an examination of fingerprints and description at the Criminal Investigation and Identification Bureau showed yesterday.

According to Sheriff Larry Gillick, his office is satisfied the body is not that of Bauman, who disappeared at least six weeks ago. The physical description of the body indicates that the man was much younger than Bauman and did not resemble him.

However, a new development that may lead to the ultimate solution of the case has come to light, according to Gillick. A check of reports on missing persons in the sheriff's office files, revealed that, early in the morning of last November 13, a man reported to Frank King, yardmaster of the Western Pacific Railroad, that a transient named Roy Mann, "fell out of a box car about seven miles from Oroville." King, in reporting the incident to the sheriff's office, said that he had sent a railroad worker along the tracks in the area on a speeder but could find no one lying injured by the tracks. However, it later developed that Mann had been engaged in a fight in the box car with two other transients and King's informant was also in the car at the time.

### Evidence Found

Deputy Sheriff Walter Anderson searched along the tracks the next day and found a white cap and a pair of blood-stained shorts. However, a thorough search of the area failed to turn up an injured man and a further check of hospitals in the Oroville area as well as in the area as far south as Stockton revealed no information that an injured man had appeared for treatment. At the time it was assumed that, if a man had fallen from a box car, he apparently was able to leave the scene.

The finding of the body on Thursday, however gives rise to the assumption that it may be that of Mann. An examination of the body revealed that the man was a victim of an assault and had sustained head injuries that, according to the examining physician, could have been fatal. Those injuries, the doctor reported, were received before the victim went into the water and could have been caused in a fight.

### File Checked

Gillick has sent an officer to Sacramento to check the CII files there in an effort to locate some record on Mann. Captain Ray Head, chief of the identification bureau in the local sheriff's office, reported today that CII officers had been able to get partial prints from two fingers of the dead man's right hand. Now, the officers must engage in the painstaking task of checking through several thousand fingerprint classification cards on file in Sacramento. If that does not prove successful, the prints will be sent to the FBI, in Washington, D. C., for a further check of national files.

Judging by the clothing that was found on the body and the fact that the man was in good physical condition, officers assume that the dead man was not an ordinary transient. The autopsy showed that he had eaten a good meal less than two hours before he met death. He also had all of his teeth in good condition and gave evidence of having been a man in the prime of his life. In view of those facts, Gillick expressed the opinion today that the man may have been carrying a substantial amount of money and could have been murdered for it.

### Seek Witness

The key to the case, of course, is the missing witness to the fight in the box car who first reported it to railroad officials. He disappeared following his report to King but left his name, and officers are attempting to locate him today. It is believed that he was a traveling companion of the dead man and may possibly be able to supply information that will lead to the identity of the body and of the other men who were alleged to be in the box car when the fight reportedly occurred.

1-18-1954

## 'Jimmy The Greek' Found In SF By Probers Of Ambushh Slaying

James Kanaris, known as "Jimmy the Greek" to the other residents of the Feather River Canyon near Isaiah, who was the object of a search by the Butte county sheriff's office in the hope that he could throw some light on the mysterious shooting of John Z. Rohrer last December 26, has been located alive and well in San Francisco, according to Sheriff Larry Gillick.

Kanaris a resident of the canyon for the past eight years, is known as the closest friend of Ernest Bauman, an aged prospect-

or who has been missing from his cabin at Isaiah for over six weeks.

Bauman was discovered missing when officers went into the canyon on the day following the bushwhack shooting of Rohrer. The officers found Martin Tunny, escapee from Napa mental hospital, living in Bauman's cabin. He told them that he had been there only a few days and that permission to stay in the cabin was given him by an unidentified hunter.

However, Kanaris, when questioned Saturday by Captain A. L. Christensen, gave a different story. He told Christensen that Tunny was definitely in the canyon for at least six weeks prior to the shooting and he also said that he was aware that Tunny and Bauman were enemies. Said Kanaris, "Tunny was the last man in the world that Bauman would have allowed in his cabin."

Kanaris also expressed the opinion that Bauman has been murdered and his body concealed in the canyon. That is the same opinion that the investigating officers have had since the day he was first discovered to be missing.

Tunny was held for two weeks in the Butte county jail and questioned thoroughly about the case. However, officers were unable to get any information from him and he was returned to the mental hospital.

Meanwhile, the search for Bauman, or his body is continuing and, according to Gillick, the case is stalled until the missing man is found.

# Bullet-Riddled Body Of Old Isalah Prospector Found Buried In Canyon

Oroville  
Mercury  
1-20-1954  
page 1 of 2

The bullet-riddled body of Ernest C. Bauman, aged Isalah prospector who had been missing for at least six weeks, was found yesterday shortly after 2:15 p.m. by two Western Pacific Railroad workers.

A victim of one of Butte county's most vicious murders in many years, Bauman had been buried in the bed of Chino Creek that flows within 15 feet of his mine deep in the Feather River canyon. The storm of last weekend turned

the mountain stream into a torrent and the rushing waters uncovered the body. The corpse was found by John P. Seaman, section foreman of Berry Creek, and Juan Navarro, a section worker.

A post mortem examination of the body revealed five bullet holes caused by three bullets. One shot had penetrated the face, emerged through the chin and then re-entered the chest. A second shot had entered high in the left shoulder

and had ranged downward, breaking the left arm, while a third bullet had gone into the upper left chest at an angle that sent it through the heart. Two of the bullets were recovered last night and proved to be from a .38-caliber revolver. An attempt was being made today to recover the third bullet.

## To Return Suspect

Following the recovery of the body, District Attorney Raymond A. Leonard announced that Martin Tunny, the chief suspect in the case, will be returned to Oroville from Napa mental hospital and questioned further by local authorities. There is a possibility that a charge of first degree murder will be filed against Tunny, Leonard said, since Tunny had a .38-caliber revolver in his possession when he was arrested on Dec. 27, following the ambush slaying of John Z. Rohrer in the vicinity of Bauman's cabin.

Rohrer, a 61-year-old prospector, was shot through the face on Saturday, December 26. He managed to work his way out of the canyon and up to the railroad tracks where he flagged a freight train and was brought into Oroville where he died the next day in the Butte county hospital.

Captains A.L. Christensen and Fred Preston, of the Butte county sheriff's office, went into the canyon and there they found Tunny living in Bauman's cabin. It developed that Tunny had escaped from the mental hospital on Feb. 23, 1953. He had been committed to the hospital in April, 1952, after he had fired a 22-caliber rifle at several people in the area between French Creek and Isalah and had later appeared at a PG&E powerhouse where employees disarmed him.

## Had Revolver

Tunny claimed that he was in Bauman's cabin at the invitation of an unidentified hunter who had told him he could stay there and watch the place. In the cabin were found all the Bauman's personal possessions including two 22-caliber rifles. When asked where Bauman was, Tunny told the officers that he was at his mine. As the two officers proceeded down the mountain trail, Christensen happened to look back and there observed Tunny standing outside the cabin with a revolver in his hand.

The officers dodged into the brush and worked their way back to the cabin but Tunny had disposed of the gun by the time they got to him. However, under questioning by Preston and Christensen, he showed them where he had thrown the gun and it was recovered. It turned out to be a .38-caliber revolver, fully loaded.

It was then that Tunny was placed under arrest and handcuffed while the two officers searched



**UP FROM THE GRAVE**—The body of Ernest C. Bauman, Isalah prospector, is shown being hauled out of the Feather River canyon yesterday. At the right is Captain A. L. Christensen, chief deputy county coroner, giving a hand to Butte county sheriff Larry Gillick. Bauman's shallow grave in the bed of Chino Creek was uncovered over the weekend when the creek was turned into a torrent by heavy rains. The murdered man had been shot three times, the bullets inflicting five wounds in his body. A crew of 13 men took turns in hauling the body up the steep mountain trail to the Western Pacific railroad tracks where he was hauled 9 miles by speeder to the Berry Creek station where the hearse from Hamilton and Riley Funeral Chapel waited. — (Mercury Photo.)

# Oroville Mercury

1-20-1954

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the area for Bauman. His body was not found then nor did several subsequent searches bear fruit until the waters of Chino Creek uncovered the dead man yesterday. Meanwhile, Tunny had been held at the Butte county jail where a check of his record revealed that he was an escapee from the mental hospital.

## Were Looking for Body

He was questioned intensively for almost two weeks both on the shooting of Rohrer and the disappearance of Bauman, but officers were unable to get any information that would solve the case. He was then returned to the Napa hospital where he has been under constant guard.

The two railroad employes had gone into the canyon, near the mine, to look for the body as they had done on several occasions in the past few weeks. The spot where the body was found had been gone over many times by various seaching parties, but the grave had been cleverly hidden under water that had backed up over it when the creek was dammed. When found yesterday, the body was lying on its face with the upper portion exposed and the legs still covered by several heavy

rocks. It was in a hole about eight feet below the level of the mine where the waters of the creek tumble off a shelf of rocks before flowing on into the Feather River about 75 yards away.

Sheriff Larry Gillick, who took a crew of trusties into the canyon to recover the body, surmised that Bauman had been shot while standing near the mine and his body then tumbled into the creek bed where it was buried.

The bullets that were recovered from the body last night were rushed to Sacramento this morning, along with the revolver, for examination by ballistics experts from the Criminal Investigation and Identification Bureau. Gillick and Leonard were awaiting a report from the bureau and the return of Tunny before proceeding further with the investigation.

Meanwhile, Bauman's body is being held at the Hamilton and Riley Funderal Chapel pending funeral arrangements.

# Tunny Being Returned Here

Oroville Mercury  
1-24-1954

Martin Tunny, 53, suspect in the slayings of John Z. Rohrer and Ernest C. Bauman, aged Isaiah prospectors, was being returned to Oroville today from Napa mental hospital for questioning by Sheriff Larry Gillick.

According to Gillick, murder charges will probably be filed against Tunny early next week by District Attorney Raymond A. Leonard.

Tunny has been the prime suspect in the case since last Dec. 27 when he was found living in Bauman's cabin following the ambush shooting of Rohrer. Rohrer had been picked up on the Western Pacific railroad tracks near Isaiah by a train crew when he was found to be suffering from a bullet wound through the face. He died the following day in the Butte county hospital and it was during the investigation of the shooting that Bauman was found to have disappeared.

Bauman's body was found last Tuesday by two railroad employes who were searching the area near his mine. He had been shot three times with a 38-caliber revolver and his body had been buried in the bed of Chino Creek until the heavy rains of last weekend raised the water to such an extent that the body was exposed.

Tunny was being returned from the hospital by Constable Jack Tetreau, of Chico who left for Napa early today. Tunny had escaped from the hospital on Feb. 23, 1953, after having been committed from Oroville in April, 1952. Following his questioning in the shooting of Rohrer and the disappearance of Bauman, he was returned to the hospital where he has been held under guard.

When he arrives in Oroville, he will be booked for investigation of homicide pending the filing of formal murder charges.



# Suspect Is Charged With Murder In Slaying Of Isaiah Prospector



**MARTIN TUNNY**  
... charged with murder

Murder charges were filed today against Martin Tunny, 56, formally accusing the Napa hospital mental patient of shooting to death Ernest C. Bauman, 60, aged Isaiah prospector known as the "Mad Russian" to the other denizens of the Feather River Canyon.

At the same time District Attorney Raymond A. Leonard announced that he will ask for a special hearing in Superior Court to determine whether Tunny is sane enough to stand trial.

Tunny will be charged with only the death of Bauman and will not be formally accused of the fatal shooting of John Z. Rohrer, 61, another prospector, who was shot from ambush on Dec. 26 and died on Dec. 27. It was while officers were investigating the shooting of Rohrer near Isaiah that Tunny was found living in Bauman's cabin.

Tunny disclaimed any knowledge of Bauman's whereabouts but was arrested when officers caught him trying to throw away a 38-caliber revolver. Bauman's body was found last Tuesday with five bullet wounds in it caused by three shots from the same type of gun. Ballistics experts are now attempting to determine whether the bullets in Bauman's body came from the gun that was found in Tunny's possession.

#### Back to Napa

Tunny was originally held in the Butte county jail for several days following the shooting of Rohrer but was later returned to Napa hospital from where he had escaped in February of 1953. When

Bauman's body was found last week, Tunny was returned to Oroville through a court order.

The suspect was questioned for 17 hours straight from 10 a.m. Saturday to 3 a.m. Sunday, but refused to admit that he knows anything about either killing. Although the interrogating officers found several flaws in his story, he steadfastly maintained his innocence. At one point he asked to see a priest and Father Michael Cleary, of St. Thomas Catholic Church was called. However, following his conversation with the priest he continue to deny all knowledge of the murders.

During the questioning he failed to recognize Captain A. L. Christensen, who, along with Captain Fred Preston, of the Butte county sheriff's office, arrested him on Dec. 27 and also refused to identify the .38-caliber revolver that he had in his possession when he was taken into custody. The gun that he was shown was the same one that he attempted to throw away on the day of his arrest.

### **Doesn't Recognize Corpse**

He was taken to view Bauman's body but said, "That isn't Bauman. That looks like an Indian". When asked if he was insane he said, "No, I'm not. Do people ask you if you're crazy?" Officers asked him then why he had been sent to Napa and he replied, "I don't know".

The evidence against Tunny is circumstantial, judging by the evidence now at hand. The murder charge is based on the fact that the accused man was found living in Bauman's cabin where he had taken over Bauman's possessions, and the fact that he was found in possession of the revolver that is believed to have been used in the murder. There is also the fact that he was known to have hated Bauman and has expressed that hatred at times during his questioning.

### **Time Element**

Although Tunny maintains that he came back to the canyon only a few days before the shooting of Rohrer, Sheriff Larry Gillick says that he has witnesses who will prove that Tunny was there for at least several weeks prior to that time. One of those witnesses is James Kanaris, known as "Jimmy the Greek", who was recently located in San Francisco. Kanaris reported to the sheriff that Tunny stopped at his cabin for food on Nov. 14 and again a few days later. However, Tunny, when questioned about that angle, said, "He's crazy. He's been taking too many woofy pills", apparently suggesting that Kanaris is a dope addict.

The date for a sanity hearing for Tunny was expected to be set later today. If he is proved sane enough to stand trial, Leonard said he will try him for first-degree murder.

1-26-1954

## **Postpone Arraignment Of Murder Suspect**

The arraignment of Martin Tunny, charged with the murder of Ernest C. Bauman, 60-year-old prospector, was continued one week yesterday in Oroville District court, to allow the defendant time in which to secure the services of an attorney.

Tunny told Judge William M. Savage, "I have money to employ an attorney."

Tunny is accused of shooting Bauman and then taking possession of his cabin in the Isaiah area. He was not charged with the murder of John Z. Rohrer, another prospector who was fatally shot from ambush on December 26, 1953, although investigating officers have tried to prove that he is also responsible for that crime.

2-1-1954

# Tunny Will Face Sanity Hearing

Martin Tunny, 58, charged with the murder of Ernest C. Bauman, 60-year-old Isaiah prospector, will apparently face a sanity hearing before any further court action on the charges.

At his arraignment today, Tunny asked for two weeks in which to secure the services of an attorney, but Judge William M. Savage, taking note of the fact that an affidavit has been filed by Dist. Att. Raymond A. Leonard asking for a sanity hearing for Tunny, remanded all further hearings on the charges to Superior court. That would indicate that Tunny will be examined to determine his mental condition before facing trial on the murder charge.

Should he be adjudged criminally insane during the sanity hearing, he will probably be sent to a mental institution without a hearing on the homicide complaint. However, should doctors find him not criminally insane, and able to distinguish between right and wrong, he will then face a preliminary hearing on the murder charge.

## Escaped From Napa

Tunny was committed to Napa mental hospital in April, 1952, but escaped on Feb. 23, 1953. He was not seen again until he was found living in Bauman's cabin following the shooting of John Z. Rohrer, 61, of Isaiah, on December 26, 1953. Bauman was found to be missing at that time and his bullet-pierced body was later found buried near the cabin.

Tunny was formally charged with Bauman's murder when it was found that the old prospector had been killed with a .38-caliber revolver of the same type that was found in Tunny's possession when he was first arrested. Ballistics experts are checking the gun and the bullets that were taken from Bauman's body.

No date has been set for a sanity hearing for Tunny but it is expected that it will be held within the next few days.

2-5-1954

## **ISAIAH GAINS VOTES DESPITE MURDERS**

Isolated Isiah precinct in the Feather River Canyon—traditionally the last voting place to report in Butte County elections — surprised the court house today by returning its six ballots well ahead of several other mountain precincts.

Election officials were relieved also to learn the recent series of killings and arrests at Isiah has not put the precinct out of business. In fact, Isiah polled one more vote this election than it did at the 1952 general election.

The six ballots were divided 3-3 for both sides.

# To Start Road To Poe Project

Oroville Mercury  
2-10-1954

The construction of access roads into the proposed site of the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Poe hydroelectric project on the Feather River will begin on Monday, it was reported here today.

PG&E officials continue to emphasize, however, that the actual start of the \$40,000,000 project probably will await the receipt of permits for one or more of the other three projects slated for construction.

The initial work will be done by PG&E crews who will construct the roads and prepare camp sights for the several hundred workmen who will be employed in the canyon when the main projects begin. The company has stated that the work will begin this year and are desirous of getting one or more of the other permits for similar projects in order to keep operating costs at a minimum.

The other three projects in question are at Belden, Butt Valley and Caribou with the entire series of projects expected to cost in the neighborhood of \$160,000,000.

2-16-1954

## Controlled Burning Program Planned for Oregon City Area

OROVILLE—More than 40 persons met in the Oregon City Community Hall, eight miles north of here, last week, to discuss brush control.

Charles Kast, a rancher in the area, is interested in reburning some brush land from which the brush was removed by fire three years ago. And, as a result of the discussion on this particular burn, another group north of Oregon City laid tentative plans to burn some 4,000 acres not previously under a brush control program. This group, headed by Harry Phillips and Lem Castle, has made arrangements with the division of forestry in locating effective fire guards.

Those interested, with Kast, in reburning in order to more effectively control the brush are Charlie Johnson, Lyman Moak, Elmer Forbes and H. S. Neher.

The names of the ranchers lined up with Phillips and Castle have not yet been obtained. The state division of forestry personnel present at the meeting who assisted in the planning were Henry Gaub and Dave Hall, associate rangers, and Assistant Ranger Jack Scholey.

John Hawkins, of the ASC office, also was present to discuss the part his office might play in paying part of the costs involved in the burn.

A tentative date of some time

during the second week of August was decided upon. The division of forestry will arrange to have a crew present on the day of the burn to make sure the fire does not escape. The next step will be for the ranchers to get together with Ranger Gaub and decide where the fire guards should be placed. Then the ranchers will proceed to develop the fire guard after which Gaub will issue a permit, providing the guards are satisfactory.

Eldon F. Azevedo, farm advisor, emphasized all ranchers involved in the burn should carry some liability insurance.

In explaining the program, Azevedo said the ranchers plan to study the results following the fire to determine what procedures they should follow to get the maximum economic return.

Other ranchers in the foothill areas of Butte County, who own brush land, can follow the same procedure as these ranchers, according to Azevedo. In other words, he continued, a rancher interested should try to get his neighbors interested so they can burn as many acres of brush as possible. Large areas generally are much cheaper to burn because of the smaller amount of fire guard necessary per acre, he emphasized.

Ranchers interested in organizing a burn should contact the Agriculture Extension Service, Post Office Building, Oroville, or the State Division of Forestry, Route 3, Oroville.

In concluding Azevedo declared, "Land covered by heavy brush produces practically no livestock feed, while by spending 26 cents to a dollar per acre the brush may be removed by fire."



PLAN 4,000-ACRE BURN—Rancher Lem Castle (left) pours over a map with Associate Ranger Dave Hall in preparation for a controlled burn this fall of some 4,000 acres of brush land in the Oregon City area. Ranchers plan to study the effects of this burn on the future economic return of the land. See story below. (Eldon F. Azevedo Photo).

2-16-1954

## Four Booked in Probe of Pulga Store Burglary

OROVILLE—Four men were booked in Butte County Jail yesterday for investigation of a Sunday morning burglary at the Pulga Store.

They are James C. Gramps, 49; Harvey E. Gramps, 36; and Albert F. Gramps, 18, all of Pulga, and Bryan A. Beavers, 53, of Yankee Hill.

Taken in the 7 a. m. burglary were 18 bottles of wine and five cartons of cigaretts. Nine bottles of wine were recovered by sheriff's deputies, while the other nine were consumed. Also recovered was one carton of cigaretts.

Joe King, owner of the store, reported, the burglary to the sheriff's office.



# Oroville Mercury

2-27-1954

## Tunny Tells Court He Has Been Held Incommunicado In Butte County Jail

Martin Tunny, 58, charged yesterday in Superior court that he has been held incommunicado in the Butte county jail, since being arrested on a charge of murder last Jan. 24.

Tunny is charged specifically with the murder of Ernest C. Bauman, 61, known to the citizens of the Feather River Canyon as "The Mad Russian". Bauman's bullet-pierced body was found on Jan. 19, buried in a creek bed within 15 feet of his mine near Isaiah.

Previously Tunny had been taken into custody on Dec. 27, after John Z. Rohrer, 61, had been shot from ambush near the same spot. Rohrer managed to work his way to the Western Pacific railroad tracks where a freight train crew picked him up and brought him to Oroville.

He died the next day and, when officers went to Isaiah to investigate the shooting, they found Tunny living in Bauman's cabin. Bauman had disappeared and Tunny disclaimed all knowledge of his whereabouts.

Officers discovered that Tunny was an escapee from Napa state mental hospital and he was returned there. However, when Bauman's body was found, he was returned to Oroville and formally charged with murder.

Yesterday's hearing, before Judge Francis Good, was a continuation of Tunny's arraignment that had been postponed twice to allow him to obtain the services of an attorney. When his case was called, Tunny approached the bench and, in answer to the judge's question as to whether he had obtained a lawyer, he replied that he had been refused the right to make any phone calls.

At that point, Tunny attempted to explain the law to Judge Good and said, "I'm allowed communications. The lower court said it".

Asked the judge: "Have you ever told the officers that you wanted to talk to an attorney?" To which Tunny replied, "I have to communicate with my friends first".

Judge Good then asked: "Who are these friends and I'll order the sheriff to contact them for you?"

Tunny replied: "I'll do the phoning myself, Judge."

District Attorney Raymond A. Leonard then urged the court to appoint an attorney to represent Tunny in order that the case might be expedited and added that Tunny would have the right to change his counsel after he had conferred with the court-appointed lawyer.

Judge Good then asked Tunny how much time he thought he would need to contact his friends and get an attorney and the defendant asked for a month. The judge refused that request saying: "Mr. Tunny, it will do neither you nor the people of California any good for this case to drag on for another month. I will appoint legal counsel to confer with you and to investigate your charge that you have been refused the right to seek counsel. I will continue this case for one week to March 5." Judge Good then appointed Norris M. Goodwin as Tunny's lawyer.

In another case on yesterday's criminal calendar Leon H. Parker, 31, charged with the theft of coffee from a Thermalito home early this month, asked to change his previous plea of guilty to one of not guilty. Judge Good reserved judgement on the request and appointed Goodwin to represent Parker at a continuation of the hearing next week.

J. W. Buster, of Gridley, charged with forgery, pleaded guilty and asked for probation. The judge set March 12 as the date for a report from the probation department on the request.

Harvey Gramps, Corbett Gramps and Clarence Beavers all pleaded guilty to charges of burglary resulting from the theft of a quantity of wine and cigarettes from the Pulga Store two weeks ago and all three asked probation. A recommendation on their request is to be given by the probation department on March 5.

3-31-1954

# Canyon Slaying Suspect Sent To Mental Hospital

Martin Tunny, accused of murder, was committed to the Mendocino state hospital today after psychiatrists testified in superior court that he would be incompetent to assist in his own defense if placed on trial.

The 58-year-old Tunny is charged with the murder of Ernest Bauman, Feather River Canyon recluse, whose body was discovered Jan. 18 buried in the bed of Chino Creek near the Feather river. Tunny is also the prime suspect in the ambush slaying of Jonn Z. Rohrer, of Isalah, who was fatally wounded near the same spot several days before Christmas.

Judge Dudley McGregor ordered Tunny to the mental hospital at the close of the sanity hearing today.

## Maximum Security

Technically, Tunny will be confined until such time as psychiatrists at the institution adjudge him sufficiently sane to stand trial. The doctors indicated, however, that Tunny's condition is unlikely to improve.

Dr. Theo K. Miller, of the Napa state hospital, described Tunny as a dementia praecox case, and recommended that he be held in a maximum security hospital because he is potentially dangerous.

Dr. Carl R. Jackson, of DeWitt state hospital, concurred with Dr. Miller's recommendation. Both men said Tunny would not be able to assist in his own defense if brought to trial.

Norris Goodwin, Tunny's court-appointed counsel, said the defendant has shown no interest in the case, and has not cooperated with attempts to prepare a defense against the murder charge.

## Rohrer's Death

Tunny was discovered living in Bauman's cabin when sheriff's deputies went into the Isalah vicinity of the Feather River to investigate the shooting of Rohrer.

Rohrer was shot through the face near Bauman's cabin, and was brought by a Western Pacific train crew to Oroville, where he died the following day.

A lengthy search for Bauman followed. His bullet-riddled body was finally found after rain-swollen Chino creek washed gravel and rocks off the corpse, which had been buried in a pool only a few yards from the cabin.

Tunny, when apprehended, had in his possession a revolver of the same caliber that killed Bauman, according to officers. The gun had been the property of the murdered man.

Tunny was an escapee from Napa state hospital when the two killings took place. At the time of his first commitment, in 1952, he had been living on French Creek not far from the scene of the killings.

Tunny is a native of Ireland, veteran of the US army in World War I, deep sea sailor, and section gang worker.

# Lake Faces Blast To Recover Body Of Drowned Boy

Sacramento Bee  
5-31-1954

McClatchy Newspapers Service

CHICO, Butte Co. — Plans were made today to dynamite Concow Lake if efforts by divers again fail to locate the body of Philip Joseph Wise, 15, Chico High School student who drowned yesterday.

The divers, James Daugherty and Ray Daugherty, both of Paradise, Butte County, and Harry Lewis of Chico, have been searching in 40 feet of water.

Sheriff Larry Gillick gave this report of Philip's drowning in the lake, 20 miles southeast of Paradise, which has been closed to fishermen but left open to swimmers and waders:

The boy, accompanying Mr. and Mrs. Floyd W. Parr of Chico to the reservoir for the weekend, waded out to an island in the lake in company with Douglas Parr, 16, and a group of other youths.

They hiked across the island looking for a place to catfish. Philip, fully clothed, slipped from a rock into deep water, started swimming but then cried out, "I have a cramp—help me."

Young Parr and Rose Kinney, 16, of Concord, leaped to Philip's aid but were unable to save him as he thrashed in the water and disappeared.

Philip was the son of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Wise.

11-20-1954

# Butte Cattlemen Meet To Talk Losses, Markets, Protection

McClatchy Newspapers Service

PENTZ, Butte Co.—The organization of the Butte County Cow Belles, beef promotion, the high rate of livestock abortion, the weakening cattle market and crop protection from fishermen were on last night's agenda of the annual Butte County Cattlemen's Association meeting in the Pentz Hall.

Mattie Lund signed 15 women as the nucleus for the Cow Belles and Mrs. George Roney and Mrs. Elwin Roney volunteered to represent them at the organization's state meeting December 7th and 8th in Sacramento.

The county group will organize and elect officers shortly after the first of the year.

## McKay On Abortion

Kenneth G. McKay, agriculture extension service veterinarian of Davis, Yolo County, discussed causes of abortion in livestock which is becoming increasingly serious in Butte County.

Cattlemen agreed, in a discussion following McKay's talk, leptospirosis may be one of the causes. McKay suggested tests could be run either in Sacramento or Davis laboratories if cattlemen could get to the laboratory a fresh specimen taken within one hour after the animal's death. Eldon Azevedo, farm adviser, offered to arrange for transporting specimens if his office were notified immediately.

## Suggests Spaying

Arch Bathurst, staff member of the Valley Livestock Marketing Association of Stockton, San Joaquin County, and manager of the farm bureau's auction yard in Dixon, Solano County, suggested producers might eliminate the discrepancy between the price paid for fat steers and fat heifers by spaying the latter. He attributed the lower price paid for heifers to the fact the buyer is afraid the heifer will calve before she can be sold for meat.

Spaying would eliminate the question of whether the heifer has been bred so it will be only the acceptable five months along at time of marketing.

President Van McConnell of Gridley, Butte County, named Charles Cass of Oroville, Butte County; Tom Bell and George Roney of Chico and A. L. Chaffin of Pentz to approach the board of county supervisors and other agencies to protest a bill to be introduced into the legislature to legalize fishing not only on navigable streams but beyond that to the average high water mark.

## Would Bring Fishermen

The cattlemen contend this would bring fishermen through their crop land to the sloughs.

This committee also will protest the application of mesh steel decks on bridges over which livestock refuse to cross. The men had particular reference to a recently steel decked bridge near Gridley.

McConnell gave the progress report on beef promotion and named Elwin Roney, Cass and Gene Openshaw of Oroville to the nomination committee.