

OLD MADERA MINE CAMP

Lode deposits of ore were first discovered in the 1870s in what was to be called the Old Baldy Mining District. This district primarily encompassed two canyons; Madera Canyon and Stone Cabin Canyon (now called Florida Canyon). Many of the prospects petered out but several were developed into significant operations over the years. These mines required workers which led to the development of mining camps to support them.

During 1909, The United States Geological Survey conducted a survey of the Mineral Deposits of the Santa Rita and Patagonia Mountains and documented the mines and mining camps that existed at that time. The Old Baldy District at that time had four inhabited and two deserted mining camps. The principle settlement of the district was the McCleary Camp located near the mouth of Stone Canyon, The other inhabited camps were the Robinson Camp located about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile east of the McCleary Camp; the Littleshot Camp (the principal camp in Madera canyon) located near Sprung Spring; The Curry Camp located about a mile west of the Little Shot Camp; and the Old Madera Mining Company Camp located in the east fork of Madera Canyon.

Mail for mine workers in the Old Baldy District was first delivered to the McCleary Camp (three times a week from Helvetia). Mail destined for the mining camps in Madera Canyon was then delivered to the Littleshot Camp before it was further transported to Curry and Old Madera. A wagon road extended about 4 miles up Madera Canyon and the remainder of the district was reached by trails.

The Old Madera Mining Camp is the only one of these camps that we have been able to find evidence of its location, probably because of its remoteness from official hiking trails. The camp is located a short distance east of the area that the GVR Hiking Club refers to as Roger's Rock. At the site you can still find improved terraces, bed springs bits of metal sheathing (probably roofing) and a trash dump in an adjacent canyon. Also, the improved spring that provided water to the camp has been recently found. It is unknown when the camp was abandoned. Following are pictures of the camp.



Built up Terrace



Terrace and Miscellaneous Items



Bed Spring and Miscellaneous Items



Old Madera Mine Camp Spring

Summary prepared by T. Johnson from the U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin No. 582 published in 1915. Pictures by T. Johnson