

THE GOLDEN TREE

by

Gerald Martin Davenport

This version represents the final 10 minute production
that was screened at the Crest Theater on October 3, 2010

Story about a little piece of Sacramento's History
For "A Place Called Sacramento" Film Contest

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TITLE: ARIA PICTURES LOGO

TITLE: THE GOLDEN TREE

1

EXT. BANK OF A RIVER: 1855 - DAY

1

ARLEN, (mid 30's), wearing a black cowboy hat, a grey long sleeved undershirt, and jeans is bent down along side the river bank swishing a GOLD PAN in a circular motion when he smiles and giggles as he takes one of the gold pieces and bites it.

HENRY
(off camera)
Arlen

HENRY, (mid 30's), bigger than Arlen, wearing a tan cowboy hat, a pink long sleeved undershirt, and light tan work pants with a very nice pistol attached to his side is a few paces away bent down along side the river bank gold-panning.

HENRY (cont'd)
Stop actin' like a sage hen and get
back to pannen'.

SNAP!! A twig snaps. Henry looks concerned and stands up

ARLEN
You tuchy as a teased snake.

Henry pulls out is pistol and makes his way passed Arlen.

HENRY
Hobble your lip Arlen.

Arlen looks up at Henry with fear seeing Henry's pistol is drawn.

ARLEN
Ya old Scallywag.

Henry **SHUSH'S** Arlen as Arlen stands up.

ARLEN (cont'd)
Bear?

Henry looks intensely into the distance.

ARLEN (cont'd)
What's got you rattled Henry?

RATTLESNAKE DICK (O.C.)

Mornin.

Arlen and Henry turn around to see four outlaw males [from left to right]: ROMERO, (32), taller than the others and a little bigger around the mid section wearing a white cowboy hat, a dark bandanna, a blue long sleeved shirt and blue jeans; GEORGE SKINNER, (22), wearing a black cowboy hat, a grey bandanna, grey shirt a tan vest, tan pants, and a dark tan duster with a side arm to match; RATTLESNAKE DICK, (19), wearing a dark hat that would be used for someone working in the fields, a solid black bandanna, tan long-sleeved shirt, and dark pants; and RAFAEL ESCOBAR, (15), wearing a dark cowboy hat, a dark bandanna, redish tan striped long-sleeved shirt, dark jeans, and a side arm he's not afraid to show.

RATTLESNAKE DICK (cont'd)

Such a nice mornin. Too nice to be working hard. Right boys?

GEORGE SKINNER

We was just wondering what you was looking fer.

ROMERO

Like we don't already know.

HENRY

What you boys want?

RAFAEL ESCOBAR

Boys? Who you callin boy?

RATTLESNAKE DICK

Now Rafael. Simmer down. Our new friend meant no disrespect. Ain't that right mister?

ARLEN

Weeze just fishin'.

RATTLESNAKE DICK

Well boys I reckon he's the funny one.

ARLEN

It's true. Looking for trout and...

HENRY

Wipe yer chin Arlen.

GEORGE SKINNER
I reckon he's the smart one.

RAFAEL ESCOBAR
Well. We're fishin too.

ROMERO
Fer gold.

Arlen turns away from the bandits and sees CYRUS SKINNER,
(18) blue eyes, pointing a six shooter at him.

CYRUS SKINNER
We'll be taking that.

Henry raises his weapon and cocks it.

George Skinner quickly pulls out his pistol and points it at
Henry.

GEORGE SKINNER
Whoa. Don't be stupid now.

CYRUS SKINNER
Your future depends on it.

Romero laughs a evil enjoyable laugh.

ROMERO
Goney off his chump and on the
shoot he gonna scratch with five
beans in the wheel.

Rattlesnake Dick heads over to Henry with that look "Give me
yer gold."

HENRY
Yer gonna be hanging from the end
of a rope one day boy.

Rattlesnake Dick gets closer to Henry and shoves his pistol
into Henry's gut and cocks it.

CYRUS SKINNER
Yellow belly.

Cyrus Skinner pointing a gun at Arlen motions for him to hand
over his gold pouch.

Henry hands over his pouch of gold slowly to Rattlesnake
Dick.

Arlen looks at his pouch of gold and shakes his head.

RATTLESNAKE DICK

Thank you.

Arlen looks at Cyrus and tosses the pouch to Cyrus.

Rattlesnake Dick is bouncing Henry's pouch of gold up and down.

RATTLESNAKE DICK (cont'd)

I say about thirty dollars.

ARLEN

It's worth more than that.

RAFAEL ESCOBAR

Is it worth your life you old
codger?

ARLEN

I'm only thirty-four.

The bandits laugh.

RAFAEL ESCOBAR

Well my thirty-four year old
friend. Do you want to see thirty-
five?

DAD (V.O.)

(faint)

Sierra.

The bandits raise their guns and look around.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

2

INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - DAY

2

SIERRA, (15), pretty petite girl, is sitting on the floor holding a book and looks up at DAD, (30's), standing holding a few papers.

DAD

(overly excited)

Look what I found. Our family
tree. Well. My mom's side anyway.

SIERRA

That's great dad.

Dad points to photo on desk of CECILIA WIMMER (GREAT GREAT GRANDMA)

DAD

My grandmother, my mom's mom, you
and Brooke's great grandmother...

SIERRA

Dad I know how the connections
work.

BROOKE, (12), comes into the door way holding a bag of Kettle
Brand Chips and munching on one.

DAD

We're connected to the gold rush
here in Sacramento. My great,
great, great, great grandmother,
Elizabeth Jane Cloud, helped James
Marshall discover gold in eighteen
forty-eight.

(beat)

Isn't that exciting?

BROOKE

I think it is.

DAD

Thank you Brooke.

(looks at Sierra)

Honey. Our ancestors are in the
history books. They're famous.

SIERRA

Were they rich?

DAD

What are you reading?

SIERRA

"A place called Sacramento." At
least that's the title. It's more
like a western about outlaws.

DAD

It's by Ron Cooper? There's
probably something about our family
in there.

Sierra looks at the book with doubt.

DAD (cont'd)

We'll break for lunch a bit. Okay?

Sierra goes back to reading.

RAFAEL ESCOBAR (V.O.)
Well my thirty-four year old
freind.

3 EXT. BANK OF A RIVER: 1855 - DAY

3

RAFAEL ESCOBAR
Do you want to see thirty-five?

ARLEN
Wells Fargo and Company is paying
seventeen and ounce.

CYRUS SKINNER
The stagecoach company? You're mad
you clodhopper.

RATTLESNAKE DICK
(pulls down bandanna)
George. I have an idea.

GEORGE SKINNER
(pulls down bandanna)
What is it Rattlesnake?

RATTLESNAKE DICK (O.C.)
We need to see Jack Phillips.

CYRUS SKINNER
(pulls down bandanna)
That four-flusher? He's serves
nothin but tarantula juice.

ROMERO
(pulls down bandanna)
More like bug juice Cyrus.

RAFAEL ESCOBAR
(bandanna already down)
Ya sure waz tangle-legged while
back Cyrus.

RATTLESNAKE DICK
Well my new friends.

Henry looks on unimpressed.

RATTLESNAKE DICK (cont'd)
Thank you kindly for the
information and...

Rattlesnake Dick bounces the pouches up and down in front of Henry.

RATTLESNAKE DICK (cont'd)
...all your hard work.

Arlen shakes his head in disbelief.

RATTLESNAKE DICK (cont'd)
Name's Rattlesnake Dick.

DAD (V.O.)
It says it right here.

4 INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - DAY 4

Sierra gives an annoyed look as she lowers the book to see her dad.

DAD
Many scoffed at Marshall that it was only mica or fool's gold, iron pyrites. Jennie Wimmer immediately recognized the small nugget as being gold that was brought to her by her young son William in eighteen forty-eight.
(beat)
Marshall took the gold to his boss Captain John A Sutter at his fort near the junction of the American and Sacramento Rivers.

Dad looks down at Sierra showing her an old picture of Sutter's Fort.

DAD (O.C.) (cont'd)
You want to go see it?

5 EXT. OUTSIDE SUTTER'S FORT: PRESENT DAY - DAY 5

Dad and Brooke are holding hands ahead of Sierra as they walk up the path to the main gate of the fort.

6 EXT. INSIDE SUTTER'S FORT: PRESENT DAY - DAY 6

MONTAGE: DAD, SIERRA, AND BROOKE VISIT SUTTER'S FORT.

7

EXT. OUTSIDE SUTTER'S FORT: PRESENT DAY - DAY

7

Dad, Sierra, and Brooke exit the main gate of the fort.

DAD

Isn't it amazing the things they
did back then?

SIERRA

Yeah, but they didn't have any
mention of our *famous family* dad.

DAD

Well they were close. I mean they
were in Sutter's mill in Coloma.
About 45 miles away. They'd have
to do that by horse or by carriage.
Would that be cool?

BROOKE

Yeah it would.

Sierra gives her Dad and Brooke a strange look and then walks
away.

DAD

Oh come on you like it.

8

INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - DAY

8

Sierra flips through pages in a book at a fast pace then
stops and fingers the paragraphs quickly as she reads various
words.

SIERRA

He noticed some particles of yellow
mixed in with the reddish earth...
Could they be gold? Took them to
Sutter at his fort... Sam
Brennan... Marshall said he must
talk to him alone... with some
acid... they touch the grains...
Marshall had discovered gold...

(turns page then back)

That's it?

Sierra closes the book "A place called Sacramento" and drops
it on the box below. Sierra eyes the books on the shelf.

**MONTAGE: SIERRA RUMMAGES THROUGH THE BOOKS, PAPERS, BOXES,
AND ALL THE OTHER ITEMS IN THE ATTIC.**

88 INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - LATER

88

Sierra finishes a book and shakes her head as she sets it down.

SIERRA
Not really famous were we Great
Grandma Cecilia?

Sierra picks up the picture of Cecilia Wimmer and behind it is an OLD RUSTY ROUND TIN.

SIERRA (cont'd)
Just a normal, run-of-the-mill,
obscure family. Probably different
Wimmer's probably.

Just then a SMALL BLACK JOURNAL drops onto the floor. Sierra looks down at the photo and sets it down then picks up the fallen journal.

INSERT: FRONT COVER OF JOURNAL THAT READS "*PRIVATE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM RILEY WIMMER*"

SIERRA (cont'd)
Private Journal of William Riley
Wimmer.

Sierra opens the journal to a FOLDED PIECE OF PAPER. Sierra opens it revealing that it is a very crud HAND-DRAWN MAP of Sutter's Fort and the area around it. She sets the map down and looks at the journal.

SIERRA (cont'd)
Eighteen hundred forty eight,
Monday. January twenty-four. Doing
my chores I heard the cries of Mr.
Marshall calling me to take a shiny
rock to mother that he thinks is
gold.

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)
Eighteen hundred forty eight,
Saturday. January twenty-nine.

DISSOLVE TO:

9

EXT. SUTTER'S MILL-RACE: SATURDAY, JAN 29, 1848 - DAY 9

PETER WIMMER, 50's wearing a light western hat, a long white beard, a long-sleeved white shirt under a dark vest and jeans is walking along the river bank with his son GEORGE WIMMER (14), wearing a dark cowboy hat, a dark red long-sleeved shirt, jeans, and light tan boots; and his son YOUNG WILLIAM (8), wearing a light tan cowboy hat, a black and white checkered long sleeved shirt, and jeans who is playing with the rocks near the water a few feet in front of them.

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)

Father allowed George and I to walk
the river bank with him waiting for
Marshall's return with Mr. Sooter.

JAMES MARSHALL, wearing his dress clothes of a white formal shirt, a vest, jacket, and the thin string tie walks along the bank down stream and waves to Peter as though to motion "I see you" as he walks along side JOHN SUTTER who is wearing a ice cowboy hat, white long sleeved shirt under a grey vest with nice pants, a side arm for luck, and his trusty cane.

As the two groups meet up the voice over continues as they introduce each other.

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.) (cont'd)

Mr. Marshall was not himself when
they arrived. Was it because Mr.
Sooter was there or was it the
gold? It's all he talked about.

JAMES MARSHALL

As you can see John. There's
nuggets and flakes along this race.
I know it's gold.

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)

Father stood tall and proud talking
about Jennie.

PETER WIMMER

So if she says it is, it must be.

JOHN SUTTER

I understand that you believe this
to be gold?

John Sutter shows JENNIE, wearing a white dress and a white apron and BEATRICE (16), wearing a red and white bonnet and a white blouse, the nugget he picked up.

JENNIE WIMMER

I do. Mr. Sutter. And it is. All
of it.

ANNA DUBELT SUTTER (O.C.)

John.

ANNA DUBELT SUTTER, very pretty, blonde hair with a black
fancy feather, gold jewelry, and a very formal colored gown
looks on with anticipation.

JOHN SUTTER

Yes Dear.

ANNA DUBELT SUTTER

Do I get to see what the fuss is
about?

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)

Then I saw an angel.

John Sutter points out into the river with his cane.

JOHN SUTTER

You can't see the glimmer in the
water?

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)

Her smile was as warm as the sun.

Anna Dubelt Sutter smiles.

ANNA DUBELT SUTTER

Anna. Please

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)

And her eyes made it hard for me to
breath

ANNA DUBELT SUTTER

You expect me to go in there and
pick one up myself?

John Sutter and Jennie Wimmer begin to walk away.

JENNIE WIMMER

Sarah. Check on Benjamin.
Beatrice. Check on the lye kettle.

Beatrice and YOUNG SARAH (12), hair in pony-tails, a red
blouse and a long blue skirt, George, and Young William
slowly move toward the river to gaze at the water at the
glittering rocks.

BEATRICE

This is what they didn't want us to see?

YOUNG WILLIAM

Just yeller rocks.

GEORGE WIMMER

You're not even suppose to be down here.

YOUNG SARAH

William go take care of Benjamin.

YOUNG WILLIAM

But Jennie told you to do it.

YOUNG SARAH

And I'm telling you to do it.

GEORGE WIMMER

Baby watching is woman's work.

BEATRICE

If yer mother heard you say that you's be in a heap o' trouble.

GEORGE WIMMER

Oh yeah. And who's gonna tell her?

Beatrice stares George down.

GEORGE WIMMER (cont'd)

William. Go look after Benjamin.

YOUNG WILLIAM

You gonna kiss her?

George punches Young William again.

GEORGE WIMMER

Bite yer tongue William.

YOUNG SARAH

They reckon this be gold.

GEORGE WIMMER

It's not our gold. Just leave it alone.

BEATRICE

It sure is pretty.

Young William kneels down to the river's edge

10 EXT. SUTTER'S MILL-RACE: THURSDAY, FEB 3, 1848 - DAY 10

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.)
Eighteen hundred forty eight,
Thursday. February third.

Young William picks up a large nugget of gold out of the river; he looks at it for a moment then stands up and puts it into his pocket and walks along the river bank looking down at the rocks.

YOUNG WILLIAM (V.O.) (cont'd)
I filled my pockets with my gold findings along the river bank that Mr. Marshall's men miss every morning. Been thinking about a safer place to hide my pocketfuls as there are too many people looking for gold stashes around the mill.

DISSOLVE TO:

11 INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - DAY 11

Camera pans down from the old rusty round tin on the shelf to Sierra sitting against the bookshelf reading the journal. Sierra looks up

SIERRA
Dad.

Sierra flips many more pages and stops.

SIERRA (cont'd)
Eighteen hundred fifty-nine,
Wednesday. June eighth.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
The pickings from around the area are getting scarce.

DISSOLVE TO:

12a EXT. FOREST PATH: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 1859 12a

WILLIAM (20), tall, wearing a dark blue flannel long sleeved shirt and jeans walks along the river bank.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
The round tin I found along the
river bed is nearly full. But it
was time to go to the fort for
supplies.

12b EXT. SUTTER FORT: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 1859 - DAY 12b

William comes around a rock wall and looks back then walks
away.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
As usual I snuck out of the fort.
But.

13 EXT. DIRT ROAD: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 1859 - DAY 13

William steps out of the brush onto a dirt road.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
Today.

SAMUEL BRENNAN (O.C.)
William?

WILLIAM (V.O.)
Was different.

William sees SAMUEL BRENNAN, wearing a nice suit and walking
with MEE LIEN, and pretty lady in a white Sunday hat and w
white elegant dress.

WILLIAM (cont'd)
Mr. Brennan?

SAMUEL BRENNAN
How fortunate that we meet. I am
heading to Napa later this month.
I could use someone like you
William.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
He introduced me to Mee Lien. His
attaché to China.

MEE LIEN
I'm waiting for Samuel to make me
his business partner.

SAMUEL BRENNAN

Women, finance, and business just
don't go together.

MEE LIEN

You will live to see the day we
women get equal rights.

SAMUEL BRENNAN

A woman's place is in the kitchen
or the bedroom.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

And then.

VICTORIA MARIE, pretty, wearing a reddish colored nice dress
runs up and puts her arms around William and gets real close.

VICTORIA MARIE

William.

WILLIAM (V.O.)

Victoria Marie.

VICTORIA MARIE

William? Don't you love me no
more?

SARAH WIMMER, (23), wearing a lightly colored patterned dress
interrupts the two.

SARAH

Does father know about you and her?

VICTORIA MARIE

It's none of yer business Sarah.

SARAH

So, you haven't told her yet?

ZEKE (O.C.)

Dagnabit!

Just then ZEKE, (24), Victoria Marie's older, and bigger,
brother shows up wearing a used straw hat, a while long
sleeved shirt, suspenders, and jeans heading toward William
with anger in his eyes.

ZEKE (cont'd)

I told ya to leave my sister alone.
Now I'm-a-gonna break ya in half.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
And her brother Zeke.

ZEKE
I'll give you first whack.

Zeke is in Williams face staring him down. William takes his finger and pokes Zeke in the chest.

WILLIAM
Lucky for you I've got things to do.

The last push William pushes harder but only pushes himself away and walks away.

15 EXT. SPARSELY WOODED AREA: DEEPER: 1859 - CONTINUOUS 15

William drops to his knees near a tree and takes out the tin from under his shirt.

WILLIAM (V.O.)
Finally I get to bury my gold.

William opens the old round metal tin to reveal many golden filled rocks, flakes, and nuggets.

WILLIAM (V.O.) (cont'd)
That makes sixty-five.

William smiles, closes the tin, and begins digging a hole to bury the tin.

WILLIAM (V.O.) (cont'd)
And then they show up.

William places the tin inside the hole and begins covering it when...

BENJAMIN (O.C.)
What you doing?

William scurries to cover the tin with dirt.

WILLIAM
Benjamin Franklin! I told you to go away!

BENJAMIN (12), short, wearing a long-sleeved white short, dark suspenders, and blue jeans and MARTHA JANE (8), wearing a Sunday straw hat, and a pretty blue dress stand behind William as he finished burying the gold inside the tin, stamps it down with his feet, and faces Benjamin and Martha Jane who look down at the dirt beneath the tree.

William (cont'd)
Nothing. Just digging for worms.

BENJAMIN
You find any?

WILLIAM
No. It's dry. Come on lets go.

BENJAMIN
You going fishing?

William and Benjamin start walking leaving Martha Jane still looking back at the dirt beneath the tree.

WILLIAM
Maybe.

William looks back at Martha Jane.

WILLIAM (cont'd)
Martha Jane. Come on.

Martha Jane turns and heads toward William and Benjamin.

BENJAMIN
You take me this time?

WILLIAM
Of course I will. You're my
brother. You want to go too.

William looks down at Martha Jane who shakes her head.

BENJAMIN
Girls don't know how to fish. Make
her clean it.

MARTHA JANE
EWE!

William reaches his hand out to Martha Jane.

WILLIAM
He's just joshing.

Martha Jane holds Williams hand and they begin walking out of the trees along side Benjamin.

BENJAMIN
No I wasn't.

WILLIAM
Yes you were.

BENJAMIN
No I wasn't. She's a girl and they clean and cook what men bring home.

MARTHA JANE
I guess your not getting married.

William, Martha Jane, and Benjamin walk away.

DISSOLVE TO:

16 INT. ROOM: PRESENT DAY - DAY 16

WILLIAM
As we walked back to the fort I could tell they knew something. Maybe it was time to tell them.

Sierra looks at the map again.

SIERRA
Dad. Dad!

17 EXT. SPARSELY WOODED AREA: DEEPER: PRESENT DAY - LATE AFTERNOON 17

Dad, Sierra, and Brooke walk up to a large tree and look around.

BROOKE
Where's the ex?

SIERRA
Dad. You read her too many stories.

BROOKE
I like Dad's stories.

Dad begins digging up the dirt near the tree.

SIERRA

You know things have changed in
hundred and fifty-one years dad.

DAD

Yeah, but that's what so thrilling
about treasure hunting.

BROOKE

You never know what you will find.

DAD

That's right Brooke.

Sierra rolls her eyes at the two of them.

SIERRA

I can't believe I am buying into
all this treasure, gold, and
history stuff.

SIERRA (cont'd)

Probably nothing there.

Just then "CLUNK!" Dad puts the shovel in and hits something
metal. All three look down and then at each other in
wonderment.

CUT TO BLACK

TO BE CONTINUED IN 2011?