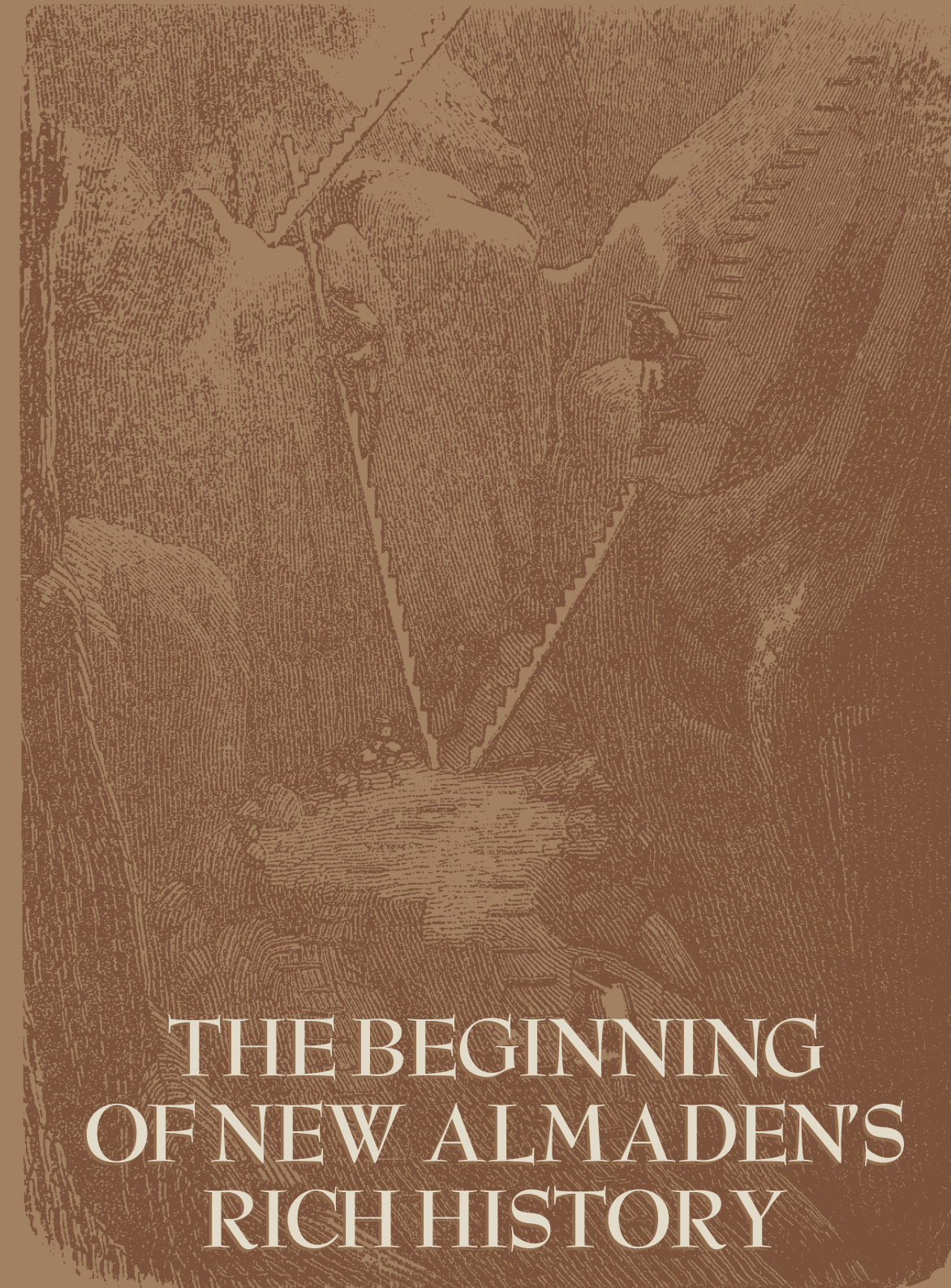


"Red Cave" 19th century engraving



## THE BEGINNING OF NEW ALMADEN'S RICH HISTORY

Just ahead lies the original site of mining activity in New Almaden's rich history, where Ohlone Indians extracted cinnabar ore from a "red cave". In 1845, while visiting Mission Santa Clara, Mexican soldier Andres Castillero observed Ohlones using crushed cinnabar as a paint pigment. He recognized the significance of such a find and followed the Ohlones to this site.

Castillero claimed his "discovery" and began mining the cinnabar ore, which was known to contain mercury—a valuable liquid metal needed by Mexico to process silver and gold. This Main Tunnel was the principal entrance to the New Almaden Mine, which would grow to become the richest mining area in all of California.

# THE "MAIN TUNNEL"



A community called Spanish Camp grew around this site in the 1850s, where Mexican, Spanish and Chilean mining families settled to live and work. Children used the pond directly below the Main Tunnel as a swimming hole while their fathers and older brothers dug deeper and deeper into the mountain in search of the valuable ore.



SANTA CLARA  
COUNTY PARKS  
parkhere.org

Raccoon

