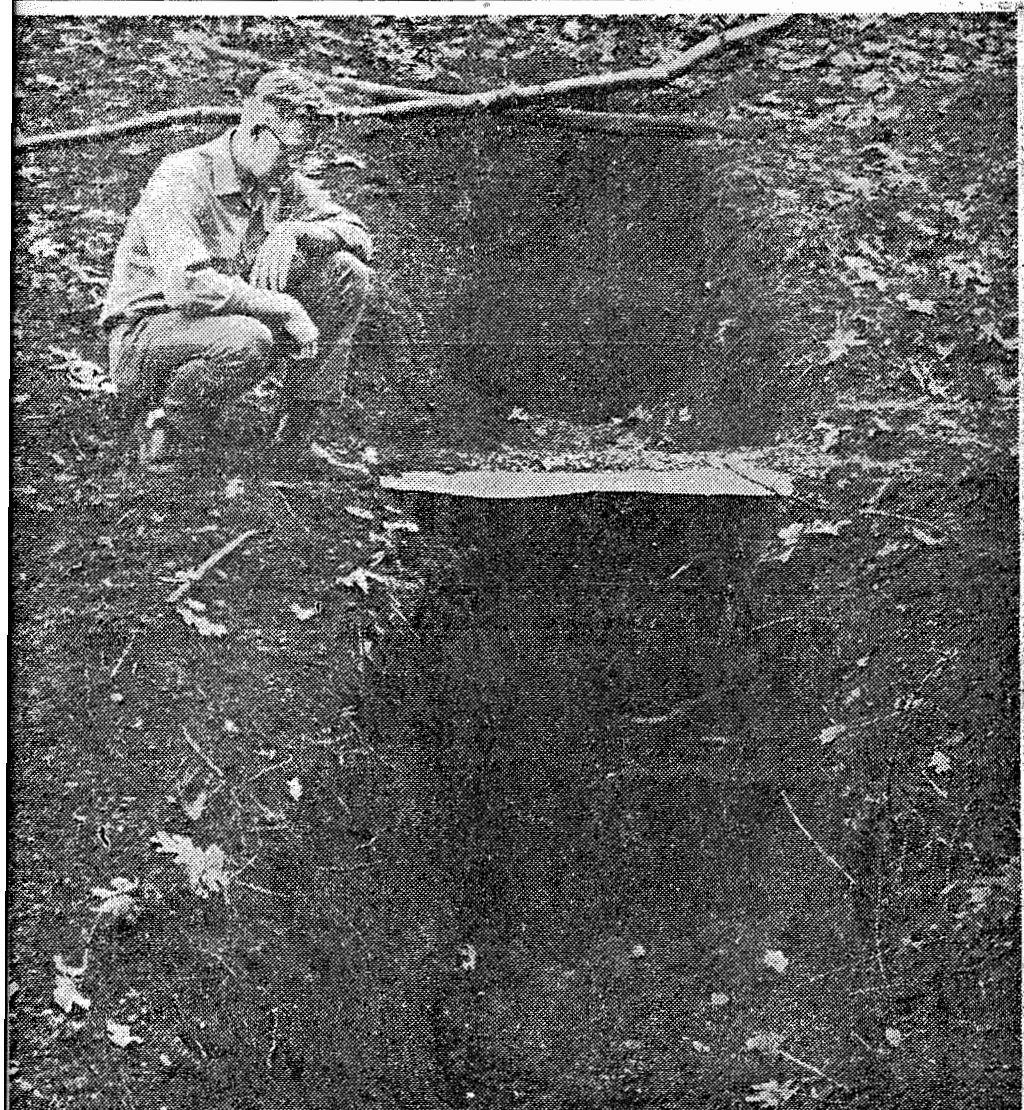


# MEDFORD MALL TRIBUNE



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**EXAMINES HOLE**—Off-duty Medford police officer Gerald Butler is shown examining the lower of two holes found dug in the side of a hill in the Foots Creek canyon area recently. Something, maybe gold, was taken from the lower hole.

## Mystery Surrounds Holes Blasted Near Foots Creek

By GREG NOKES  
Mail Tribune Staff Writer  
(c) 1961

Foots Creek — A mystery possibly involving gold and a mining robbery of 30 years ago, has unfolded in this little roadside community that rivals in skullduggery the century-old tales of Captain Kidd and his buried pirate's treasure.

Little is known factually other than two men and a woman took "something" out of the side of a hill near here, and that something is probably worth a lot of money—maybe a fortune. But, where these facts end, speculation begins.

The town of Foots Creek is located 20 miles west of Medford on Highway 99, in the heart of once-prosperous gold mining country. A small stream that gives the town its name is known to have produced more than \$3 million worth of gold in the late 20s and early 30s.

**Starts in November**  
The mystery started in earnest when two men and a woman approached Tom Boone, owner of a place along Foots Creek rd., and asked permission to cross his property in order to do some mining in the hills in back of his place.

They also asked Boone for the location of an old donation land claim in the area. Boone gave them directions, said it was all right to cross his property as long as they didn't disturb anything, and then went back to his work.

Occasional prospectors and fortune-hunters are still common in the area so Boone didn't give the matter much thought. He did notice, however, that the trio had with them a pickup truck and a small foreign car, both bearing California license plates.

For three days the two men made trips back and forth

a number of dynamite explosions during this time.

On the third day one of the men came up to Boone, thanked him for the use of his land, said their search had proved futile, and then drove off with his companions.

The story could have ended there, had it not been for several curious neighbors.

Roland Lloyd Miller, box 371, Gold Hill, who is one of the old-timers in the area, was one of these. He decided to see what it was all about.

Miller started walking up a dry-creek gully that runs up

the side of a wooded hill in back of his farm. When he had gone about a quarter-mile he discovered two deep holes dug right at the bottom of the gully. Something had been taken from one of them.

(Continued on page B 2)

## Foots Creek Mystery

# Small Barrel Would Fit into Imprint at Back of Second Hole

(Continued from page 1)

The uppermost hole had been dug straight down for a distance of eight feet. Whatever the trio had been looking for wasn't there.

The second hole was located four feet below the first and was dug for a distance of six feet straight into the side of the hill. At the back of the hole was an imprint where something round and 16 inches across had been. A small barrel or oilcan would have fit perfectly into the imprint.

Miller immediately speculated that the barrel had contained contraband gold taken 30 years earlier in an armed robbery at a nearby mine. He called police.

### Confirms Report

A state police officer confirmed what Miller reported - two holes, an imprint where something had been removed from one of them-but nothing else.

Police noted that this particular plot of land belonged to the Bureau of Land Management, and they sent a report of their meager findings to the FBI. For two months the story was kept quiet, in hopes that something would turn up.

Nothing did. And Monday, this reporter and an off-duty Medford policeman went to the area.

We talked to both Boone and Miller, but neither could offer any more information than they had already given to police. Miller, however, did elaborate on his robbery theory.

### Holds Up Dredge

About 30 years ago, he said, an armed bandit held up a Foots creek gold - mining dredge and got away with an undetermined amount of raw gold. The dredge had been operated by one D. H. Fairy for the international Guggenheim mining interests. The robbery has never been solved and the gold never recovered.

Miller thinks the gunman may have buried the gold on the nearby hill, planning to return for it at some later date. It would appear then that the man and his friends, or his friends along, finally came back for it last November.

Pursuing this line of thinking, most of the residents of Foots Creek shudder to think what might have happened had they tried to find out what was going on while the

men were still digging.

We were informed by our police officer friend that gold is still easy to sell. It will bring as much as \$100 an ounce on the black market, he said, whereas the U.S. government only pays about \$35 an ounce.

A trip to the diggings themselves revealed something that had apparently gone unnoticed before. Our friend discovered that the lowest of the two holes is located dead-center between two dead pine tree snags, one on either side of the gully.

This would indicate that all the men had to do was to locate the appropriate gully and then follow it up the side of the hill until they came to the two dead snags, and then start digging.

On their first try they missed their goal because they apparently sighted up the wrong snag on one side. The second time they were right on target.

### Three Days of Work

Judging from the piles of dirt and amount of blasting that had been done, the two men put in a good three days work before finding what they were looking for.

But, different from most men who hunt buried treasure, they found theirs.

Police doubt that they will ever find what came out of the side of that hill; they are not even positive that any laws have been broken. But, whatever it was, it will leave the residents of this roadside community talking and speculating about it for a long time to come.

GOLD HILL COMING BACK



Henry Ray and George Haff holding lumps of tungsten-bearing ore on their Gold Hill claims.

Gold Hill, Or., April 1.—Not since early days of gold discovery in Oregon has there been a mining excitement here equal to that due to the discovery of high grade tungsten ore three miles north of Gold Hill.

Everybody who can leave town for a few hours goes out prospecting for tungsten. Business men run out in their automobiles, make a location, run home to luncheon and back again in the afternoon to work on their claims.

Henry Ray and George Haff, the discoverers, have two veins of scheelite,

or wolframite, the tungsten-bearing ore. These veins, 700 feet apart, are six to eight inches wide. The locality in which they are found has been very rich in gold, and it is believed that thousands of tons of tungsten-bearing ore is in the dumps at the mouths of the several tunnels. The gold-bearing group has been known for some years as the Oxley or Sylvanite group. The discoverers have secured options on the Cheney, Simmons, Ray and Lyman properties.

The ore has been tested by several firms, and has shown high values.

PLATINUM FOUND IN GOLD ORE SENT FROM HIGHLAND PROPERTY

San Francisco Assayers Notify Owners and Plans Are Made for New Plant,

ORE VALUES ARE GROWING

Development Work to Be Prosecuted on Larger Scale Because of Recent Encouraging Showing.

Medford, Or., April 1.—The Highland gold mine on Foots creek, has made old mining men in this district realize that they have overlooked precious metals more valuable than gold in their hurried search for the latter. Native platinum, now worth \$135 an ounce, has been found in the gold bullion sent to the refiners at San Francisco, the determination showing that .932 of an ounce was taken from 10.024 ounces of gold.

The refiners immediately marked the showing in platinum and hastened word to the owners of the Highland because of the discovery. Inasmuch as the platinum was found in the gold bullion, the miners have no idea from what character of rock it came, but will at once install an equipment necessary to develop it.

Expert miners in this city are studying the ore from the Highland, which runs high in gold, some of it over \$200 per ton.

Workmen engaged in opening up the Highland, although their operations cover a period of only a few months, find the value of the ore in gold increasing rapidly as depth is attained. The plant for operating it will be enlarged and the work pushed.

Medford District Booming.

Medford, Or., April 1.—The Bell Ore mine of Applegate river, 17 miles from this city, has been sold to Fritz & Pitts of San Francisco. J. D. Bell of Medford bought it six months ago and set once equipped it for operations. Messrs. Fritz & Pitts will enlarge the equipment and increase the force.

The Opp mine, seven miles from this city, is now running its ten-stamp mill three eight-hour shifts a day on high grade ore. The plant will be enlarged.

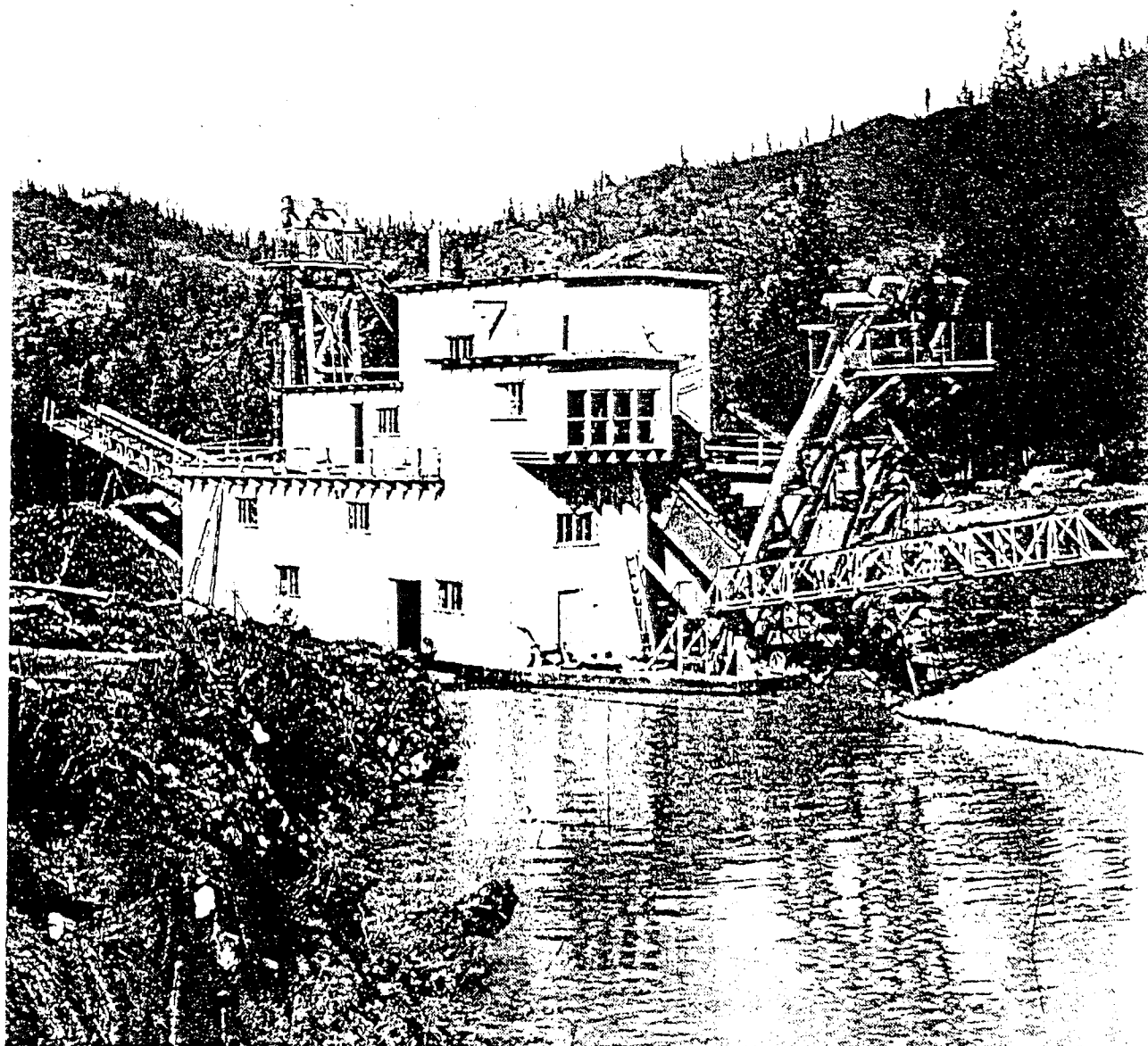
Mining men from all of the prominent mining regions of the northwest, as well as from California and Colorado, are investigating various properties in this district.

Unusual activity marks the revival of development work in the Blue Ledge district on account of the promise of an early extension of Southern Oregon Traction company's line to that territory this season.

Progress is being made on the Medford-Bullis deal.

Murphy-Murray dredge on Fooths Creek, Jackson County.  
Capacity 4,000 cubic yards daily, electric powered, 67  
buckets of 3½ foot capacity; dug 20 feet below water line.

*Courtesy Oregon State Dept. Geology & Mineral Industries*



Mrs. Barnette, of Ashland, is in the city at present, attending her father, J.A. Calfee, an inmate of the Kelsey hospital. Mr. Calfee suffered a dislocated neck in a fall two weeks ago, and despite his 81 years, is showing a gradual and hopeful improvement.

Bandmaster Harry Day has matriculated as a piano salesman, in addition to his arduous duties as the instructor of 25 promising bandmen. Representing a prominent piano house he is waging a sales campaign that is bringing comforting results. Three high-grade pianos entered Gold Hill homes through his agency this week, the purchasers being Silas Fleming, Ralph Darling, and C.W. Carson.

Work in preparation for the construction of the cement plant is well under way. A crew of men are now engaged in building road to the nearby rockledge, where foundation rock for the buildings will be quarried. Plies for the power line have been installed, and operations at the power company's plant are being rapidly pushed under engineer F.W. Dodge. The construction of buildings at the plant site will commence in the near future.

Addison Bennett, special writer of the Oregonian staff, was in Gold Hill Sunday afternoon and Monday, gathering data for the publication of a special feature page concerning this city and the tributary territory. Mr. Bennett toured Sams Valley, Galls, Sardine, and Kanes Creek valleys, and spent an interesting hour at the Braden mine. He departed with a wealth of information, a collection of local views, an expressed admiration of Gold Hill and southern Oregon, and the straightaway billiard championship of the city. Mr. Bennett's story of Gold Hill will appear in an early issue of the Portland Oregonian.

"Doctor" Elia Anton, esq., of Asia Minor, honored Gold Hill with a visit Wednesday, and spoke at the local schools, where he seemed to deplore the fact that he had discovered "one heathen in our midst." The "doctor" was a rusty featured deacon, of the frock-coated type who solicit small change for the "cause," and announced his nationality as Chaldean. Mebbe [maybe] he was, but he bore the appearance of a refugee Turk out for traveling expenses. He departed for Medford where he declared there was much work to be done, on the evening train.

November 22, 1913 Vol. 16 No. 29

**Wm. Laddington, Foots Creek, Perishes in Powder Explosion  
Battered Torso Lay in Smoking Ruins of Old Cabin**

Death by an explosion of dynamite, which fired the lonel cabin and reduce the remains of the victim to a charred mass, wa the fate of William Laddington, an aged prospector of Foots Creek early Tuesday night. Near the hour of nine the explosion was hear by distant neighbors, and the following morning the greswon [gruesome] find was made amid the ashes of the cabin.

Coroner A.E. Kellogg left this city for the scene of th tragedy early Wednesday morning, bringing the remains to this cit where they were prepared for burial. In his opinion the explosio of dynamite kept by the old man in his cabin, caused the death a resulted in the fire. The limbs were either blown or burned fr the body, but the charred torso remained. The cabin, whi adjoined the Black Channel mine, was completely destroyed.

Since 1852 Laddington had been a resident of Foots Creek a pursued his calling of prospector. He was 88 years of age the de of Jackson County argonauts--and still worked a claim. Report h it that in earlier days he made his "stake", and subsequent squandered it. For some years past he has been receivi

assistance from the county. He was a native Kentuckian, but possessed no known relatives.

#### Local News Notes

Wm. Mansfield, of Tolo, renewed acquaintances in this city Monday.

J.H. Beeman and son Horton attended the Giants White Sox game at Medford Monday.

Frank Court left on Tuesday for northern California, where he will be employed during the winter.

N. Cates and family, of Evans Valley moved to this city the first of the week and rented a residence.

Bert Rippey and family moved from Tolo to this city, where they will make their home on Sunday last.

Miss Millie Hodges, manager of the local telephone exchange, was in Medford Wednesday upon company business.

Mr. and Mrs. E.V. Upton arrived on Wednesday and will make their future home in this city. Mr. Upton is secretary of the Beaver-Cement company.

M.S. Johnson consummated a real estate deal the first of the week, whereby he now owns five lots on 5th Avenue, opposite the Hodges residence, hitherto owned by the South M.E. church of Medford.

Misses Millie and Hattie Hodges, accompanied by L.O. Walker, were visitors at the Myers' home in Ashland on Sunday last.

Engineer F.W. Dodge this week completed a new reinforced concrete bridge, located on the post road near Davidson's residence, south of the river. The structure will be of great benefit to the winter traffic and travel of the Kanes Creek district and the Braden mine.

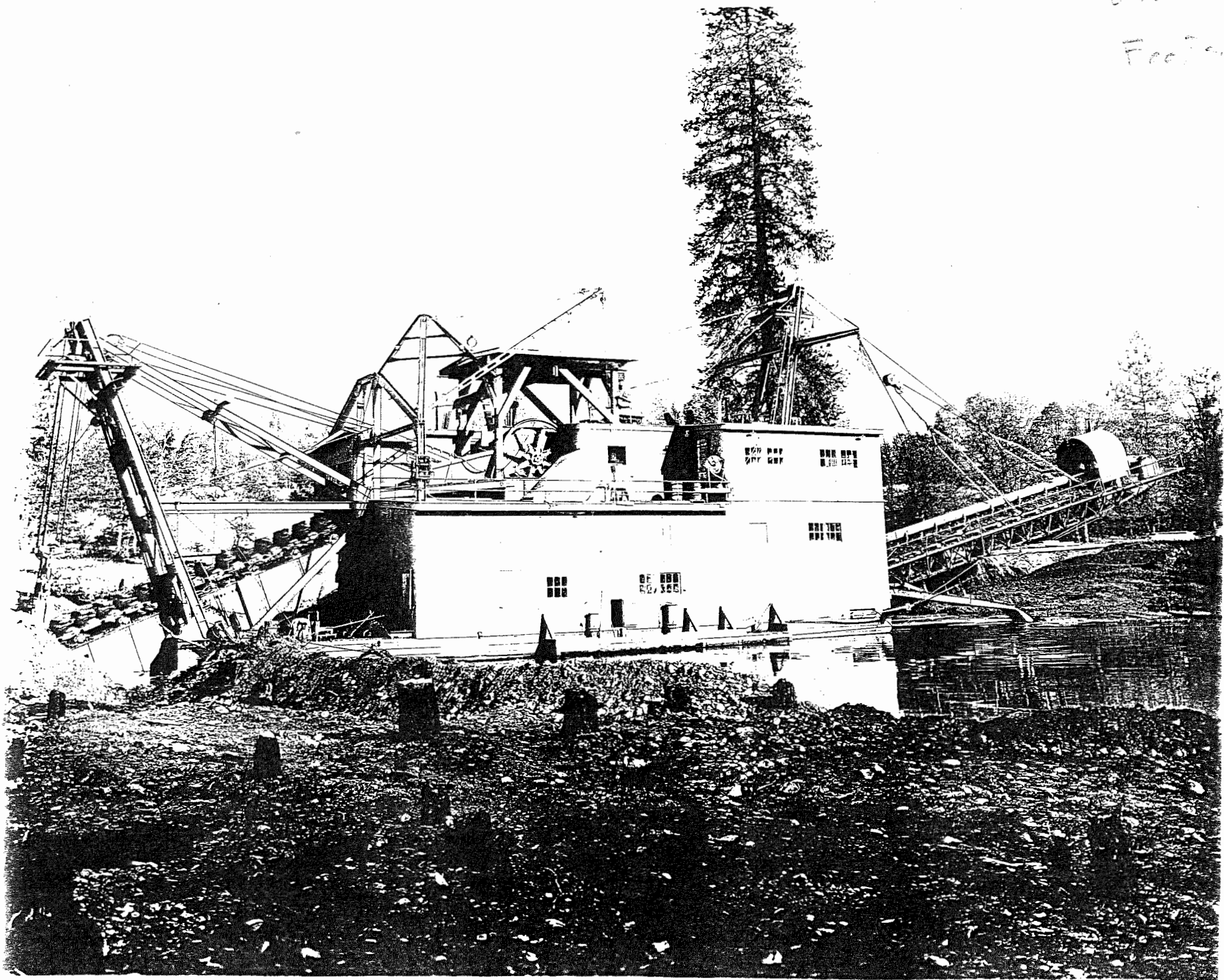
Mr. and Mrs. Benton Borough, residing near Grants Pass, visited for several days this week with Mr. and Mrs. Geo. R. Hammersly. In their home county and throughout southern Oregon generally the Borough family is known as the "largest in Josephine County". There are twelve sons and daughters in the Borough household--a sturdy American family to delight-T.R.

J.A. Calfee, for several weeks a patient at the Kelsey hospital, suffering from a dislocated neck, has recovered sufficiently to be removed to the G.W. Sperry residence, where he will be attended by his daughter, Mrs. Davidson, of Washington, and by his aged wife, who recently arrived from Ashland. The family will henceforth make their home in this city. Although 81 years of age Mr. Calfee's complete recovery is not despaired of, as a gradual but continued improvement is noted in his condition.

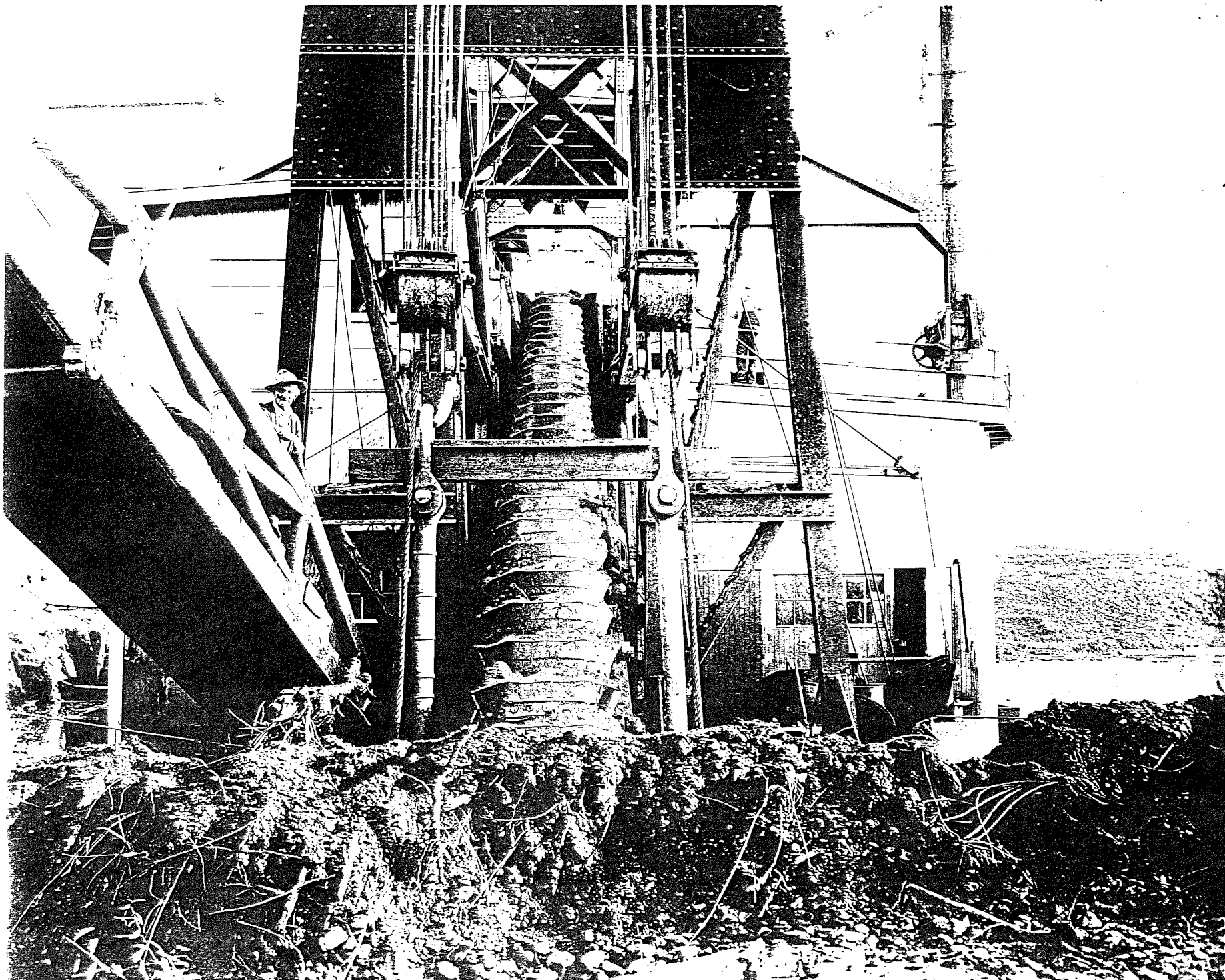
With the placing of two 15,000 pound girders at the south approach of the railroad bridge the work upon the new trestle required by the county court is brought to a close. The new work is of steel and concrete, spanning the Pacific highway, which is much broadened at that point by the improvement. The roadway will now be lowered several inches, and a drainage ditch constructed, after which the work train which has occupied a siding here for the past month, will pull out for engineering stunts elsewhere.

Knox Hammersly, late of Klamath Falls, was in this city Tuesday as the guest of his mother, Mrs. D.C. Cameron. Knox, or "Slim" as he is now known to his associates and fellow buckaroos of the Sims and Chandler Wild West show, which exhibited at Medford this week, appeared on his native streets in the full regalia of a plains rider, and made a picturesque figure for the admiration of the gaping small boys. The show is a new one, recently

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Orehead 1927  
Footers Creek



97.73.3  
around 1927  
Foot Crab

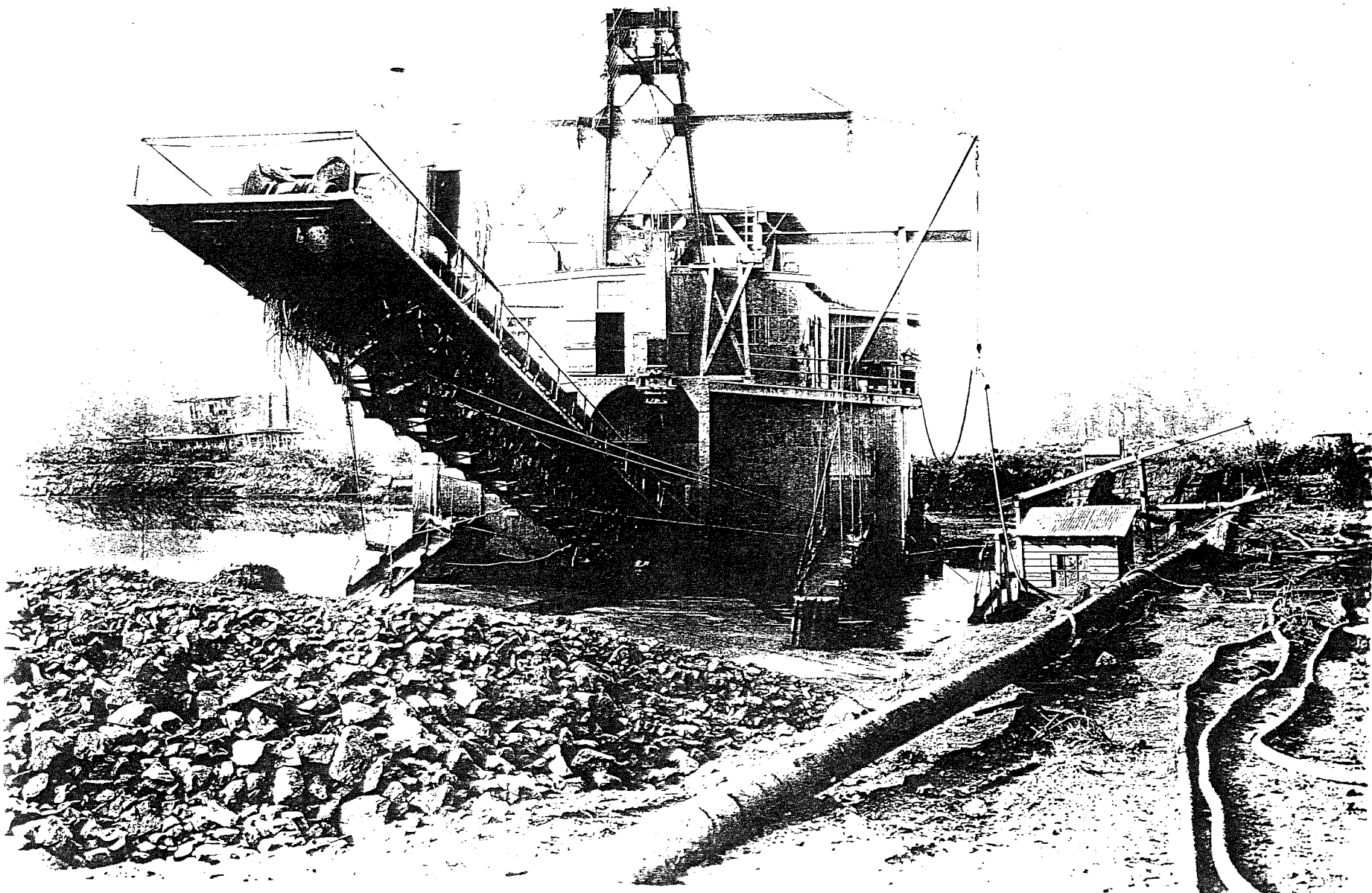




97.73.1

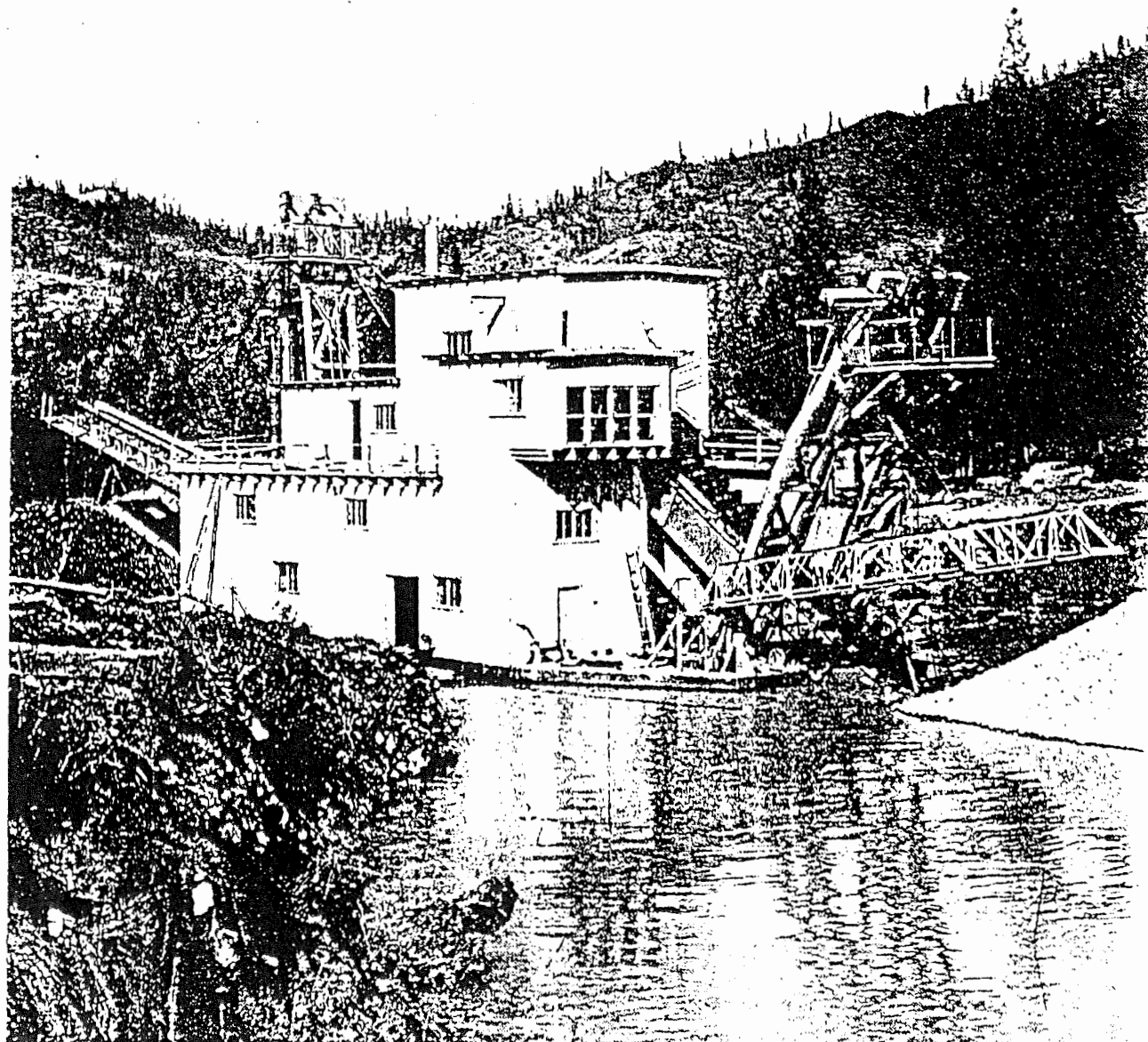
1927?

Foot's Creek

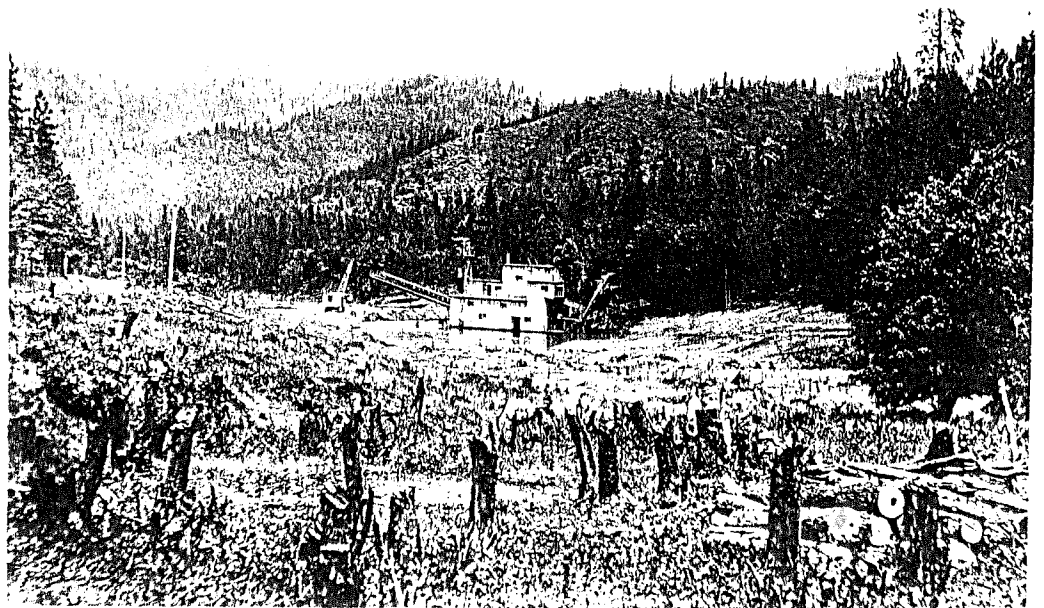


Murphy-Murray dredge on Footh Creek, Jackson County.  
Capacity 4,000 cubic yards daily, electric powered, 67  
buckets of 3½ foot capacity; dug 20 feet below water line.

*Courtesy Oregon State Dept. Geology & Mineral Industries*



97.73  
Wood Creek  
Forest 77



have been instructed to look for a man whose face bears evidence of an ill advised attempt to use the latter. It is thought that hobos made the haul.

C.W. Martin has installed a handsome street light at the News corner for the California Oregon Power company. A hollow steel stand, surmounted by three globes contained 40 watt Tungsten lamps is an improvement like unto day after darkness. The light is a sample of the system which the C.O. company will install throughout the city if their bid is favorably considered. The Rogue River Public Service corporation has also filed a bid for the city lighting. Both will be given final consideration in the near future.

The new sub-station of the California Oregon Power company in this city will be completed within ten days, according to C.W. Martin, who is in local charge of the work. The Gold Hill station will be the most modern in southern Oregon, fire proof and fool proof, with outdoor transformers. An automatic oil switch will promptly cut out the current should trouble occur at any point on the dependent line. An absolute and uniform control of current is assured. For the present the station will carry a load of 300 h.p. but by trifling alterations this may be increased to practically unlimited capacity.

#### Mrs. Flora E. Duffield

DIED: At her home in this city, on Thursday, November 5th, 1914, Mrs. Flora E. Duffield, wife of Samuel H. Duffield, at the age of sixty-two years.

Flora E. McKnight was born in the state of Wisconsin, April 22, 1852, removing in girlhood to Missouri. On October 27, 1870, she was wedded to Samuel H. Duffield at Quitman, Missouri. Three sons were born to the union; Harvey, who died in childhood; Charles E., of Dallas, Oregon; and Leslie, of Sacramento, California.

In 1877, the family came to Jackson County, where for a number of years Mr. Duffield was one of the most successful miners in the Foothills Creek place district. During recent years they made their home at their pretty Gold Hill cottage.

Six years ago Mrs. Duffield's health became impaired and she passed gradually into the invalidism that confined her to her room for the last two years.

Death came quietly in the early morning last Thursday--from heart failure attributed to her weakened state.

A simple funeral tribute and prayer was offered at the residence by Rev. C.E. Wharton Saturday afternoon, many friends attending. Interment was made at Rock Point cemetery.

Mr. Duffield wishes to sincerely thank the many whose friendship comforted throughout the long illness, and aided in the final hour of trial.

#### Mrs. Mary Smith

DIED: At her home in this city, on Saturday, November 7th, Mrs. Mary Smith, aged eighty-one years, wife of Enoch M. Smith. Funeral services were conducted at the Rock Point cemetery on Monday afternoon, a large concourse of friends from Gold Hill and the neighborhood attending.

Mrs. Smith had been ill for some time, and her death had been expected at any time within the past several weeks. A kindly neighbor and friend, she will be sincerely mourned by those who knew her best.

Much sympathy is freely extended to her aged husband, "Gardener" Smith, who keenly feels the loss of his life long