

Old-Time Miner Using Old-Time Equipment



Twenty-two years in the same cabin working the same mine on Galice Creek is the story of retirement for Bob Pancost. An old timer in the mining business, Pancost has work-

ed with silver for many years but his first love has always been gold.

The old donkey engine that he is shown operating above was used by Wes Fowler's

grandfather over thirty years ago and Pancost estimates that it is close to a hundred years old and still going strong. Pancost doesn't claim to be that old but says there are a good many years of work left in both of them.

The donkey is used to operate a lift which removes the large rocks from the placer operation and dumps them in tailings piles at the top of the 100-foot wide hole into which he has washed material with a giant.

Even though he must put the rocks on the lift it beats carrying them to the top by hand as the Chinese did, Pancost says.

The problem of the mine is that the giant cannot operate



BOB PANCOST examines an old metal reducer for a small giant, one of the first used in the Galice area. Before the advent of the metal reducers, miners used stout, re-inforced leather for the purpose.

Death Valley Scotty Mined Here in 1922

Scott of Death Valley, spectacular figure of boom days in Nevada is tramping the Siskiyou in Josephine County.

Alone, tramping the Siskiyou Mountains, with a pack train, a dog and a gun for companions, Death Valley Scotty, one of the most spectacular figures in the mining world during the boom days of Nevada, has recovered from serious wounds suffered several years ago, and is seeking gold in this vicinity.

While on a trip in the Sucker Creek district, George S. Barton, local mining man connected with the Boswell Mine, recently encountered the old prospector, whom he knew at the height of his prosperity nearly 15 years ago. Barton refused to say where Scotty is prospecting, but it was while on the Sucker Creek trip that he ran across him.

Death Valley Scotty was so named because of his mysterious trips into the famous Death Valley district, from whence he always returned with a large poke of gold, is not a man of middle age, for the old desert rat is to celebrate his 69th birthday April 3. In spite of his years he has lost none of the keenness of eye that caused men to hesitate before drawing a gun in the days that are no more.

Reticent as to his activities, Scotty gave out no reason of his tramping the hills, nor why he could be in Josephine County, when the general belief is that all he has to do is make one of his mysterious trips into

Death Valley and return with a load of gold.

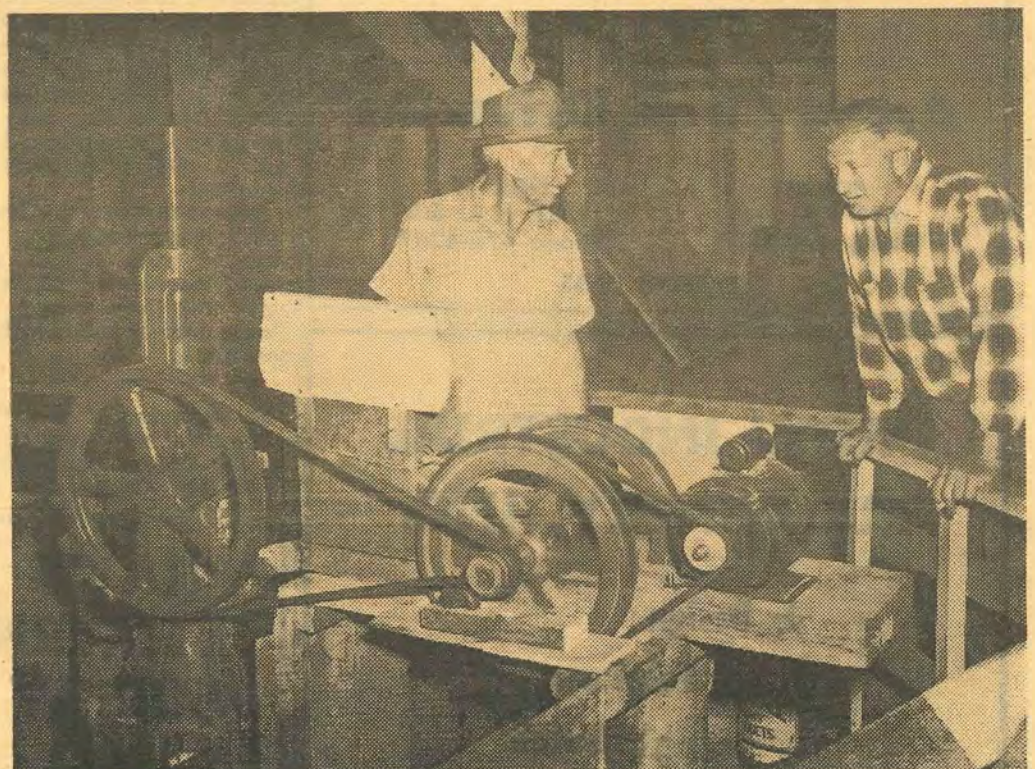
All attempts to draw him out regarding his whereabouts since he was last before the public eye failed. Scotty admitted having been seriously wounded several years ago, and is now regaining full use of one arm. Newspapers at the time carried an account of his death in a California dance hall, following the shooting.

Scotty, who is a "dry land" miner, having learned the game in desert country, in 1867, still clings to this method. Water, applied to placer mining, has no attraction for the old timer. He pans as usual, and makes assays. That his is not entirely unsuccessful is attested by Barton who saw samples of his ore.

Men who knew Scotty would at first fail to recognize him, declared Barton, who says the prospector now weighs about 160 pounds. In the old days Scotty tipped the scales better than 200 pounds, but allowing for his sojourn in the hospital, lost 75 pounds.

Among many stories is that of his habit of chartering a special train, upon returning from one of his trips to Death Valley, and spending two weeks or so at a time in New York, where his extravagance brought forth much comment. He is known to have spent thousands of dollars in a single evening in Nevada towns and in San Francisco. Upon reaching the end of his gold, Scotty would invariably disappear for a time,

(Continued on Page 4)



C. L. GARRISON, past president of Josephine County Sourdoughs, explains the workings of a small rock crusher and stamp mill to an unidentified fairgoer. Mr. Garrison built the crusher and the one-stamp mill was loaned to the Sourdough for display by Mr. Herman Wiess, a local miner.

Sourdough Gazette

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HOW TO FIND THE SOURDOUGHS

It won't be easy —because the Sourdoughs' regular meeting place, the Grants Pass Community Building burned down early this summer. But if you want to contact an officer, ask at the city recreation department. Regular meeting night is the second Tuesday of each month. We talk mining, swap yarns, drink coffee and eat donuts. Visitors always welcome.

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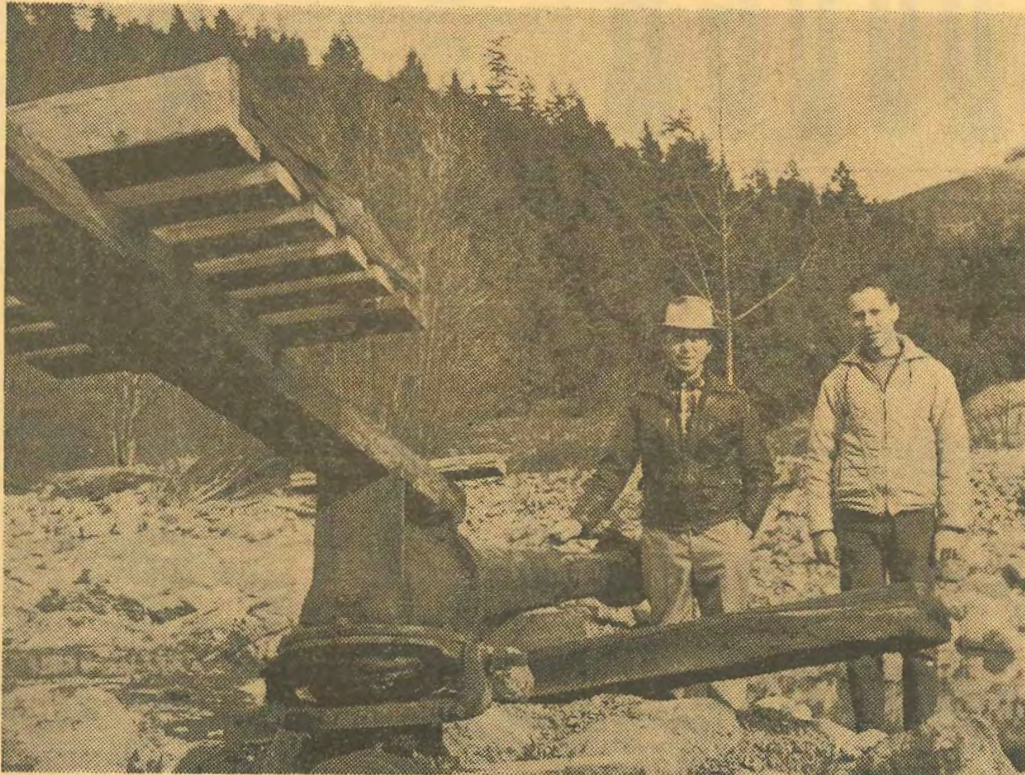
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Former Calif. Machinist Tries Hand at Mining



A different life for his son than an 8 hour day in a machine shop, a chance to work out of doors, to tackle a new challenge, to be your own boss — these were the things that led Ovie Beck to the decision to move his wife and son, Richard, from Sacramento to Wolf Creek and to exchange the world of the tool and die maker for that of a miner

Father and son, above, stand by the giant they operated recently and will operate again at the old Speaker Mine on Coyote Creek

With an eye to future real estate development, the Beck team has decided to leave the pasture land behind the giant

undisturbed and to work only on the opposite bank of the creek where, an old story has it, a vein of gold was lost in the days of the Chinese miners. The area where the rich vein was supposedly found and then lost is in the channel of an old stream and, if gold follows logic, there should be nuggets on the old bedrock.

Gold Mining In the Thirties Active in State

When the U.S. advanced the price of gold in the early thirties there was a great increase in gold mining activities throughout the West.

In Oregon a large number of dragline dredges came into the state. Several were on the tributaries of the Rogue River in Josephine and Jackson counties.

The high point of production came in 1940 when a total of 56 dredges including dry land equipment worked in the state. In addition, there were 82 hydraulic mines, 10 drift mines, and 44 hand operated properties making a total of 192 producing placers. Gold production from placers in 1940 amounted to 71,577 ounces valued at \$2,506,000.

The death blow came in October 1942 when War Production Order L-208 was put into effect. Gold miners were shut down and remained closed until July 1, 1945 when L-208 was rescinded.

Since that time a few dredges and hydraulic operations have resumed work—a bare skeleton of the pre-war industry. In early 1948 there were 5 producing dredges and 16 hydraulic operations.

In December of 1899, "quite a force" of men were at work on the Oregon Bonanza Mine on Williams Creek.

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The Becks look forward to watching their valley increase in value while they enjoy the freedom and satisfaction of their new career in mining

Too Many Coins Pose Problems

A 21-year-old woman of La Mesa, Calif. has a unique problem. It's what to do with an inheritance with a face value of \$15,525 that could be worth \$500,000, but might drop in value to \$30,000.

The woman was bequeathed 31,050 half-dollars specially minted for the 1935 California exposition. They are worth \$16 apiece, but if she disposes of them all on the market at once, the value will sink to one dollar each.

The coins represent nearly one-third of the number minted. —American Gold News

A typical comment in the spring of 1886 concerning the mining town of Waldo: "Chinatown is full of Chinamen and women, and more coming every day."

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Third Generation Miner Tries His Luck on Family Claim



Wes Fowler, has returned to the old Antler Claim on Galice Creek where he was brought for the first time when he was just three days old. The mine supported the family for many years but has been idle since 1955 when the young man went to the coast to log and remained there for 10 years. He couldn't get mining out of his blood, he admits, and when he came home one day to find that his wife had rented his house and trailer to clear the way for a return to mining, he decided the time was then or never.

Fowler has studied mining during the ten years he was away from it and feels that he can make the operation into an efficient year round business by installing a series of settling basins in the hollows created by the piles of moss covered rocks that were hand lifted out of the stream bed by the old prospectors and Chinese mine laborers. A minimum of cat work makes the basins ready to hold the runoff water from the placer operation and the mossy growth

on the rocks acts as a natural filter which retains the muddy sediment and allows the clear water to return to the stream from which it was pumped. This arrangement is similar to many used in the East, Fowler says; but seldom seen in the West. Fowler uses the pump by which he is standing in the picture above to lift the water from the stream. He then shoots

the overlay loose with the powerful stream of water and pushes the bedrock material onto a grizzly with his cat. From here it is washed over the gizzly and the gold is trapped in the bottom of the sluice boxes. He has made groceries and reasonable wages, Fowler says, since beginning work on the claim and has picked up four nuggets worth over \$100 each.

His wife and two junior high aged children are as enthusiastic about the mining life as he is; not one of them would trade their life in the old Bert Pankey cabin for the easier living in their four bedroom, two bathroom modern home in Crescent City.

Lucky Joe Mine Opened on Jump-Off Joe

Harry McFarland has opened his Lucky Joe Mine in the Jump-Off Joe mining district. It is an open pit and hydraulic operation.

Different ores are being extracted, but the basic metal is gold. The gold is showing in a with a serpentine contact. Manganese is quite prevalent and has discolored some of the rough pocket type gold.

The water supply is from a network of ditches that converge in a catch basin behind a dam. Through a system of gates the water is made to flow through 650 feet of line with a 100 foot drop to feed his No. 1 and No. 2 giants.

The hydraulic area is not yet down to bedrock. Indications are the nuggets increase in size at greater depths. The open pit is on pocket ground in an ancient slide and many quartz stringers are interlacing the formation.

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\$100,000,000 In Gold Still In Oregon

Southern Oregon is in the lap of the Gods as far as gold is concerned. As a glance at this map prepared by the Dept. of Geology and Mineral Industries will show. The placer mining industry of Oregon is over 100 years old and has been worked in the state upwards of \$100,000,000 in value of production, the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries estimates. That much or greater gold value remains in Oregon's placer gravels can hardly be doubted, the department states, so grab your gold pan and go start looking.

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Sourdough Gazette, 1968-3

News from Gold Hill, Oregon in 1886 made mention of developing an iron mine in that area.

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Past President In Alaska

Bert Michaels, past president of Josephine County Sourdoughs and always an active member, is now working at the Red Devil mine in Alaska.

The Red Devil is a mercury producer, and Bert is working as a machine maintenance man, and will also design machinery as needed. Bert went north to Alaska first, and his wife Phyllis left the middle of June this year to join him.

Bert and Phyllis have been a great help in producing this year's issue of the Sourdough Gazette, doing almost all the picture work and writing about local mining activities.

More than a thousand men were mining the beach sands south of Coos Bay in 1862.



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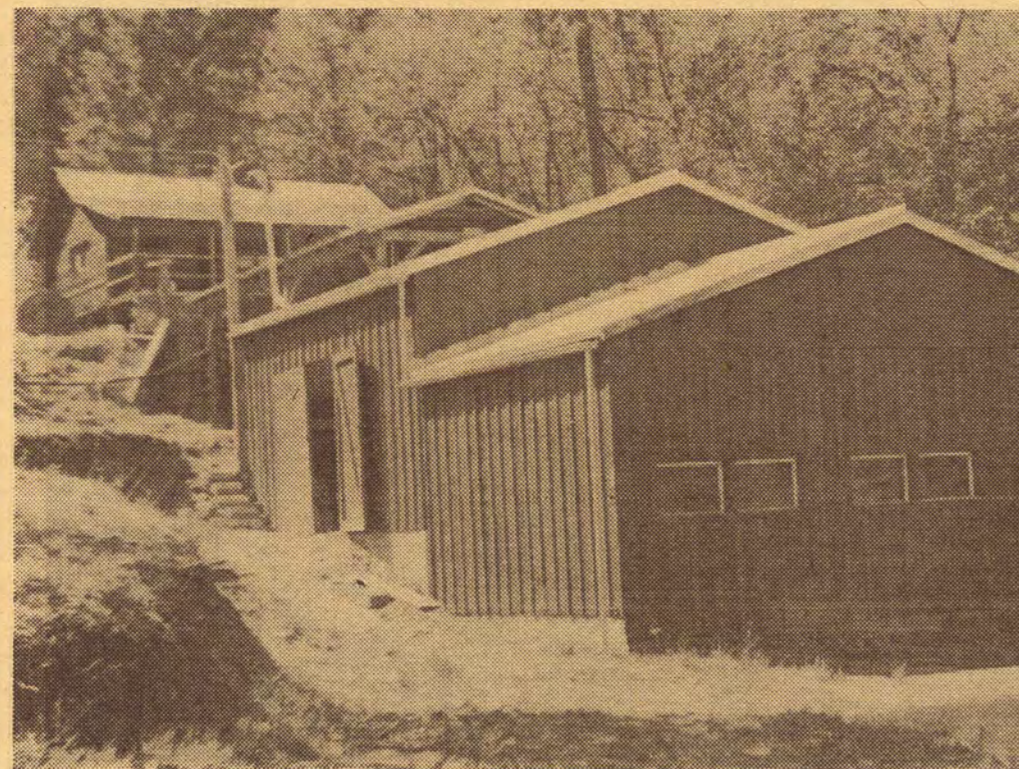
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Young Miner Builds New Mill on Old Claim



EXTERIOR VIEW of the mill building at Vallandingham's operation on Powell Creek in Josephine County. Ore is dumped at the far end, where it is run through a crusher, then conveyed to a ball mill located in the central section. After grinding and chemical treatment, the fines go through a flotation system, then washed over a concentration table in the part of the building in the foreground.

"No time for nostalgia," might be the motto above the door of Dave Vallandingham's new ore concentration mill on Powell Creek in the Williams area. This young man sees mining as a business operation where time and energy must show a consistent return on investment.

Most miners Vallandingham says, neglect their homework—assaying, testing, and checking results. A miner who will spend \$5,000 for labor and machinery won't put out \$500 for assaying, he says, and this is a fatal approach with today's lower grade ores and depressed market. A well equipped laboratory complete with retort furnace, assay scales, gold scales, makes it possible for him to do most of the laboratory work at his home.

The mine from which the ore comes is the old Dark Canyon on upper Powell Creek about five miles above the mill. The mine was a new operation in the 1930's when a surge of mining activity swept through Southern Oregon with the increase in the price of gold. It ran for many years but closed when mineral prices were not allowed to rise with the inflation of the rest of the economy.

There are three tunnels at the mine, about fifty feet apart, joined by shafts through which the ore is dropped by gravity to the bottom level where it is put in an ore car, pushed the 300 feet to the tunnel entrance and loaded on a truck headed for the mill. All of the tunnels have electricity with power generated by an old Kohler light plant. The ore lies in a vertical sandwich near the top of the mountain in solid rock. So solid, in fact, that no shoring has ever been required in the tunnels. All that was necessary to re-

open the mine was to clear the tunnels and start blasting.

At the new and efficient concentration mill, the ore is fed into a jaw crusher where it is ground up, screened, and then further pulverized in a ball mill by being rotated with a ton of steel balls. Screened into a Clark centrifugal cone separator, the heavier ore is separated from the lighter tailings which are reground or discarded. The heavier and more valuable ore is then put on the large shaker table where the heavy and light material are again separated, this time by vibration, and the heavy rock is floated off with water. The remaining fine material is retreated in flotation cells which are large stainless steel tanks. To capture every bit of the valuable mineral, chemical re-agents are added and the ore goes through what is called a sliming process. The tiny specks of mineral are coated with the chemicals and are floated off the top of the tanks into settling drums. After being dried and reduced, the concentrate is, in the case of gold, a grey powder ready for shipping to the smelter. The process is known as a ball mill flotation

plant and can handle up to 25 ton of high grade concentrate per day. The energetic young miner's plans for the future include the building of a smelter to enable him to handle the complete operation from mining the ore to preparing the mineral for market and completing the new, modern home next to the old log cabin on the banks of Powell Creek where he now lives with his wife Nancy, and baby daughter.

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Ghost Town Of Golden Well Named

The mining town of Golden, located on Coyote Creek, about 3½ miles from the town of Wolf Creek, was so named in the early days by S. C. Ruble, inventor of the Ruble elevator, used extensively in placer mining.

In the early 90s there were approximately 50 men placer mining on the creek and about 150 inhabitants in and about the town. There was a general store there operated by Ruble, and later operated by Columbus Bennett. Golden had a post-office.

Placer miners had been operating on the creek for many years and in the late 1850s, when the white men left for Salmon River district during the gold excitement in that section, the Chinese came and worked the creek. There were about 500 of the Orientals placer mining on Coyote Creek, but when the miners returned from the Salmon River district they drove the Chinese out.

Among the early miners were Henry Smith, who conducted a store, Jack Morris, Coyote Smith — who was justice of the peace—J. Robinson, who had a rich placer at the mouth of the gulch bearing his name.

In the town still standing are several cabins, old residences, and the church building, long unused. The church, which was organized in the late 1890s was a Campbellite church, with W. Ruble Jr. as pastor. It was short-lived. The Free Methodists organized later.

There is no estimate of the amount of gold extracted along Coyote Creek, but it has been mined all down the years, and is still producing. — From the Daily Courier, April 3, 1935.

Death Valley Scotty

(Continued from Page 1) and then suddenly come back with a sack of gold.

A story is told of his coming into a saloon upon his return from a trip calling upon all to drink to his health. A large sack was tossed carelessly into a corner. Those who were curious sought to learn its contents. Upon being opened it was found that the wily prospector had caught a rattlesnake which lay upon the gold, guarding it from trespass.

Scotty realizes he is not as young as might be, and indicated that he would retire from an active life upon making another strike. Commenting upon his exploits, he remarked, "He thought he was old enough now to show better judgment."

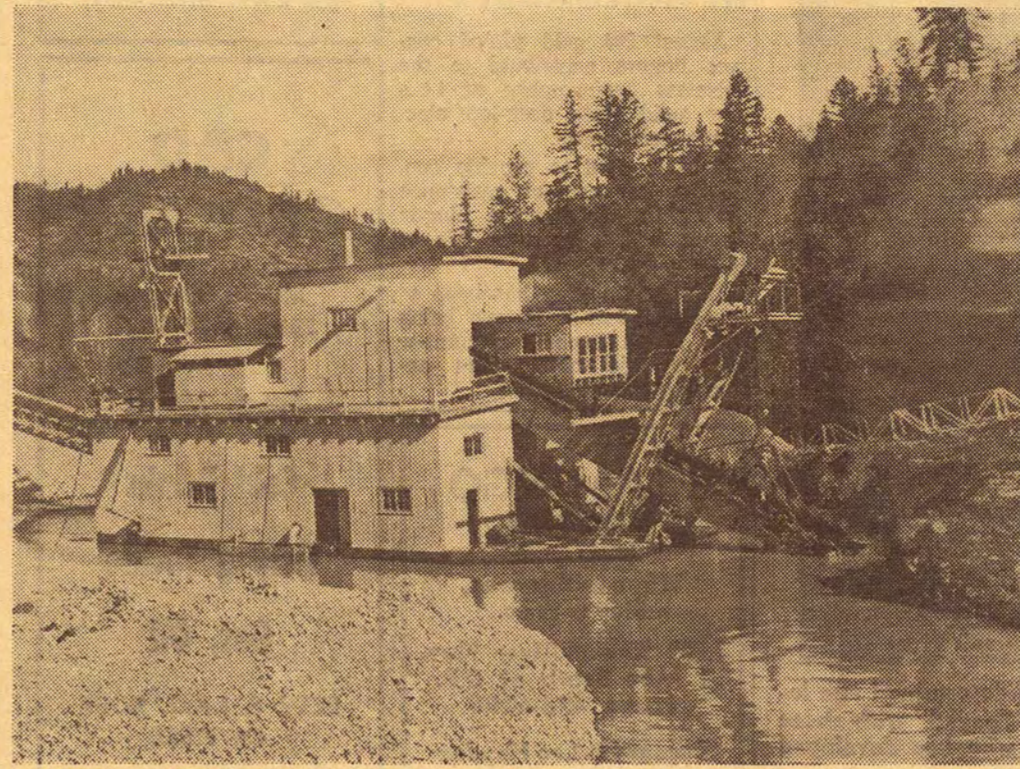
Mining men are at a loss to understand why he is interested in looking over this section, as it is generally believed he has several rich caches in Death Valley. They cannot explain why the old miner does not return to fields with which he is familiar, instead of roaming the Siskiyou. — From the Rogue River Courier Weekly of Jan. 27, 1922.

Josephine County Sourdoughs

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Gold Dredge Activities Here in the Thirties



(Article in Jan. 27, 1934 Courier)

Largest gold mining operation in Southern Oregon from the angle of total investment, annual payroll and amount of material mined each year is that of the Rogue River Gold Co. which operates its dredges on Graves Creek 20 miles North of Grants Pass. D. H. Perry is the vice president and manager and H. E. Henderson foreman of the crew which varies from 25 to 75 men. At present 64 men are on the payroll including the clearing crew which works with large scale logging equipment for several months each year removing the heavy forests and blasting and pulling stumps in advance of the dredge.

The dredge is actually a 1,000 ton ship floating and moving about on a deep, 3 acre lake which the dredge excavates for itself as it moves ahead storing all the excavated material in place behind the boat except the floating silt which is pumped out of the pond into extensive settling basins to make new, rich agriculture lands where none existed before. Originally, the ground before it is dredged is worthless for any other purpose being rocky and covered with thick trees and brush on a high hillside; the clearing costs alone of \$300 per acre would make the land prohibitive for farming even if the soil were fit for growing anything.

In contrast to the simple operation of a power shovel digging with its single bucket and requiring much time to swing and dump, the dredge digs steadily as the boat swings itself in the arc of a circle, the continuous chain of 70 manganese steel buckets gouging into the solid, tight gravel and bedrock elevating the material to

the hopper above the top deck whence it passes through a perforated revolving screen where the material is disintegrated, washed and sorted, the "fines" passing over gold-saving tables while the coarse material is ejected on a 100 ft. long belt conveyor in a steady stream to high tailing piles. The dredge is 250 ft. long from the front of the bucket line to the end of the tailing stacker.

The dredge does the work of 2,500 miners. Everything is mechanical. No human hand touches the material from the time it is excavated from beneath the water until the waste is discharged in the rear.

The machinery is driven by 15 motors aggregating 700 horsepower. Each of the 70 buckets weighs a ton empty and carries one half ton of the material. The dredge has a capacity of 8,600 cu. yds. or 13,000 tons per day. A quartz mill handling 100 tons a day is considered large in Oregon. This dredge handles 8,000 tons almost every day of the year, working three shifts, day and night.

After operating on Foothills Creek for 7 years, the dredge was dismantled and hauled to Grave Creek and about half of its material used in the reconstruction of the present dredge. The transfer took 5 months and employed 75 men. The dredge has run continuously since it started operating on Grave Creek on Sept. 25, 1935 except for occasional shutdowns for a day or two at a time for repairs.

Even while operating on Foothills Creek, this dredge was the strongest of its size in the world. To contend with the extremely tough formation on Grave Creek the dredge was reconstructed much stronger but after running a few months

Effect of Gold on Soldered Joints

A recent investigation showed that heavily plated components soldered with 60-40 lead-tin solder need not form inferior joints. Flat springs were plated with a minimum of 0.2 mil of gold and soldered to pre-tinned copper wire. Pull tests resulted in shear separation of the springs rather than of the joints. Field reliability tests confirm the laboratory results.

TREASURE SOUGHT

Forty thousand dollars in gold dust has been sought frequently by many who have heard the tale of buried gold out in the Kerby area. Two robbers held up and murdered an itinerant peddler traveling through the mining camps of the valley as he left the mines bound for Crescent City.

It was believed the peddler had about that much gold in his possession when he met his untimely end at the crossing of the little bridge on Whiskey Creek where the old Waldo-Crescent City roads joined. The outlaws were captured and hung at Crescent City.

As they were lead to the gallows, one of the men turned and threw a Bible to a friend in the crowd. It was announced that the Bible contained directions for finding the spot where they had buried the peddler's gold dust. —From the Courier's Silver

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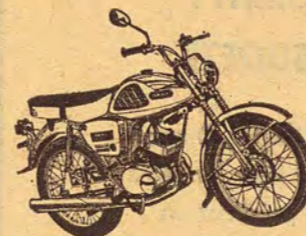
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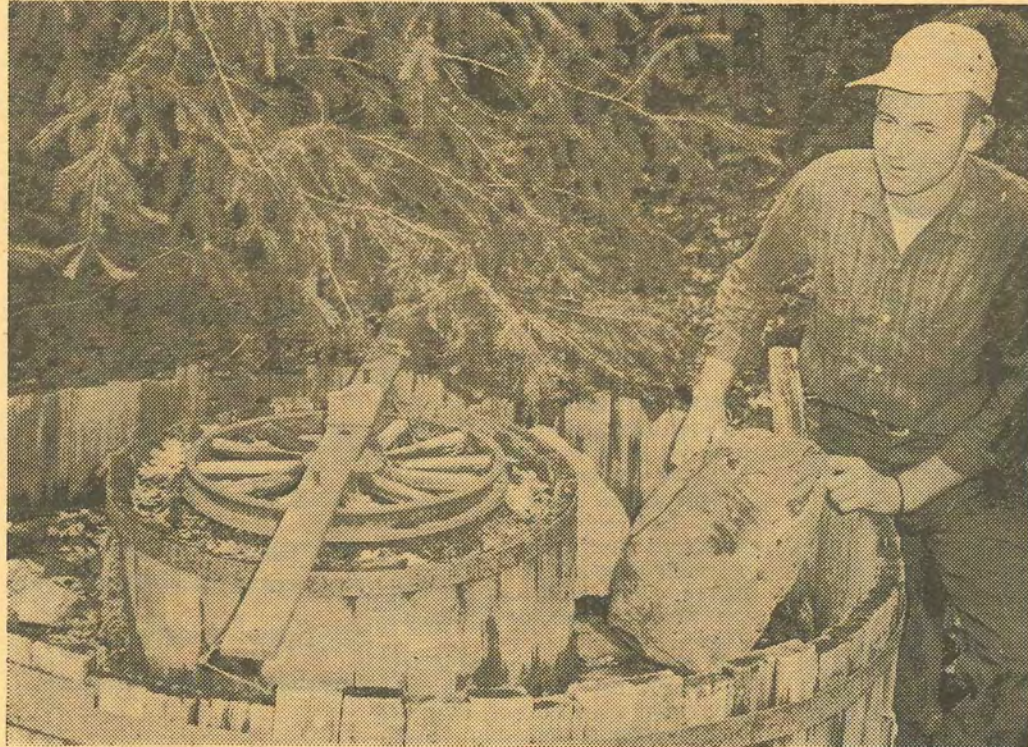
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RICHARD WINTERBOTTOM looks over an old arrastra of undetermined age located at the Greenback Mine near King Mountain. The arrastra is "paved" with shoes discarded from old stamp mills. Winterbottom is a local logger who has developed quite a bit of interest in local mining history.

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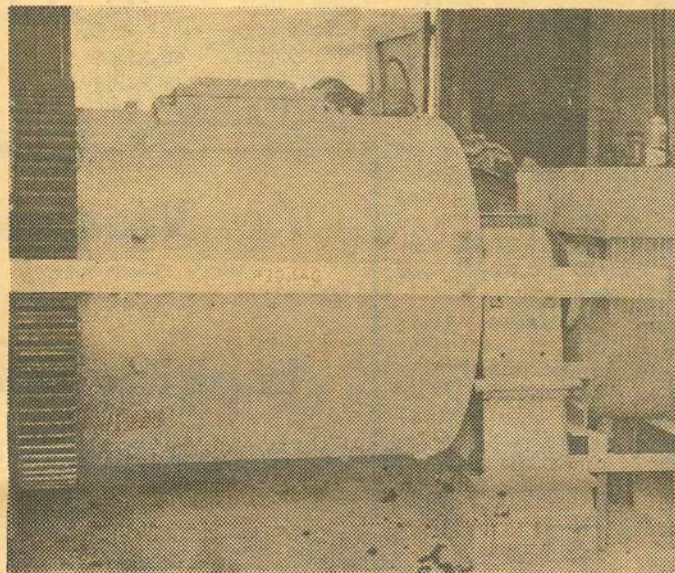
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There's a cat in the valley with long whiskers and tail, And he is in charge of the Hunky-Bunk jail.

The jail has no lock, no roof and no floor, And the sides of the jail are one open door.

So bring all your trouble, and have never a fear, In Hunky-Bunk Valley, they'll just disappear.

When the sun, it is set and you've watched its last glow. Then it's time in the Valley to beddy-bye go.

Sweet dreams you may have at the Hunky-Bunk fair, Out in the Valley past those hills over there.

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Waldo Was Richest Gold Camp

Waldo proved to be the richest mining camp in Josephine County in the early days. More miners made small fortunes there than at any other camp. The early mining in Waldo was shallow and easily worked. There were no large boulders as were usually encountered in other camps of the county. It was not an unusual occurrence in the early days of Waldo for an individual miner to make from \$10,000 to \$30,000 in a few months, while the main company that owned the main ditches and water rights, with large forces of men, took out large fortunes.

One company in Allen Gulch employed 50 men at one sluice—just pick and shovel—and kept working for a number of years. A great number of foreigners were at this camp in those early days. It was a very usual occurrence to hear French, Spanish, German and Italian spoken all over the camp.

There were many Catholics among them who erected a Catholic Church in Allen Gulch, the richest place in that camp. It was the first church in the county.

The principal water company sold water all over the camp to the miners, the water being brought from the East Fork of the Illinois River. Colonel Preston (after whom Preston Peak was named) was general superintendent for the company, and was highly respected by all who knew him. Robert (Bob) Jordan was foreman in the mines for the company. Jordan was not so well liked. He was considered too hard and tyrannical by the working men.

Some of the pioneer merchants at Waldo were Guthrie, Crandall & Wertz, Logan & Thompson, A. B. McElwain; also the three O'Regan brothers, Peter, Dan and John, who were early day merchants at Althouse. In the early days of the camp a large, well-equipped livery stable was full of fine rigs and horses (mostly Spanish) as soon as the roads would permit.

The Salvation Army cares for victims of leprosy at six centers in Asia, Africa and South America.

Spanish Coin Found in Old Logan Mine

In July of 1916 occurred the discovery of an old Spanish coin in the sluices of the Logan Mine, located near Waldo. The coin bore the date of 1784 and is held to establish the approximate date of the gold seeking operations of the Spaniards in Southwestern Oregon.

Findings made in the deep gravel during the past generation (before 1916) have confirmed the belief that Spaniards visited this section of Oregon in quest of gold antedating any local history. The Logan Mine, then the Simmons Mine, was first worked in 1852. A small crucifix, much worn and corroded was washed from a gravel bank into the sluices and still later a small metal pendant bearing the Latin legend "Mater Dolorama — Ora Pro Nobis." This surrounds the figure of a saint whose heart is pierced by seven daggers.

On the reverse side is a likeness of the crucifixion. This and the crucifix are thought to establish the early work of the Franciscan friars who founded the mission at Monterrey in 1770 and later founded the mission Dolores in San Francisco.

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JUST A FEW of the 85 gold panning fans that participated in the Josephine County Sourdough field day along the Rogue River in the summer of 1967. Cecil Bobell is showing Swiss G. Aberhard how to operate a gold pan while Mrs. Aberhard and daughters keep a wary eye on the photographer.



DATING BACK to the time of Agricola, circa 1550, is the belief that vinegar is better than water for washing gold. The belief evidently persists to later times according to the evidence of many empty vinegar bottles at the Howland Mine, located in the Silver Creek drainage area.

Robber Returns After Years

The year 1857 was the liveliest one around Waldo. There was hand mining all over, in every little gulch. There were occasional robberies and the times were rough.

Homer White was working at the Esterly mine in 1919. One afternoon a fellow passing through stopped and talked to White. He told White he had been there in the old days when

the town was full of people, and he asked White if those three cabins were, in a row. White pointed out the place to him. The cabins had been gone long ago. They looked the ground over, figured out where each cabin had stood. Then they got to talking about the time the sluice boxes were robbed, and although the fellows who did the stealing were caught, the gold was never found. Soon they said "so long" and White went home and the other fellow went on down the road.

The next morning White got to thinking about that, and he went over to take a look at the place where the three cabins had stood. Where the middle cabin had been was a hole, freshly dug. White knew then that the fellow had been one of the robbers, and that he had used him to find the place where he had buried the stolen gold, years before. — From the Courier Diamond Anniversary Edition.

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