

# SOURDOUGH

VOLUME VII, NUMBER 1, 1974



# GAZETTE

SOURDOUGH GULCH, JOSEPHINE COUNTY, OREGON

PRICE 25¢

## A New Look At Modern Mining

by Ralph S. Mason

Mining in Oregon began with the discovery of gold at Jacksonville in 1851. That same year gold was also discovered at Griffin Gulch, not far from Baker. The next quarter of a century saw a full-fledged gold rush in Oregon. Placer gold, found in the streams and later in the adjacent banks, formed the basis for this tremendous activity, which brought thousands of people to the state, provided a wilderness society with an abundance of wealth, and established the first semblance of a legal structure. It is significant that Oregon became a state long before much of the territory lying to the east, mainly because of the search for gold.

The abuses perpetrated by the early-day miners are common knowledge. However, miners were not alone. The farmer, the stockman, the logger—all moved to Oregon because of the land. Many brought injurious practices with them and left wreckage behind. The prospect of limitless land and an abundance of natural resources made conservation of any kind uneconomic and unheard of.

Once the easily obtainable stream placers were exhausted, miners turned first to the gold-bearing stream banks and later to the rich veins cropping out of the hillsides. To work the banks required capital and in many instances water for the hydraulic giants. Ditches to supply the water were dug by hand, often in record time, in mountainous un-surveyed areas. The Auburn Canal, the Rye Valley Ditch, the Sparta Ditch, and the Eldorado Ditch were completed in the 1860's and '70's. The Eldorado Ditch, incidentally, was 100 miles long, an engineering feat which would be of major proportions even today with earth-moving machinery. To mine underground required even more financing and for the first time the large mining companies appeared. The completion of the transcontinental railroads in the 1880's signalled the beginning of a period of intensive mining and milling, which was to continue, with some fluctuations, until World War II and the ill-advised government order L-208, which permanently closed nearly all of the state's metal mines. Gold dredging in Oregon began in earnest about 35 years ago. In 1938 there were 12 dredges active in eastern Oregon; in 1939 the state had 15 floating dredges and 13 nonfloating washing plants. Gold dredging came to an abrupt halt with World War II, and only a few attempts have been made to revive it since.

Of all the mining activity in the state during the past 121 years, none has been subjected to more criticism than gold dredging. Admittedly there were abuses, but the outcry has been largely based on an emotional rather than a factual basis. In 1939, a total of .0015 percent of the state's crop land was dredged. Translated, this amounts to only 70 acres. It has been estimated

that if all of the potential dredgeable ground should be dredged it would amount to .04 percent of the state's crop land.

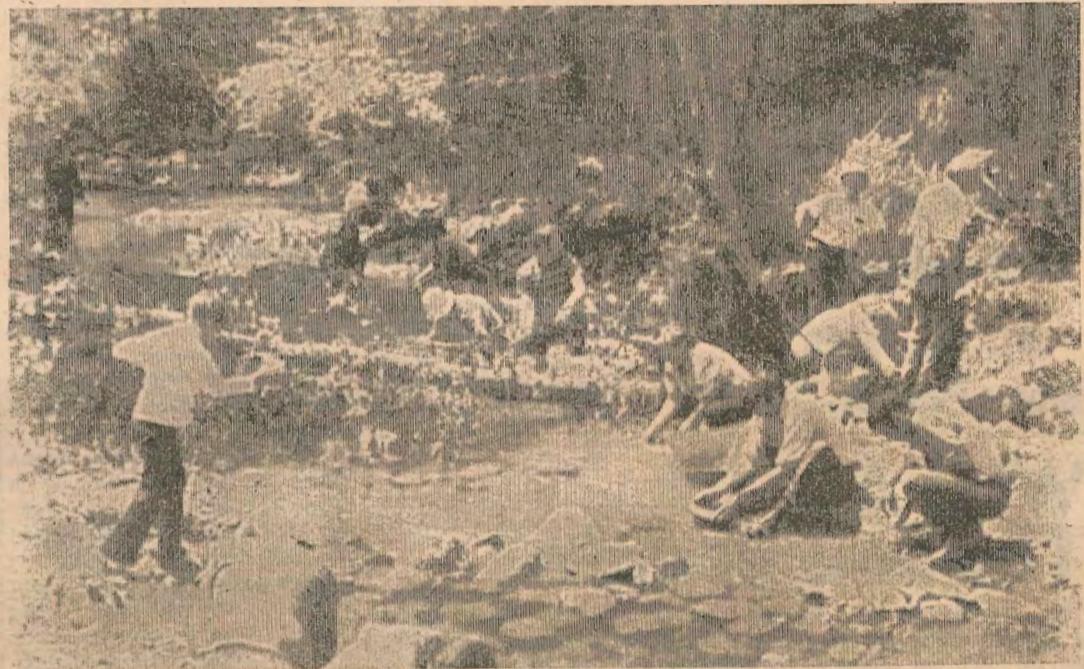
Land abuse and stream pollution are always related. The relationship is sometimes obvious, as in some dredging where water is muddied and silt introduced into the stream. In other instances, the tie between land abuse and stream pollution is not so readily apparent. An over-cropped farm or a hillside stripped of trees will eventually pollute the streams with topsoil and silt. The big difference is that pollution from dredging occurs at the time of the operation, but pollution from poor farming or logging takes place during periods of heavy rain when the muddy water is assumed to be due to "natural" causes.

Today the mining industry presents a far different picture from that of 50 years ago. Mining companies have largely replaced the individual operator who was primarily interested in immediate return rather than a long-term investment. The high cost of setting up any type of industry today requires a long period for amortization and the assurance that it will be permitted to stay in business. The mining industry is particularly vulnerable to this situation, with amortization periods of 20 years or more required for most large-scale operations.

Mining has recognized that it must accept its share of community responsibility, just as manufacturers and logging companies have done. Any well-established business realizes that good public relations are a "must." Mining companies also have learned that it is good business to police their own ranks rather than to have punitive and restrictive legislation forced upon them. A few examples of present-day mining company reclamation practices illustrate this point. In the southeastern United States, areas which have been mined for bauxite by ALCOA have been reseeded to trees which are tended as carefully as our own tree farms in the Northwest.

Here in Oregon, Reynolds Metals Co. is also in the tree farm business—before they have started to mine bauxite. In Washington and Columbia Counties, where this company owns a considerable acreage of land underlain by ferruginous bauxite, a two-fold program of restoration and timber cutting is underway. Much of this land had been cut over, was brush covered, and was nonproductive when purchased by the company. Incidentally, much of this area was made unproductive by bad cutting practices of early loggers.

Some of the Reynolds' land has reseeded naturally, and trees are being harvested on an individual basis with care exercised to prevent damage to surrounding trees. In other areas, the land has been reforested and some of the trees are approaching marketable size. Several planted areas are designed for Christmas



From Florida to Hawaii, Indiana to California, to name a few places, more than 100 people got together at Sourdough Panning Park on Coyote Creek June 18. Old and young, tall and short, thin and er—not so thin would-be gold miners gathered together with Sourdough instructors to have a panning good time. They brought gold pans, frying pans and pie pans and lots of enthusiasm and energy. Everybody found some color and a few lucked out with larger flakes and nuggets, with one man finding a pretty piece of wire gold in his pan. --Photo Courtesy Courier

## Simulated Gold Rush At Allen Creek

by Marvin Ramsey

On Thursday, May 30, 1974, Ray Macfarlane, John Kerby, and Marvin Ramsey were invited to the Allendale School by Judy Elliott and Tom Wicklin, fourth grade teachers, to participate and instruct a panning bee.

First, at the class room, Ray Macfarlane exhibited his collection of real money or hard money consisting of gold and silver coins which is getting to be a rarity since we are now operating on soft money instead of hard money. There was a class of fifty students and some of the mo-

thers were present and were quite intrigued by the specimens of hard money.

We marched route step about a quarter of a mile to Allen Creek where the panning was conducted. Macfarlane, Kerby, and Ramsey took the lead and the teachers and mothers stood by and watched fifty fourth grade students try their hand at panning; they were eager to learn the art of panning for gold. Allen Creek is not a very rich gold bearing stream. We found black sand concentrates and a few flakes of brass, but no visible gold.

## Re-Opening Planned For The Brass Ledge Mine

The general manager, Steve McTimmonds, of the Brass Ledge Copper Mine located in the Galice Mining District on Peavine Mountain says that the owner, James R. Toone of San Diego, California, plans on resuming production in August, of copper ore under contract with the American Smelting and Refining Smelter in Tacoma, Washington.

Planned production is 50 tons per week of lump ore. The ore will be hauled 19 miles via truck from the open pit at the mine to the railhead at Merlin, Oregon. Recent preliminary exploration cuts have revealed several new mineralized zones on the property. These will be drilled later to determine size, grade, and mineability. The ore shipped under the present contract will be from the #1 vein or main vein as it is called.

Several men will be employed in the operation which will run

## Have You Heard This One Yet?

As Moses was laboring in bondage in the muddy flood plain of the Nile River, wondering how to make his daily quota of bricks without having access to any straw, the Lord appeared to him and said, "Moses, I have some good news for you and some bad news; which would you like to hear first?"

It having been a hard day, Moses said, "Oh Lord, I would like to hear the good news first."

"Then hear:" said the Lord, "I shall devastate the land of your oppressors; I shall change water into blood, I shall turn day into night, I shall lead your people out of slavery and into the promised land."

"Oh, wonderful," said Moses. "And what, Lord, is the bad news?"

"We, Moses," replied the Lord, "You will have to prepare the environmental impact statement."

## Stake Your Claim

Vacant public surveyed or un-surveyed lands are open to prospecting, and upon discovery of mineral, to location and purchase as are also lands in national forest in the public-land States, land entered or patented under the stock-raising homestead law (title to minerals only can be acquired), lands entered under other agricultural laws but not perfected, where prospecting can be done peaceably, and lands within the railroad grants for which patents have not issued.

Rights to mineral lands owned by the United States, are initiated by prospecting for minerals thereon, and upon the discovery of mineral, by locating the lands upon which such discovery has been made. A location is made by staking the corners of the claim, posting notice of location thereon and complying with the state laws. (Continued on the back page)

8-12, 1974

# SOURDOUGH GAZETTE

Published By  
**JOSEPHINE COUNTY SOURDOUGHS, INC.**

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Grants Pass, Or. 97526**

## Who Are The Sourdoughs?

The Sourdoughs are a group of people, although they may not all own an interest in a mine, do have interest in mining activities and mining problems.

The group meets the first Wednesday of each month, at 8 p.m., in the Women's Club Auditorium, 6th and B Streets, Grants Pass. The business meeting is usually followed by a session of informal discussion and refreshments. Meetings of the Sourdoughs are open to the public and visitors are welcome.

Among Sourdough activities is operation of Sourdough Gulch during the Josephine County Fair. The Gulch consists of a

## Nickel Exploration In S. W. Oregon

by LEN RAMP  
Geologist

Oregon Department of Geology  
and Mineral Industries

A few mining companies are currently showing considerable interest in the nickel-bearing lateritic soils of southwestern Oregon and northern California. A lot of claims have been staked in Josephine, Curry and Del Norte Counties and exploration work including bulldozer trenching, back-hoe sample pits and drilling have been and are being conducted in a number of areas.

The principal areas of interest in Josephine County include Eight Dollar Mountain, Woodcock Mountain, Rough and Ready Ridge and a few patches in the drainage area of Rough and Ready Creek. The deposits are by-products of weathering which has

developed soils and saprolites over periodotite. The laterites and saprolites contain in the range of 0.5 to 1.0 percent nickel. They are relatively shallow deposits, generally less than 50 feet in depth, and occur in scattered patches of from 5 to 500 acres. At the current price for nickel of \$1.50 to \$1.62 per pound, the necessity of having a processing plant situated near the deposits before they can be considered "ore" appears obvious.

Considerable research is being conducted on winning nickel metal from laterites and improved hydrometallurgical techniques have been developed. I believe it is very likely that we will see another nickel plant in Oregon in the relatively near future.

During the early 1970's Hanna Mining Co. has been mining in excess of 2 million tons of crude ore each year from the Nickel Mountain deposit near Riddle in Douglas County. From this ore in 1970 and 1971 this smelter has produced about 26 million pounds of nickel metal which is contained in ferronickel.

A recent increase in production at Hanna's smelting operation saw 33,278,000 pounds of nickel produced in 1972 and 30,748,000 pounds produced in 1973. This latter figure represents a gross value of a little more than \$60 million.

The Hanna Mine and Smelter operation employs about 500 persons and is the only producing nickel mine in the United States. Should we be fortunate enough to get a new nickel plant in the Illinois Valley area, or elsewhere in southwestern Oregon, it would have an important stabilizing effect on our economy. Our present economic base is mainly in timber industries, recreation, and agriculture. The broadening economic base is mainly in timber industries, recreation, and agriculture. The broadening of our economic base to include mining would be very beneficial.

The State of Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries has recently launched a nickel resources study project in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Mines. The plan is to investigate all areas where nickel deposits may occur and determine tonnage and grade figures that can be fed into the Bureau of Mines Availability System (MAS computer system). The principal area of nickel enrichment will be mapped and sampled on a reconnaissance style. The results of the survey are to be published by the State and made available to the general public.



Long-time Sourdough and eager-beaver panner is Harvey Dickey, doing a bit of solo panning at the Sourdough Gold Panning Field Day June 18. The place was Sourdough Panning Park, about 2 miles up Coyote Creek from Wolf Creek off-ramp. Site is just above Miller Creek road bridge. Panning is allowed in the park, but sluicing and dredging is prohibited. The park is made available to Josephine County Sourdoughs and persons wishing to pan for gold through courtesy of Josephine County Commissioners.

—Photo Courtesy Courier

Josephine County Sourdoughs meet the first Wednesday of each month at the Woman's Club building, NW corner of th and B Streets. We generally talk mining, swap yarns, drink coffee, eat donuts, brag a lot and sometimes back up the bragging by showing gold in various forms - nuggets, flakes, and dust. Meetings start at 8 p.m. and visitors are always welcome.

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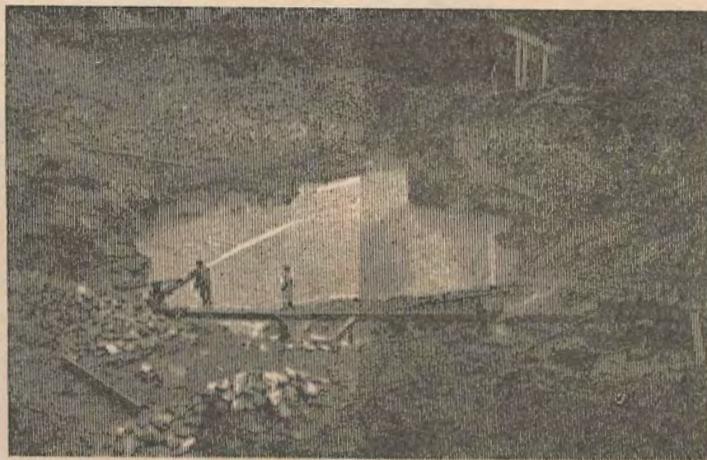
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Loy Yokum is manning the giant, washing paydirt into a sluice box on the 3L Mine on Lower Grave Creek. Mrs. Yokum is standing by making sure that Loy does a good job.

## Is There Another Like This One?

From Files of  
Rogue River Courier,  
June 23, 1904

The most wonderful gold discovery ever reported in Oregon was made a week ago Sunday by Ray Briggs by pure accident. The boy, who is 18 years of age, was hunting on a mountain near Thompson creek and stumbled onto a ledge of almost pure gold cropping out of the surface. The find was of such magnitude that the boy, miner that he is, could not realize that he had made a record breaking strike. He carefully gathered up a double handful of the best specimens and secured a chunk of the quartz about the size of a candle box, which he took home to his father's placer mine. The rock was quickly crushed in a hand mortar and it yielded nearly \$800. The next morning found the Briggs families, David Briggs and two sons, George Briggs and Charles Howard and son at the place of the find and three claims were staked out. Then

began active mining with a hand mortar and in two hours they had secured \$2000. By night rich quartz was stacked up in piles. By Thursday night they had mortared out \$25,000. An additional \$7,000 has been taken out Saturday. The gold is found in decomposed quartz, and in some instances the gold being in layers of inch or more in thickness and standing on edge with a layer of decomposed quartz sprinkled with chunks of gold along-side. Already prospectors are scouring the hills and a stampede is expected.

(Ed. Note: Some people say that all the good gold, all the easy gold has been found in Josephine County. Other miners contend there are still many opportunities to find gold, if one takes time and patience. They say a lot of ground here has never been seriously prospected as it does not have a gold "history".)

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## Scarcity Of Gold

from the Ore Bin  
April 1973

Gold has been sought and mined for more than 6,000 years, not just by individuals but by kings, governments, conquerors, adventurers, and corporations. All five continents and many of the world's islands have been searched and mined. The airplane, helicopter, four-wheel-drive automobile, and the shallow-draft motor boat have opened the wilderness and made it easy of access. Scarcely any virgin land or unexplored area where gold might be found remain, except the sea floor, and it is receiving increasing attention. Gold never was plentiful in the past nor is it plentiful today.

The scarcity of gold is a continuing fact which the monetary authorities refuse to recognize. In spite of statements to the contrary, the world has never suffered from a surplus of gold, even when the discovery of great bonanzas doubled the gold stocks.

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## "Let's Go Prospecting"

The first step in meeting our challenge of supplying the metals of tomorrow is to find new mines. The first step in finding a new mine is a prospecting trip. I am quite certain that everyone of you small miners have your own ideas on how and where to go prospecting. I don't think that my comments will astound you, but perhaps you can apply some of them to your own pet area.

I believe that you can identify two broad methods of prospecting, a random method and a scientific method. I would say that a person using the random method has a decreasingly small chance of finding a new mine. However, this is the method by which most of our base metal mines were found. In this method a person takes his rock pick or fishing rod or hunting rifle and takes off into parts unknown to see what he can see. The main problem involved here is that he isn't the first person to do this at his place. Thus the chances of finding something by kicking over a rock are rather small. However, he may stumble across someone else's prospect pit that was dug many years ago and therein find something that is of value now that wasn't when the pit was dug. Thus there is still a place for this method.

The scientific method of prospecting is rather painstaking but is the method by which we will find the majority of our new mines. This is the method that the big mining companies use at considerable expense. Now the small miner can't afford to go to much expense, so how does he use this method? To answer this,

first, I had better explain exactly what I mean by the scientific method.

This method could also be called an indirect method as opposed to a direct method where you find the mine by picking up a chunk of ore. In the indirect method you use your head a little bit. Suppose that you were out looking over a forested hillside and you noticed a line of big trees, each one of them showing effects of being struck by lightning. Now don't just sit there and say isn't that interesting, go over and see if you can determine why. I know of a large fluorite vein that was traced in exactly this manner. Either the vein matter was nourishing to the trees and they grew taller, or the vein itself was a better conductor that the surrounding rock and thus attracted the lightning strikes through the trees. In any event, the miners who noticed this phenomenon were able to develop their mine much easier than they would have otherwise.

There are quite a few indirect methods that the small miner can use without spending much money. The oldest and most overlooked is the gold pan. A great many of our big mining districts were found with the gold pan. Among them are Leadville and the Comstock. However, the Comstock could have been found several years sooner than it was had someone been fortunate enough to identify the strange black sand that kept clogging up the riffles in the sluice boxes

**PASSING THE GAVEL** is Wesley Pierer, out-going president of Josephine County Sourdoughs, to Len Schaffer, new president. Wes Pierer has been known a long time to local residents as a miner and logger, working hard at both jobs. Schaffer, a once active miner, spends his time now on real estate, gardening, and part-time advertising salesman. Both men are strong supporters of legislation to help small miners continue to prospect and mine precious metals.

(it was argentite silver). A very new mine in Colorado could also have been found by the use of a gold pan. Associated with the Urad and Henderson molybdenum deposits of Climax is some tungsten. Had an individual been so fortunate as to analyze the black sand obtained by panning in Clear Creek in Denver, he would have noticed that it was anomalous in tungsten compared with the other streams in the area. Had this individual followed the stream, panning and analyzing all of the large tributaries he would have eventually found himself at Urad by following the tungsten.

So, how does the small miner prospect for minerals other than gold with a gold pan? Suppose you are in Montana and want to find tungsten. Take your pan (I have used a pie plate and a hubcap!) and a portable black-light and start panning streams in your area of interest.

When you get your concentrate check for scheelite. If you want to spend a little money, have the concentrate assayed for tungsten. Then follow the tungsten home.

Use your pan regularly in prospecting; examine the heavy minerals with a hand-lens. Often you can tell quite a lot about rock types this way in any area that is completely covered by forest. You can save a sample of the heavy minerals for later analysis.

sis, but be sure to label them as to where you got it. A person can spend one day panning streams in an area, covering many square miles of drainage basins, and later have the assays to tell you what basin to go look at in more detail. Many ore deposits leave their fingerprints in the heavy minerals of the streams draining them.

Most indirect methods used by the large companies involved detailed trace element work by competent chemists. Sometimes, a very simple observation in the field would do the same thing. I remember a silver property that carried a little bit of selenium. There is a certain flower whose color is normally white, but when there is a trace of selenium around, the flower is violet, becoming darker with more selenium. I could actually trace the silver veins on this property by following the darkest violet flowers! A detailed geochemical sampling program could not have done better. My point is, don't overlook the obvious.

Fortunately the small miner is receptive to new ideas and also a very good observer. So when you go out prospecting, look closely at the trees, grasses, cactus, flowers as well as the rock. Listen to what they are trying to tell you.

I know that each of you has heard the saying about follow

### Sourdough Gazette — 1974 Issue

that ore even if it goes up a tree. That same saying can be applied to answer the question of where to go prospecting. I firmly believe that each new mine that will be found by the small miner will be near an area where someone has found ore of some kind before. The geologists of the big companies will find new ore deposits in virgin country, but we small miners will not. We can not afford the sophisticated methods needed nor do we comprehend the geologic reasoning involved. However, we will find our share.

Start your prospecting trip in an area where you know there is mineralization, then work out from it. Perhaps you can work between two mining camps, trying to find a possible connection in mineralization. When someone made a strike, he had plenty of pals looking right around him for another one, but their efforts decreased as the distance from the strike decreased. The chance of finding something on the doorstep of another mine is not too good, but the chance of finding something between two mines on the same trend is much better.

In conclusion my basic philosophy on prospecting is to use your head and listen to Mother Nature. Sometimes we get too educated and miss the obvious. Good luck!

by Arden L. Larson, Geologist,  
Multi Metals Inc.

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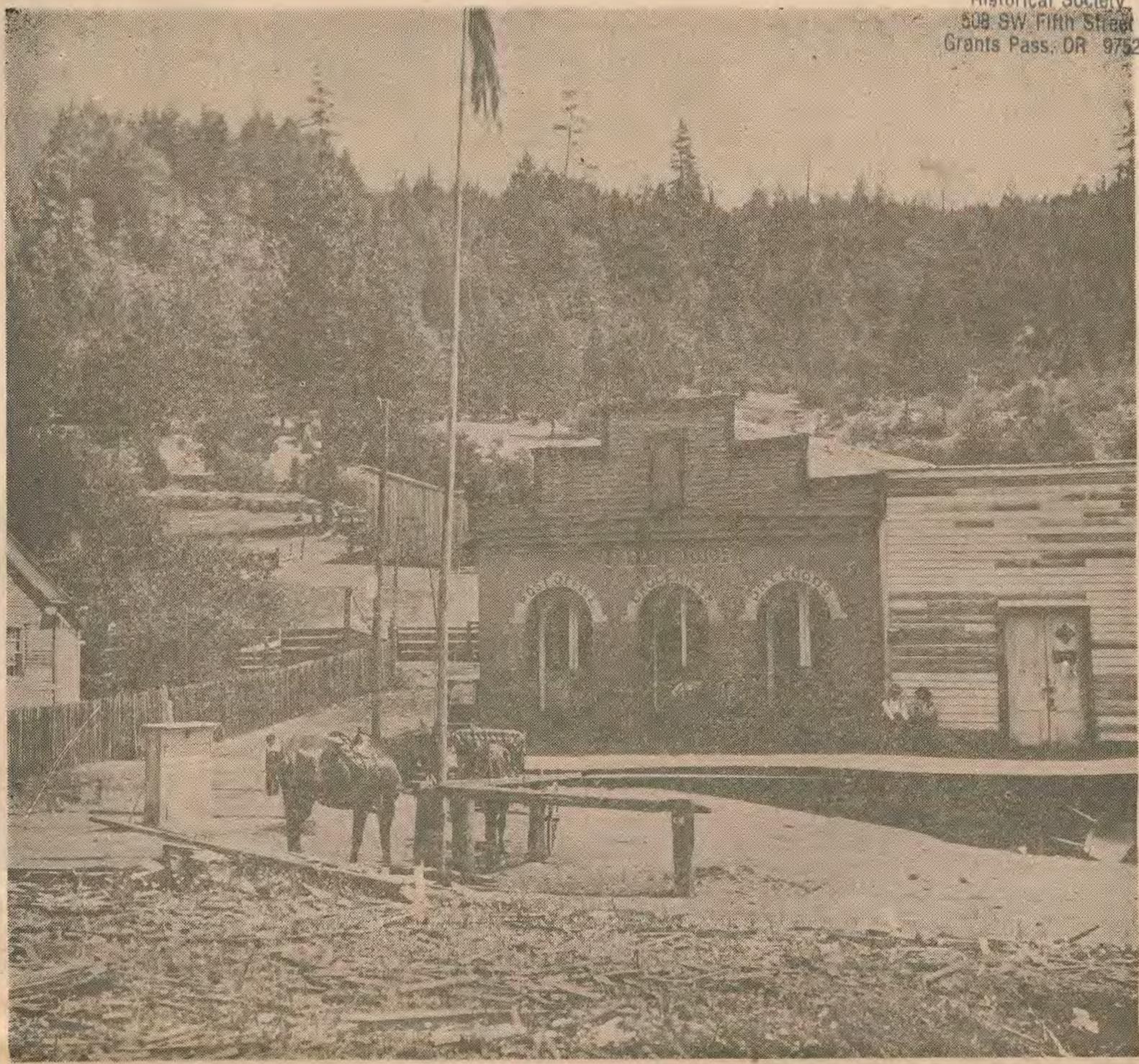
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Waldo in its heyday. Otherwise known as Sailor Diggins, it was the first county seat of Josephine County.

courtesy of the Illinois Valley News

# Gold Fever Strikes All Over The West

by James P. Sterba

**CRIPPLE CREEK, Colorado,** — Sassy and proud, she had fought the rot for years. But ghosts, crumbling bricks and burrowing chipmunks were everywhere, and survival for this town meant opening herself up to infestations of welfare checks, tourists and \$2 tours through her bowels.

They were shameless concessions. The faithful knew men would unlock her heart again — a heart many believe is still made of the largest, most concentrated mass of high-grade gold ore in the world.

Gold! They're after it again all over the west. Tin-horn hobbyists, seeking a taste of the past, stampede on weekends to nugget-bearing streams, and professionals, from grizzled sourdoughs to major corporations, are prospecting, refurbishing and negotiating their way back into production, spurred by soaring prices for the metal.

The largest U.S. producer, Homestake Mining Co. in South Dakota's Black Hills, started scouring the west in February for other lucrative properties. Nevada, with five major mines, and Alaska, with two in production, will each have two more within a year.

For Colorado gold bugs, however, that's all peanuts. For here, nestled at 9,000 feet in the shadow of Pike's Peak, the Cripple Creek-Victor Mining District, site of the last and biggest gold rush camp of them all, is back in business.

It was October 12, 1890 when

Inquiries double

California has no major working mines, but two old ones are being rehabilitated and inquiries about risk-free mining loans have been doubled, officials there say. Montana, which used to issue about 75 mining permits per year, has issued more than 500 so far this year.

Claim buyers, thought to be foolish only a few years ago, feel they cannot lose now. One of them, Howard Hughes, the billionaire, reportedly paid \$18 million since 1960 for 2,700 claims in Nevada.

Sellers of gold pans, small dredges and metal detectors say gold hunting is the fastest growing hobby in the West. There are panning clinics in Oregon, and John Rose's discovery last October of a 28-ounce nugget — he thought it was a cow pie — in Sierra Country has helped spread the fever in California.

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Bob Womack found it. Nobody believed him. He drank too much. That tonsil varnish and gold went to his head. He sold out cheap and died broke: didn't know he'd found what they call a geological quirk — a four by six mile basin of hard rock ore.

Drilling tortuous

They took 20 million ounces of gold out of her in the next 40 years, more than California and Alaska combined. She's got a thousand miles of tunnels now, and it was tortuous drilling because of the extreme hardness of the rock.

"Cripple Creek is already woke up and getting out of bed after a long sleep," said Dale Weaver, owner of the El Paso Mine. "All the elements are here for a real boom — I mean profit."

For amateurs the lure is a wisp of pioneer discovery in a nation where everything seems known or at least pre-planned. For the feverish and the professionals, the catalyst is a free market gold price up from \$35 per ounce three years ago to more than \$125 last week.

Nobody has to sell gold at the government price of \$42.22 an ounce. Some 1,300 domestic licensees — jewelers, industrial concerns and dental suppliers — demand six million to eight million ounces a year and have to pay the free market price.

Domestic production, however, is less than 1.8 million ounces annually. The rest is imported, so the market is promising. And if pending federal legislation becomes law and allows ordinary citizens to own gold again, the price and demand may soar higher.

Mines profitable  
At the old prices, only about a dozen large mining concerns made any money on gold, and many mined it as a by-product while seeking other minerals. Costs of labor and equipment had soared so high that reopening old mines was not profitable. Until now.

In Cripple Creek — named after the cows that broke their legs trying to cross it — there has been a rush of fresh interest. Virtually all the land is claimed and few claims are for sale. One 2.7-acre plot reportedly bought at a tax sale eight years ago for \$40 is now for sale at \$125,000. Two small companies plan production by fall, and major holders are exploring, testing and rebuilding.

The largest, Golden Cycle Corp., plans spending \$6 million restarting production that was stopped in 1961. By late summer about 100 men will be on the payroll. Golden Cycle quietly gained control of more than half the prime claims in the district over the last decade, and production could begin at the 1,200-ton-per-day Carlton Mill by next year.

"It isn't that we're out of gold here," said Bill G. Robinson, the town mayor and also publisher of the weekly newspaper, Cripple Creek Gold Rush. He squashed a well-chewed cigar butt with his boot.

"We're sitting on the largest

Sourdough Gazette — 1974 Issue

known deposit of gold in the Western world today," he says. "The only thing like it was the California mother lode and that was mined out long ago. This place never was."

Avrdupois weight is used for measuring common materials while troy weight is used for measuring the precious metals. Stage coach holdups were fairly routine along southern Oregon routes in the 1880's.

## THE GOOD OLD DAYS

An ad appearing in the Oregon Observer on Jan. 19, 1910. 80 Acres, 10 cleared, one million feet saw timber, 25 acres in sheltered cove above frost line, excellent for peaches or grapes. One half mile from corporation line of Grants Pass. Price \$1500 if sold within 30 days.

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# The Small Miner; The Forgotten Man

The Mining Record

June 27, 1972

Unfortunately the average citizen fails to appreciate the importance that the small miner has played in the development of this country. Seldom does that

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citizen realize that if it weren't for this man and his discovery of the numerous metals so important to our society that America would not be the great country she is. Our free enterprise economy is the backbone of America and metal is the backbone of that economy. But the miner, the prospector, is the guy who started it all.

Where is that guy today? Forgotten, lost in the maze of computers, satellite prospecting, plate tectonics and the like; but very much alive. He is excited by the new gold rush, encouraged by the record high metal prices. Yet he is troubled. Troubled by the spiraling costs of labor and supplies; the environmentalists and new laws making it even more difficult to be a small miner. But now the need for him is great and growing daily, for we are facing a metal shortage much greater than our impending fuel shortage. We need new sources of metals, now. The vast majority of our present and past sources were found first by the small miner and later developed by our big brothers, the large mining companies.

So, how do we meet this challenge? How do we follow that path from the day that we load up our jackass (two legged, four legged or four wheeled) to the day the new found metal starts coming out of our mine? Where do we look, what do we do when we think we have found something, how do we prove that we have something worthwhile, how do we develop it, where can we sell our product or property, and above all, how do we do this without spending much money? These questions must be answered by all small miners and prospectors who are planning on finding a new mine or have already found a prospect.

## Weekend Gold Fever Shows Big Increase

Record numbers of weekend miners with gold fever have swamped the California Department of Fish and Game offices for applications to use suction dredges on streams in the famous Mother Lode country.

With the price of gold near \$150 an ounce on the world market, applications for dredge permits are running more than 50 per cent ahead of the record volume for 1973.

By mid-June of this year, 3676 permits had been issued compared to 2379 in the same period in 1973.

Of special interest to Oregonians who may plan on doing a little suction dredging in California: The permits are required under the fish and game code, and persons operating dredges without permits face fines of up to \$500 and jail terms of up to six months. Get that free permit, gold hunters! Don't be a guest in some California cross-bar hotel!

The average weekend miner winds up in a river such as the Trinity, Feather, Yuba or American where the first dredges were used about 75 years ago.

Some local weekend miners have reported trying their luck with dredges on the Smith River, but success or lack of it was not mentioned.

## Where To Sell Your Gold

1. Raw placer gold may be sold to any willing buyer at an agreed upon price. Placer gold, if in large flakes or nuggets usually commands a premium price, depending on size. Rock shops and manufacturing jewelers buy placer gold. Telephone directory "yellow pages" often list gold, silver, and platinum buyers.

2. Gold amalgam, or the "sponge" remaining after the mercury has been removed by retorting, is normally salable to some person or firm possessing a gold buyer's license.

3. Gold ore from quartz mines must be sent to a smelter for treatment. Smelters pay for all metals specified in their schedule. Smelter charges and freight are deducted from payments.

4. Gold jewelry and other objects containing gold, if melted down, must be sold to persons or firms possessing a gold buyer's license. Gold in this form is often heavily discounted by the buyer.

5. Gold is no longer purchased by the U. S. Mint. (See Page 1 story about freedom to buy and sell gold.)

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Gold is to be distinguished from certain yellow sulfides (particularly pyrite and chalcopyrite) and from yellow flakes of altered micas by its malleability, its insolubility in nitric acid, and its high specific gravity.

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The special Josephine County Sourdough map printed on these pages is sponsored by Mr and Mrs Wayne Mikel. The map shows many of the mines that made Josephine County famous in the "old days." The map was made specifically for the Sourdough Gazette by E. B. Webb, former member.

**Gold \$200?  
Silver \$10?**from the Mining Record,  
March 6, 1974

Noting that half of all the gold mined in the history of the world is held in central banks because it is recognized as the only pure money, C. V. Myers said in his

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by Arden L. Larson

Perhaps the most difficult time in the life of a small miner is that time when he is discouraged. We are all full of our ups and downs but when we are down we feel like taking a case of powder and blowing the hole shut. We live a life full of hardships and many disappointments. More often than not, we must take these rough times alone and that is the worst part.

Many of us turn to our family for encouragement, others turn to religion. We all turn to ourselves. We are all alike in many ways, we are miners. As miners we all exhibit a character so typical of our American heritage that we know why our country is so strong.

Many of you have visited my mill and read the creed that I have on my wall. Most of you have wanted copies of it. I can not claim this creed as an original, it came out of an unknown mining journal that I read several years ago. As soon as I read this creed I copied it and have lived by it ever since. When I get very discouraged I read it carefully, pick up my chin and my spirits and tackle the problem at hand. I am taking the liberty of introducing you to this creed in the hope that it can give some of you a pat on the back or a kick in the pants (which ever you need). It is:

Remember patience and perseverance are our trademark, hard work and hardship our life, and happiness and success our destiny.

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Robert T. Littlefield of Grants first find there.

Littlefield's plans include taking his family, wife Margaret and daughters Becky and Trina to Alaska next year when he is scheduled to set his pipe prepare a ditch and get other equipment ready for operations. He has been interested in mining but has not actively mined in this area.

Locally, Littlefield is engaged in septic tank and drain field installation and backhoe work in Josephine County.

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## First Gold Mining Site In Oregon

The first gold mining in Oregon was that done in July 1850 by a party of prospectors from Illinois at the mouth of Josephine Creek, so named by them for a small girl with the party. The Althouse brothers, for whom the Althouse district was named, were in this group.

Soon after, a party of sailors, reputedly deserters from a ship at Crescent Bay located gold started the Sailors Diggins camp. One strange legend of this site is that as they dug into the gravel they uncovered white man's tools -especially a shovel- left many years before.

The big strikes near Jacksonville in December 1851 were the ones, however, which brought the first real gold rush to Oregon— coinciding with the fact that the richer grounds in California had all been taken up and some even worked out. Before long mining towns had sprung up over Southern Oregon: Jacksonville, Buncom, Phoenix, Allentown, Willow Springs, Brown town,

Waldo, and Kerbyville. The first miners to work these fabulously rich placers were impatient for rich rewards and often abandoned a claim as soon as the gravel dropped in its yield of gold, moving rapidly to any reported new strike. Intent upon working only the very richest grounds by crude hand methods, they were unencumbered and could easily move on and set up again in a new field.

The earliest miner's councils to organize into mining districts—embryo governments— were Sailors Diggins and Althouse in April 1852. These early day districts governed by a miner's council were the law of the land in the absence of any formal government.

By 1854 districts had been formed at Gold Hill, Upper Applegate, Lower Applegate, and Galice. The Ashland district was organized in 1858, Grave Creek, Coyote Creek, and Wolf Creek followed in 1860. The Grants Pass district—the first of the

hard rock miners organizations was formed in 1863 at the time the Jewel mine on Grants Pass mountain had built an 8-stamp mill.

By the 1870's mining had necessarily settled down to the orderly development of the lower grade, but widespread placer gravels. This required the building of long ditches and flumes for large-scale hydraulic operations. At this time many Chinese, recently released from the Transcontinental railroad, were brought in as construction laborers. The Chinese usually worked in large gangs, or "companies" headed by a boss-man manager, but before long broke up into small parties who left the construction jobs to "work over" the depleted placers deserted by the original miners. At this many of them were successful, eventually incurring the jealousy and hostility of the white miners.

Many of the big placers reached the peak of activity in this period—the largest—the Old Channel Mine, near Galice, in 1870 was being worked around the clock.

Gold gold mining became of importance in the 1890's, the Greenback in 1897, the Silent Friend in 1900 and the Eureka and Granite Hill in 1901. The Benton Mine developed in 1911 became the biggest producer, and was the largest industrial employer in Josephine County until its closure in 1942—closed by War Production Board Order L-208, which ordered all non-essential mining closed down. Gold mining was then considered non-essential.

The records of the U.S. Mint are not always an accurate yardstick of gold production, since much gold has been retained by the finders, much has been kept as specimen and show pieces, some has been made into jewelry, and a lot of it was used in its natural state for exchange and often hoarded. Mint records, however, show nearly seventeen million dollars produced in the State of Oregon from 1848 to 1882—at the then prevailing price of gold this represents an even million Troy ounces of pure gold. The following sixteen years the record production for Southwestern Oregon was \$5,800,000, and the period from 1900 to 1912—\$5,500,000 nearly, the peak year of 1906 produced \$600,000. Gold production then declined steadily except for a small increase following World War I.

In January 1934 the Mint price of gold was raised from \$20 to \$35 per fine ounce by an Act of Congress. With improved machinery and mining methods, more efficient dredges and the higher price production increased dramatically in Southwestern Oregon—reaching a peak of \$1,050,000 in 1940.

World War II effected a major set-back in gold mining activity. Higher wages lured many miners into Defense industries, many went into military service, and material shortages crippled many operations. The War Production Board Order classifying gold mining as non-essential and ordering closure of the mines was a blow from which mining has never recovered. Since then, the post-war rise in wages and prices and the frozen price of gold have created a situation not likely to encourage production.

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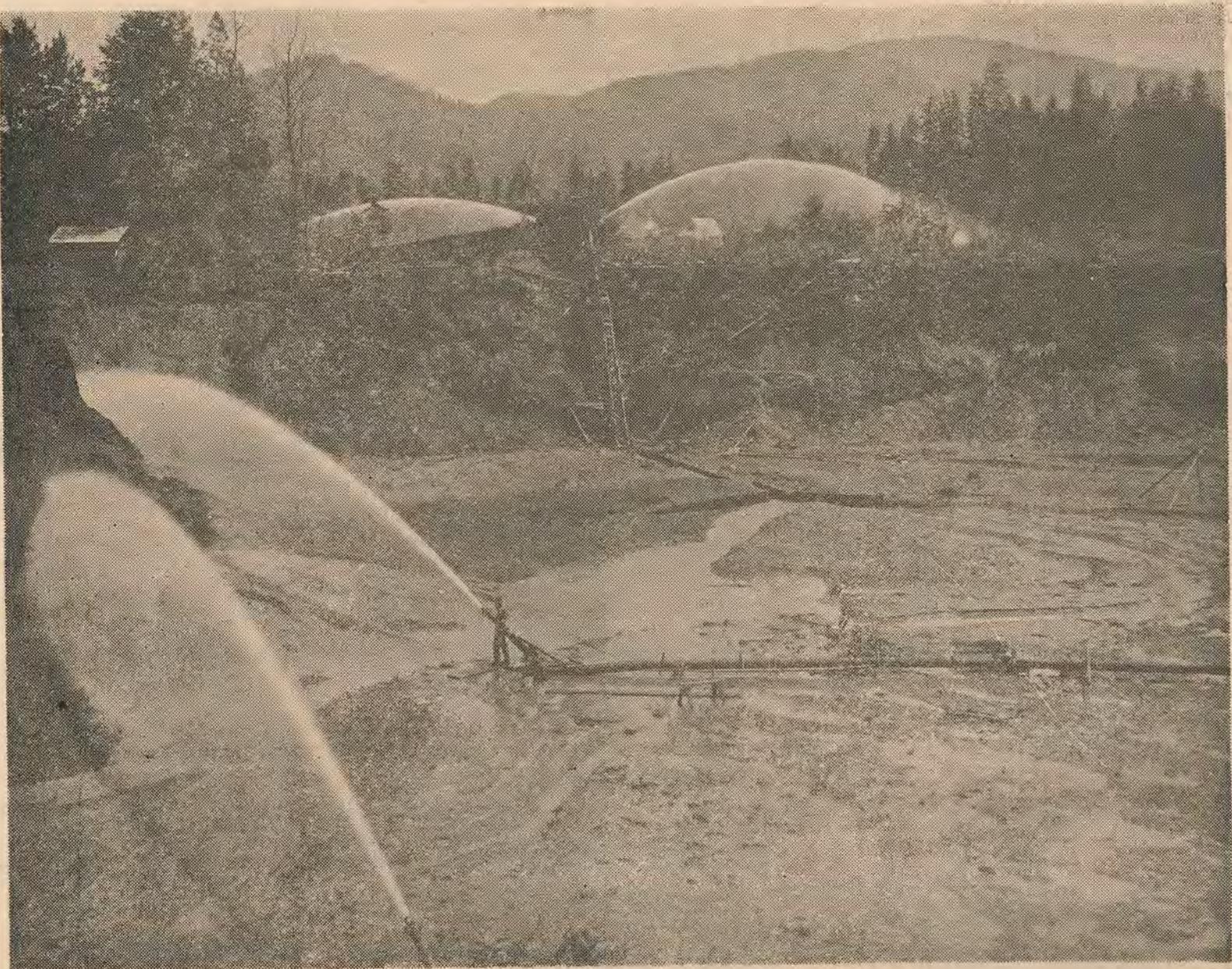
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When the hydraulic giants roared the land revealed its gold. The scenes above are probably from the Waldo area. Courtesy of the Illinois Valley News

## State Geologist Asks Delay In Wilderness

The following is a letter written to Senator Hatfield in regards to the enlargement of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness area by Raymond E. Corcoran, State Geologist:

Dear Senator Hatfield

On March 12, the GRANTS PASS COURIER carried an article with accompanying map showing proposed enlargement of the Kalmiopsis Wilderness Area which you are introducing along with proposed enlargement of other Wilderness areas in Oregon and Washington.

I would like to register strong disapproval of any increase in the size of the Kalmiopsis Area. I am familiar with the geology and mineral deposits in this region, and our Department is presently involved in research to gather additional information.

A report on the geology and mineral resources of the Illinois River drainage area was prepared by Mr Terry Close of the U.S. Bureau of Mines and Mr Len Ramp of this Department to assist the U.S. Forest Service in evaluating the area for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. I will request that the U. S. Bureau of Mines furnish you with a preliminary copy of this report.

Mr Ramp has recently completed a detailed geologic map covering the Upper Chetco River drainage including the Kalmiopsis Wilderness and Big Craggies which will soon be published by our Department as a bulletin. The report will include a discussion of the mineral resources. We will send a copy of this bulletin as soon as it is available.

Much of the area is mineralized. Because we know that valuable mineral deposits are unusual rather than commonplace and that these deposits are or can be extremely important to the future development of our domestic mining industry, we believe it would be wrong to include such areas in our National Wilderness System.

A large portion of the proposed area to the south of the present Kalmiopsis Wilderness is underlain by ultramafic rocks. Soils developed from these rocks are often enriched in nickel. These red nickel-bearing soils (nickeliferous laterites) have attracted the attention of several mining corporations in recent years and

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companies such as Inspiration Copper and Hanna Mining have on-going exploration programs. A large number of claims have been located and considerable preliminary sampling and drilling have given encouraging results.

Our Department recently proposed a nickel resource study that should be under way by late summer. The Chrome Creek - Baldface Creek - Doe Gap area to the south and the Collier Creek

area just northwest of Big Craggies are high on the priority list for investigation of nickeliferous laterites.

Other minerals known to occur within the proposed enlarged Kalmiopsis Wilderness include chrome, gold, copper, cobalt, and platinum.

We hope that you will postpone recommending these areas for inclusion in the Wilderness and await a more complete evaluation of the mineral resource potential.

Mining companies are very reluctant to spend any effort in developing mineral resources in established or even PROPOSED Wilderness areas. The prospect of political impediments in addition to the usual exploration problems are very discouraging to them.

Mr Ramp spent a significant portion of five field seasons mapping in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness between 1966 and 1971. He

Sourdough Gazette — 1974 Issue

reports that during that time it was a rare occasion to see any other persons using the area. He has taken subsequent trips into the area and seen only slightly greater use. On the basis of this obvious lack of use, I cannot see the need for enlarging the Wilderness.

Sincerely yours,  
Raymond E. Corcoran

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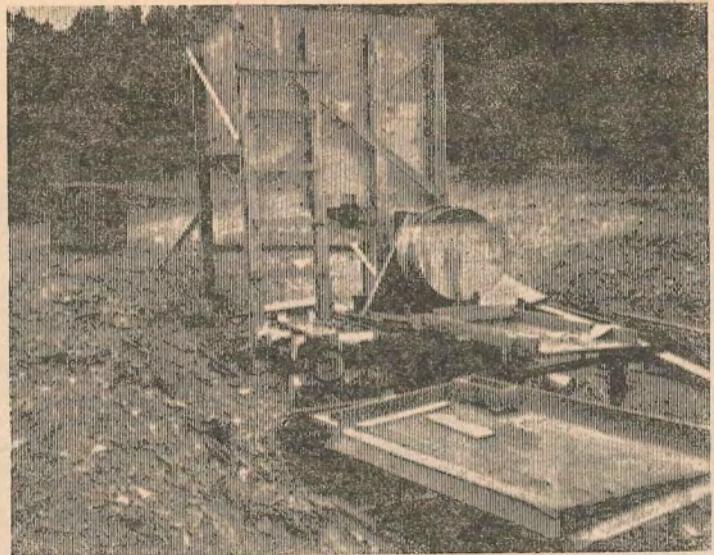
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This gold mill is being put up in Jackson County to handle ore from the owner's mine on Miner's Creek. It will also be available for custom ore work by the ton, if anyone is interested, and has enough ore for at least a week's run.

It is a 10 ton Strobb Ball Mill, with a 3 x 6 foot amalgam plate.

The table is 4 x 8 foot and the motion is furnished by a counter balanced wheel.

This is an all electric mill and the power is from a 5 kw power plant.

Ray Ferguson is the owner and operator.

**Gold Diggers At Work  
In Josephine County**

from the Sourdough Gazette  
Summer, 1963

**DREDGE,****LAST SUCCESSFUL OPERATION**

The mechanization of the 1930's brought about a huge piece of gold extracting equipment, the dredge. Not only was it huge in size but constituted a like investment. This mechanical giant could do the work of 2500 miners while floating on a lake it excavated for itself when working and moving ahead. The Rogue River Gold Company which operated a dredge on Grave Creek proved to be the most successful of the many who tried this type of operation.

Rising wages, more expensive equipment and higher transportation costs were factors in reducing the margin of profit for the gold miner. The beginning of the 1940's found only a few of the many mines in Josephine County operating and the arrival of World War II brought an abrupt end to all gold mining. The past twenty years have brought about little change in the gold mining picture. Most of today's gold mining is carried on by hobbyists and aging oldtime prospectors.

**CHINESE:**

No tale of early day mining would be complete without mentioning the Chinese and the part they played in the mines as well

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as in the lives of the miners.

As many as 3500 Chinese were working around Waldo in the early 1870's. Most of them were engaged in mining. They were usually "neat" miners and could take out gold in diggings which had been abandoned by the white miners.

**PATIENTLY WAITING**

Gold mining's epic chapter in early Americana is rapidly receding ever farther into the distant "past" but its effect upon the region will forever remain inscribed on the pages of history. It can serve as a foundation for the "present," and a hopeful dream of the area's "future" prosperity.

Yes, like all faithful sourdoughs of the past who were always hopeful of making that "strike of a lifetime," are the Sourdoughs of the present who are patiently waiting for the price of gold to make a glorious jump to at least \$70, an ounce so they too can make good every prospector's dream of "Striking It Rich."

The foregoing article has concentrated on tracing the progress of gold mining in Josephine County during the past century. Let it not be overlooked, however, that other minerals have also been unsuccessfully and profitably mined. Among these were the rich copper deposits, particularly those in the Illinois Valley, limestone, chrome, and marble. A slab of this latter material was Oregon's contribution to the Washington Monument, Washington, D. C., completed in 1884. The block was cut at Williams from a lime deposit which later became the Oregon Lime Products Co.

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**More News About****Buying, Selling****Our Gold**

After more than 40 years, it may soon be legal for Americans to buy and sell gold.

The move to legalize gold in the United States has been forging ahead the past two years. Bills favoring gold ownership have been introduced by congressmen from mining states in the west. But the Treasury Department has opposed lifting the ban and in the past Congress has not moved to legalize gold ownership.

Shifts in opinion in Congress and the administration indicate the miners may win out. The Treasury continues to argue against the use of gold in international money affairs and says it is not against citizens owning gold. What it would like to do first is work out an agreement with other nations which would ban the use of gold as an official monetary unit.

Gold is now one of the few items that has shown a greater price increase than the general rate of inflation and Congress is now putting the squeeze on the Treasury Department.

During the past year the price of gold topped \$200 an ounce on the free market. It has settled recently to about \$160—still much higher than the official monetary pegged price of \$42.20 an ounce. If the gold ownership ban is ended, as indicated by the House vote in an article on page one, it is expected that the first result would be a spurt of activity in dormant gold mines in California, Colorado and other states in the west. And people who wanted to hedge against inflation could then buy gold bars

March 9, 1910—Mr. Ramsey, the invincible, is too busy sluicing and taking out the yellow metal to even come down to Wonder store for his mail.

Dec. 9, 1899—Since the fire the office of the Grants Pass Coffin Co. is at Hale's Furniture Store next to the Layton Hotel. They are still selling fine trimmed caskets at \$10 and \$20.

Wonder, March 9, 1910—Herch McClung came in with some nice nuggets, bought a pair of gum boots and supplies and went back to hunt some more nuggets.

To most early day miners in Southwestern Oregon platinum was considered a nuisance and was thrown away.

May 28, 1886—A nugget weighing \$300 was recently picked up by McDonald on Wagner creek. It is said to be a beauty.

Dec. 2, 1899—George K. Quine is in this city from Riddles. He is now engaged in hauling nickel ore from the mines to the station for shipment east to be tested.

and squirrel them away in banks or under the bed, maybe.

Until gold production increases it is possible that there would be a new rise in the price of gold, possibly as much as \$500 an ounce. Whatever happens, Americans, like Europeans, can follow the "golden" rule: When in doubt, hoard gold!

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## Mining and Minerals Policy Act of 1969

Sec. 2. The Congress declares that it is the continuing policy of the Federal Government in the national interest to foster and encourage (1) the development of an economically sound and stable domestic mining and minerals industry, (2) the orderly development of domestic mineral resources and reserves necessary to assure satisfaction of industrial and security needs, and (3) mining, mineral, and metallurgical research to promote the wise and efficient use of our mineral resources. It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Interior to carry out this policy in such programs as may be authorized by law other than this Act. For this purpose the Secretary of the Interior shall include in his annual report to the Com-

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# A New Look at Modern Mining

tree production. No clear cutting is permitted and the entire region of approximately 5,000 acres is being managed on a sustained yield basis. Several test pits opened to a depth of 10 feet or more 20 years ago are now obscured by trees. As a direct result of this program, soil erosion and stream pollution have been reduced and the land is aesthetically enhanced.

Sand and gravel operators have found that unsightly gravel pits can be landscaped and made into attractive home sites featuring a lake with swimming and boating facilities. Currently in the Salem area, Walling Sand and Gravel Co. is converting mined-out gravel pits into public-use areas. In addition to picnic facilities, the company has arranged with the Oregon Game Commission to have the ponds occupying the former pits stocked with legal-size fish. The response from the public has been enthusiastic. As a side venture the company obtained plans for duck-nest platforms, which were erected in a secluded location within the pit, and several pairs of migratory birds have nested there.

The reclamation work of Porter Brothers in Bear Valley, Idaho, is well known. In northern California, as long as 30 years ago Harmes and Larson dredged and then leveled and resold 100 acres along Horse Creek.

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In this instance it is interesting to note that the cost of doing the reclamation work was exactly double the original value of the land.

Most surface-stripped land can be reclaimed and water pollution held to a minimum. The mining industry is willing and eager to do it, but the sad fact remains that all too often the land owner is more interested in immediate gain from rent sand royalties on his mineral deposit than in a long-term investment. Clearly something must be done.

The problems are these:

1. The failure by large segments of the people to recognize that mining is an essential industry, indispensable to our way of life and to our very existence. What sets modern man apart from his ancestors is his use of metals and minerals.

2. Although mining operations on state and federal lands are controlled by existing legislation and present mining practices, there has been a real problem where the operation was on privately-owned land. The landowner has needed to be educated in the value of his land after mining, not just for himself but for the economy of the community. Hopefully the new reclamation law will help correct this.

3. Mining is not the only industry that has environmental problems, and the matter should be viewed in its entirety. Basically, stream pollution and land abuse are the by-products of civilization, and the record dates back 7,000 years.

4. There is a need for realization that any regulatory measures to control mining activity must be drawn with care lest the industry be destroyed. Over the past 30 years most of the legislation related to mining has been of a restrictive nature, in sharp contrast to a great number of laws passed to help nearly every other phase of our economy.

The mined Land Reclamation Act for the state of Oregon, which went into effect July 1, 1972, is designed to rectify many of the problems related to the increasing demand for minerals, particularly aggregate. In some areas there is a diminishing supply of these non-renewable re-

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sources, plus steadily shrinking areas where mineral resources may be obtained, and a growing awareness by the public generally that far better use must be made of all our land. Briefly the new law requires aggregate producers and miners who mine more than 10,000 cubic yards or disturb more than two acres of land annually to provide a performance bond, a mining plan, a reclamation plan, and evidence that the operation and the proposed use following cessation of mining meet with the approval of the appropriate local government. Visual screening, where necessary, will be required; water pollution will be controlled; and when the mining operation is completed the site must be left in a suitable condition for a planned subsequent use.

This new law parallels one now in force in the State of Washington. It is hoped that the experience reported from Washington will be repeated here in Oregon. Our sister state has been getting excellent cooperation from aggregate operators, state and federal agencies, and local governments. Some Washington operators, too small to come under the law, have voluntarily agreed to abide by the regulations, no doubt considering that it is good public relations to do so.

Gold miners of the early days had it easy. They could dig gravel, remove the gold, and leave the pits and piles of tailings behind, because in those days gold mining was the major source of income in the remote regions where gold was found, and no one really cared about the appearance of the environment. Nowadays, gravel deposits are being mined for another purpose—aggregate. Billions of tons of sand and gravel, plus large amounts of limestone, gypsum, and clay, go into the concrete for freeways, bridges, office buildings, shopping centers, apartment houses, condominiums, forecourt fountains, and a hundred other concrete uses that have come with the rise in our standard of living and increase in population. As a result, pits and piles of gravel can be seen across the land. Strictures are being placed on industry to curtail the environmental effects created by these and all other mining operations. This reclamation will cost large amounts of money and the added expense must be passed on ultimately to the consumer, who willingly or unwillingly will pay more for commodities in order to maintain or improve his life style. Thus, in the final analysis, the consumer is as much a contributor to the environmental consequences of mining as is the miner himself.

from the Ore Bin  
July 1972

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## Stake Your Claim

regarding the recording of the location in the county recorder's office, discovery work, etc.

Any person who is a citizen of the United States, or who has declared his intention to become a citizen, may locate, record, and hold a mining claim of 1,500 linear feet along the course of any mineral vein or lode subject to location. The lateral extent of locations of veins or lodes shall in no case exceed 300 feet on each side of middle of the vein at the surface.

No lode claim shall be located until after the discovery of a vein or lode within the limits of the claim, the object of which provision is evidently to prevent the appropriation of presumed mineral ground for speculative purposes, to the exclusion of bona fide prospectors, before sufficient work has been done to determine whether a vein or lode really exists.

The location notice should give the course and distance as nearly as practicable from the discovery shaft on the claim to some permanent, well known points or objects. It should also give the section, township and range.

All placer-mine claims located after May 10, 1872, shall conform as nearly as practicable with the United States system of public land surveys and the rectangular subdivisions of such surveys, and such locations shall not include more than 20 acres for each individual claimant. A location by two persons can not exceed 40 acres, and one by three persons can not exceed 60 acres.

But one discovery of mineral is required to support a placer location, whether it be of 20 acres by an individual, or of 160 acres or less by an association of persons.

The annual expenditure to the amount of \$100 must be made upon placer as well as lode locations.

Failure to perform the annual assessment work will subject a claim to relocation unless the original locator, his heirs, assigns or legal representatives have resumed work after such failure and before relocation.

In the case of a lode claim the discovery shaft or trench should consist of the excavation of at least 5 cubic yards of material to constitute the location work on a placer claim.

Some, but not all, state land is open to mineral entry. Following discovery, a location is made in the same manner as for claims on federal forests. A lease agreement must be obtained from the State Land Board, State Capitol Building, Salem, before any mining can be done.

The best information on patenting procedures is contained in the pamphlet "Information Relative to the Procedure of Obtaining Patent to a Mining Claim" issued by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and available from the Bureau's land office, 710 E. Holladay Street, Portland 12, Oregon.

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