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HAPPY NEW YEAR

Cover: Placer Mine — Compliments of Hank Speaker.

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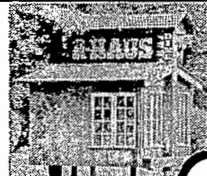
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MILLIONS IN GOLD

WITH HANK SPEAKER

Many books have expounded on the adventure and romance of the Gold Rush of the 19th and 20th centuries here in the United States. The most celebrated miners are, of course, the 49 ers.

The 49 ers were a different breed. They were men that went out alone, on their own, to find gold. The miners that hit the west coast of America in the 1850's were filled with the American Spirit. This land of plenty was going to help them to become rich, if they worked hard enough and had just a little luck.

Those days and that type of man are gone you say? Mines are big giant affairs now, and they are owned by consolidated international bankers, you say? No more hard work, good luck, and the romance of man pitted against nature, searching for her riches? If that's what you think, then you haven't talked to the miners of Josephine County.

In particular you haven't talked to "Hank" Speaker. Hank is a placer miner. He

is one of those men we've been talking about, a '49er through and through.

In 1929, when the depression hit, Hank Speaker was just a young man falling timber on the Oregon coast. But, like most men at that time, he lost his job when the timber industry failed. This was probably the best thing that ever happened to him. How can losing a job be good for someone? Because that's when he got the "gold bug" and located a choice mine on Wolf Creek.

"The Speaker Mine", as his place was known, not only helped him weather the depression, it made him an independent businessman. He mined in the winter and then had the summers for himself and his family. The Speaker Mine brought a lot of gold into Josephine County for 28 years. This mine was the work and ingenuity of a true individualist, miner, Hank Speaker.

In 1957 Hank sold the Speaker Mine on Wolf Creek and looked to our new state of the north, Alaska! New land and the promise of richer, better mines lured Hank and others
(Continued on next page)



A head on look at the flume of Hank Speakers mine on Harrison Creek, Alaska.



"Pure Gold Dust" mined by Hank Speaker.

MILLIONS IN GOLD

like him to Alaska. Before you can mine you have to find the gold, though, and Hank hunted for the right mine in Alaska for eight long years. If he was going to mine in Alaska, he wanted a rich mine, one that would pay off well. While Hank was hunting for the right mine in Alaska, he kept himself busy with a little logging, and as a member of the Sourdoughs of Josephine County.

"The Sourdough Club of Josephine County was formed in the 1950's. Miners and mining enthusiasts banded together to keep their rights to mine," says Hank.

"In the 50's many miners in Josephine County felt harassed by government officials. Most miners alone were very much afraid of these officials when they came out to their mines. They usually just stopped mining without really looking into the laws that govern mining. When the Sourdoughs formed, they helped individual miners keep their mines. One famous case was the Forest Creek Mine, owned by Harry Stewart.

"Harry Stewart had owned the Forest Creek Mine, on Forest Creek, for quite some time when the D.E.Q. came in and told him he would have to shut his operation down. Well, Harry Stewart had his whole life into that mine and he wasn't about to stop mining on his own property when he wasn't bothering anyone else.

"The D.E.Q. said that Harry had sediment stirred up in the creek and in the Applegate River. Harry went to the Sourdoughs for help. As a result, they found out that the D.E.Q. was absolutely in error. Harry Stewart then hired the foremost mining attorney in the United States, William B. Murrey of Portland. It turned out that Harry Stewart filed a \$350,000 suit against the D.E.Q. The D.E.Q. had broken the law by harassing Harry

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Stewart and his pursuit of mining and happiness.

"An examination of the Forest Creek Mine showed conclusive evidence that Harry Stewart's mining actually cleaned the water. That's right! Sediment from the Forest Creek Mine never did reach the Applegate River because the water from the mine ran through three or four miles of gravel that was the "tailings" of the mine. This gravel completely filtered the water and made it some of the purest water found on the Applegate River!

"The Sourdoughs not only help miners that are in trouble, they also have a lot of fun. Thousands of people have enjoyed their display at the Josephine County Fair each year. The Sourdoughs have a big place where people can pan their own gold for 50¢ a try. The gold concentrate in the water is so rich that most people usually pan out 2 to 3 dollars worth of gold.

"Josephine County owns the old Davis Mine on Coyote Creek, and the Sourdoughs pan gold here on the weekends. On some weekends big crowds of Sourdoughs are panning with their families on Coyote Creek. Once in a while someone will find a pretty good sized nugget and let out a big whoopie! You see, Davis didn't clean the crevices out and there are still some big nuggets in there.

"In fact," Hank Speaker says, "There is a lot of gold left here in Josephine County, a lot of gold! The old Channel Mine on the Rogue River has five miles of channel left. In that 5 miles there's millions and millions in gold. One of the richest placer mines in the world sits idle because of some misconceptions about the process of placer mining. Contrary to uneducated opinions, mining is a natural process and the sediment it releases into the river does nothing but help

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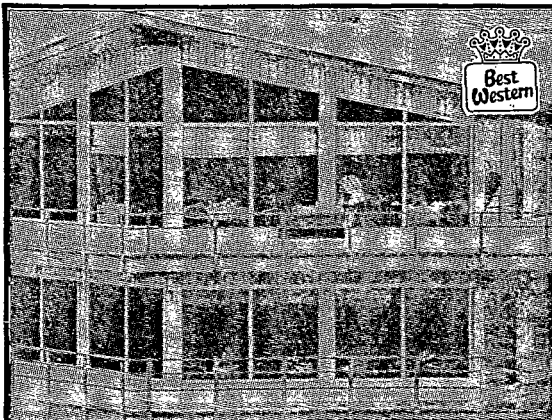
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the fish. The sediment stirs up food for the fish, covers their eggs, and keeps fishermen from killing them off.

"The old Channel Mine started running in the 1800's and the fish runs were the best when the mine was running at full capacity. Zane Grey wrote a book in 1920 when the old Channel Mine and many others were working full bore on the Rogue. In this book Zane Grey states that the Rogue River was without a doubt the greatest fishing stream in the world. But it's a fact that Zane couldn't say that now, and we don't have any mines running. (Continued on next page)



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Hank Speaker running his placer giant into the flume.

"By keeping the mines shut down we rob our county of the most colorful industry on earth. Mining would literally bring millions of dollars into Josephine County. As a county rich in gold, we should stand up for our rights. Letting the federal government or even the state government legislate our lives for us without even a vote is a sad and miserable existence! Mining would also help bring better fish runs back to the Rogue River. The sediment would cover the spawning beds and keep the eggs from working away and being eaten by sucker fish. Right now we spend thousands of dollars putting logs and sediment into tributaries of the Rogue to build spawning beds. This is the irony, because with mining these beds would be put in naturally. The silt would also protect the fish from the year around fishermen that are literally behind every rock, catching fish just for the fun of it!

"Mining was the industry that made Grants Pass a town. Let's not give it up! After all, its our land, our gold, our fishing, and our water. Let's start using them to every one's best interest.

"Placer mining has been the main method of mining in Josephine County. However, the 'Old Greyback Mine' was a

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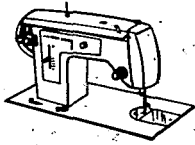
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rich quartz mine. A quartz mine is one that tunnels along with a vein of quartz and gold mixed. As long as the vein can be followed, these mines are much richer than placer mines and have made millionaires over night. Over three and a half million dollars worth of recorded gold was brought out of the 'Old Greenback Mine.' There was probably a lot more gold brought out that never was recorded. The mine was closed down because they finally lost the vein of gold at 1800 feet.

"Just to show how rich this mine was, a fellow-miner named Klumph bought the old

dump of the "Greenback Mine" and reworked the left-overs. It is said that he took out a brick of gold a day for two years, and that's a lot of gold.

"Since mining is difficult to carry out here in Josephine County, many miners from here started searching in Alaska as I did. As was mentioned before, it took me eight years to find a suitable mine in Alaska.

"I located an old placer mine set up on Harrison Creek in the 'Circle Mining District,' just out of Fairbanks. The old pipe was still good and portions of the three miles of

(Continued on next page)

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MILLIONS IN GOLD

valley I bought were rich with gold.

"In the summer of 1964 I set out to get my mine in operation. Let me tell you, putting together a first-rate placer mine single-handedly is no easy task. It took me two years to rig the mine. The process included building a dam, digging a long water canal over to my pipe and then laying pipe down the mountain to my mine.

"In 1966, I started in mining and as luck would have it, the mine was extremely rich. Of course, in Alaska you can only mine in the summer, so some mighty long days were put in. More fortune came our way when the price of gold sky-rocketed. With the same amount of work we made three and four times the money. We had hit the Jackpot!

"News of my mine got around to other miners and prospectors in the Josephine County area and soon we had a whole clan of Oregonians on Harrison Creek, Alaska. In fact, there is talk of re-naming this stream "Oregon Creek.

"The mine I have been running in Alaska has been in operation since 1900. If any creek has been mined, Harrison Creek in Alaska has, yet to this day trout fishing at the bottom of the mine is spectacular. Little girls

and children have caught hundreds of fish out of a fishing hole at the bottom of the mine. The amazing fact is that other streams in the area aren't good fishing streams. The fine silt and small gravel stirs up the food and makes for good spawning beds.

"One bright summer day, while my family and I were busy mining, a government car drove up. Out stepped four men; one from the D.E.Q., one from the Game Commission, one from the B.L.M., and one from the E.P.A. Unbelievable? Perhaps I was to be honored for bringing new mining methods and great fishing to the Circle Mining District? Maybe these men had heard of such a great mine and wonderful stream and just had to see it and test it to make sure it was real? My family and I invited the men for coffee and told them of their work. Presently, all four began to tell me that I couldn't stay on my land and mine. They told me that this mine was a problem. But why was it a problem? They didn't say, just continued to take samples and poke around without any legal reason or right whatsoever.

"I had not spent ten years getting my mine in Alaska just to have a perfect stranger run me off for no reason whatsoever. So I got hold of none other than William B. Murrey,



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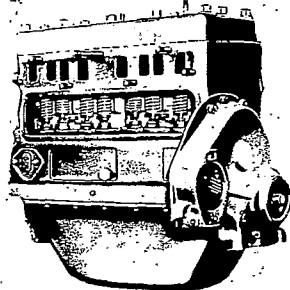
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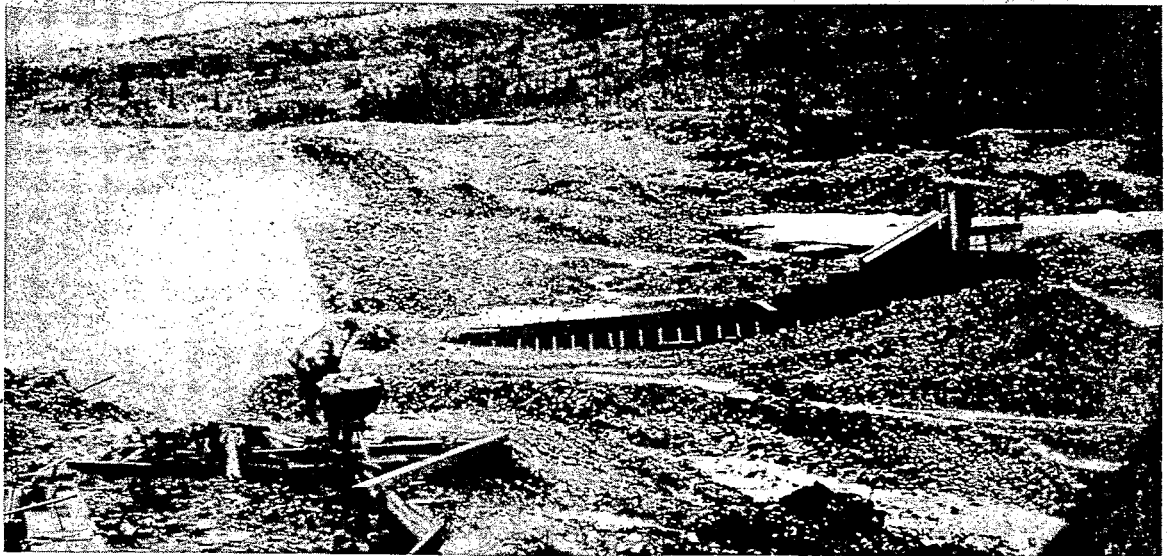
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Hank Speaker stacking the "tailing's"

the mining attorney in Portland, Oregon.
"In a short period of time attorney Murrey found that these four men were guilty of a federal criminal law that had a fine of ten thousand dollars and a possible ten years jail sentence. You see, these four men had driven one hundred and twenty seven miles out and one hundred and twenty seven

miles back to their offices because they had nothing better to do than harass and bother a man mining in his own valley. A telephone call or a letter wouldn't do! One man wasn't enough, either! No less than four men had to come out to tell Hank Speaker what to do on his own land.

(Continued on next page)



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MILLIONS IN GOLD

"Since the above-mentioned fiasco, a man from Washington, D.C. has been to my mine. His findings? ...the Speaker Mine on Harrison Creek, in the Circle Mining District of Alaska, is a perfect mine. The mining process doesn't bother a thing. He said that nature did the same thing with rains and floods. As a result, the Game Commission gave the Speaker Mine a formal apology and hoped that suit is not brought against them or the other agencies, for they were all clearly in the wrong.

"If I and the other miners decide to prosecute, the decision could open mining up all over the country, because this could undoubtedly go all the way to the Supreme Court.

"Taking away the 49 ers right to mine would have been anarchy! Don't we have the same rights now, as then? Aren't there still those men that have the American Spirit? Men that, with hard work and a little luck, can make this rich American land pay off? I and a lot of other miners know so", says Hank Speaker.

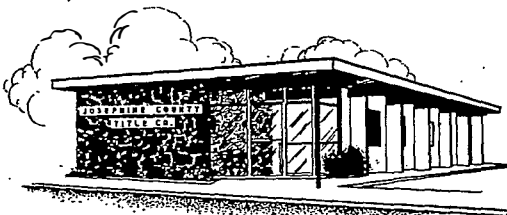
To show the tragedy of the mining shut-downs around our country, Hank Speaker

showed me the following scientific study of mining on the Rogue River: AN ECOLOGICAL STUDY MADE FOR THE OREGON STATE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES by Dr. Henry Baldwin Ward, Consultant.

The Rogue River has long been held in high esteem as a salmon stream. It has been visited annually by many fishermen from Oregon and from other states and records of their sport, printed in various magazines devoted to travel and outdoor life, have given it truly an international reputation.

No one knows when salmon or trout first came to the Rogue River, but it seems probable that the salmon spawned at the foot of the retreating glaciers of the Ice Age and followed up the cool run off of the disappearing ice masses until their spawning grounds became as today.

The Rogue has always carried loads of silt. The extent of its drainage, the depth of its valleys, the amount of waterworn material in its area, and the drop of several thousand feet in its course of 250 miles to the sea, as well as the consistent testimony of explorers and settlers during the last century, give evidence of marked fluctuations in vol-



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ume of stream flow and in clearness and turbidity of its waters.

All the evidence that has been obtained justifies the conclusion that no present-day contributions of materials produced by bank erosion differ in character or exceed in amount those added periodically by purely natural processes in past times.

The river was once the seat of an extensive commercial fishery. Washings from placer mining have been poured into the Rogue River in quantities since 1850 and even when the stream was crowded with the immense runs of salmon, which characterized it in earlier days, the fish found these waters favorable for their existence; they maintained their runs.

To designate placer mine run-off as pollution is a confusion of terms. Neither in dictionary definition nor in scientific analysis can the use of this term be justified. To pollute is to defile; to contaminate with wastes of man or animals; this is done by introducing domestic or community wastes, or such as are produced in manufacturing and industrial processes.

A. M. Swartley, experienced geologist, emphasized the fact that mining debris "is chemically inert, makes no oxygen demand

on the stream and therefore takes away from the flowing water nothing which the fish require. This is equally true of this material whether placed in transit by nature or by man since (the products) are alike in nature, come from the same sources and are only being accelerated by man in their journey to the sea." Further he stated: "All these materials entering the streams, whether by natural or human activity, whether coarse or fine, whether traveling on the bottom, in suspension or solution, are almost altogether inert, suffer little change on their way to the sea, and having reached the end point of chemical change do not rob the water of oxygen which the fish demand, or add to the water toxic agents injurious to fish" (fish food or other forms of life).

The Copper River in Alaska has been one of the famous salmon streams of that territory. It has a large number of tributaries which come out of mountain ranges east, north, and west of the Copper River valley. A. M. Swartley has seen among these Alaska rivers in which salmon run and spawn some so heavily loaded with mud that one could not trace the body of an adult salmon ascending the river even when the dorsal fin cut the

(Continued on next page)

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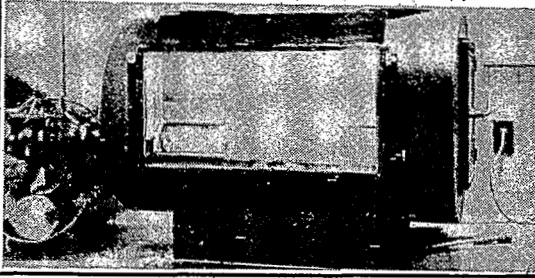


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MILLIONS IN GOLD

surface of the water. The journey from the sea up the Copper and its tributary was long and strenuous; the chance for damage to the salmon from muddy water was certainly large if any damage could be wrought by such conditions, and yet none was observed. Many other similar cases could be cited from printed as well as personal records.

The long period of past time in which the salmon of the Rogue had been subject to the influence of heavily silted waters in that stream and the persistence of a run large in numbers and unsurpassed in quality serves to confirm the views expressed above on the basis of other evidence.

Despite their far greater sensitiveness to changes in environment and susceptibility to injury, young salmon lived heartily in a concentration of sediment which was ten times the average recorded at Agness. Those who think that normal erosion products will prove injurious to such fish should examine carefully the records.

Run off from placer mines may contribute to the opacity of the water and perhaps also make it difficult for the fish to see the fly, although Dr. Griffin found that young fish readily saw and promptly captured food thrown into the tanks in his experiment. However, if the fish cannot see or are not attracted by the caster's lures, the condition of the water may reasonably be said to protect the fish, even though it disappoints the fisherman!

The essence of Dr. Ward's findings is that the placing of muddy water from placer operations in the Rogue River drainage is not inimical to fish and fish life.

Thus Speaker summarizes, "It is evident from the material in this report that mining would be a profitable, ecological and colorful industry to have going full time in Josephine County. Thousands of jobs for our men and millions of dollars for our families are available on our own land, so let's use it."

Henry Speaker lives here in Josephine County with his wife Flora. If you're interested in mining, just drive on out and talk to Hank. He's ready to talk mining almost anytime. After all, he's a 49'er through and through.

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