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Web-foot Bonanzas

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE

Gold Fields OF EASTERN OREGON

By P. DONAN

d by the General Passenger Department OF THE ROAD & NAVIGATION COMPANY RTLAND, OREGON.

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A Brief Sketch of the Gold Fields of Eastern Oregon.

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I.

A Prophecy Fulfilled.

The much-repeated and often-misapplied phrase, "Klondikes at Home," was first used as the title of a chapter in a little book on "The Gold-Fields of Eastern Oregon," issued by the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company in September, 1897. After a brief presentation of the gold-producing capabilities of Colorado, Utah, California, Idaho, Montana, and other auriferous regions nearer, and easier to reach, than the frozen quagmires of sub-Arctic midnight, over which the world had then gone mad, the skit wound up with this emphatic—and, as it has turned out, prophetic—declaration:

"But of all these Klondikes at our doors, these near-by and always-accessible combinations of Bonanzaland and Homeland, none offers surer riches in the present, or more gloriously golden possibilities in the future, than the famous Eastern Oregon Gold-Fields, of which Baker City is the center and metropolis. Scores of great mines have already been developed, new ones are being almost daily discovered, and hundreds more are yet to be found. The whole region is rich in resource and product now, and will be incalculably richer as its mighty stores of hidden wealth are opened up, and the boundless opportunities it presents for speedy fortune become known. There is not in all the world today a field of grander promise for the intelligent and enterprising prospector and miner—the keen-eyed, strong-armed, brave-hearted, 'advance agents of prosperity' in every true bonanzaland."

That was published little more than two years and a half ago, and already every word of it has been amply verified by results. The "Klondike at Home" has become a splendid reality in Eastern Oregon. The gold-ribbed mountains have thrilled with new life. Thousands of prospectors have flocked in from every part of the globe, and the grand army of actual mining workers has more than doubled, probably trebled, possibly quadrupled. Then, there were but 513 mines, and more or less developed mining claims, in all the 14,000 square miles of golden ledges and

placer-beds; now, there are over 2,000, and fully 8,000 more locations and prospects. Then, there were less than 200 stamps in operation; now, there are, including those going in this season, nearly 500. Baker City has risen from 3,500 or 4,000 population then, to 8,000 now, and Baker county, from 11,000 to something like 20,000; and every other county, town and village in the realm of gold has grown in proportion. The whole far-stretching mineralized region has been dotted with new and flourishing camps—one or two of which, at least, bid fair to rank among the wonders in mining annals.

Such mining growth as this is based on mining merit alone. No salted-pothole prosperity goes with veterans of the pick and pan. Call the roll of earth's famed treasure-houses today—South Africa, Australia, Nome, Klondike, and all the rest:—and there is none richer in present rewards for intelligent labor, and none more radiant in promise and possibility, than the Gold-Fields of Eastern Oregon.

II.

A Golden Empire.

Stretching from the northeastern part of Wallowa county down into the northern end of Harney and Malheur counties, and from the Shoshone or Great Snake river far over on the tributaries of the John Day, and including all of Baker county and a large part of Grant and Union counties, this vast mineral belt extends through two full degrees of latitude and longitude. That is, it is about 120 miles square, and has an area of 14,400 square miles, or within a trifle of as much as Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, all combined. It is traversed in every direction by spurs of the picturesque Blue mountains, from 6,000 to 10,000 feet high, and diversified by innumerable bold torrents like the Wallowa, Imnaha, Grand Ronde, Burnt and Powder rivers, and the tributaries of the John Day and Malheur. There are immense forests of valuable timber, the valleys are exhaustless in their fertility, the pasturage for livestock is abundant all the year, and the climate is mild, equable and healthful [illegible] for a perpetual sanitarium. It is a l[illegible]d and golden grain, where valleys [illegible] from 40 to 70 bushels of wheat, from [illegible] bushels of oats, and from 300 to 600 bu[illegible] potatoes, to the acre, are walled in by mountains of gold-quartz that runs from $5 to $5,000 to the ton, and watered by streams whose gravel yields from 5 cents to $50 to the pan.

So far as limited exploration has gone, all its peaks and foothills seem ribbed with royal ore, and all its gulches and creek-beds exhaustless deposits of golden sands; while silver, cop-

per, lead and iron abound, and opals and other precious stones are found in some localities. It has produced untold millions of gold, that in earlier days went to San Francisco to swell the reports of California's yield. Grant county has turned out over $5,000,000 of placer gold alone, and Baker county's aggregate production of quartz and placer gold has certainly not been less than $20,000,000. According to the report of the United States mint-director, Baker, Union, Grant and Malheur counties, in 1893, produced $1,377,479, or about three-fourths of the entire output of the state. Expert estimates credited these four counties with producing $2,443,000 in 1897, and $2,950,000 in 1898, of which Baker county alone was set down as turning out about $1,600,000, and Union county, $650,000. The product for 1899 ran at least $500,000 above that of any previous year, or to a grand total of something near $3,500,000.

This last year of the Nineteenth Century promises to be the gilded banner-bearer in the history of the region. Nearly all the old mines are increasing their yield and their facilities, many new mines are being opened, new and improved machinery is going in by trainloads, and work is being everywhere pushed on a more extensive scale than ever before; scores of small producers are turning out their quotas of bullion or concentrates; the placer-beds are adding tens, if not hundreds, of thousands every month; and new discoveries, many of them of almost incredible richness, are being daily made.

This "almost incredible richness," and some of its results, may well form the theme of a brief, new chapter.

III.

Amazingly Rich Ores.

The richness of the ores in many parts of this Oregon land of gold is very nearly, if not quite, unexampled in mining history, and stretches "the faith-blanket"—the believing ability—of old miners to the ripping or tearing point. In the mineral show-windows of the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company's Portland ticket-office, during the past two years, many samples of ore from the Virtue district have been on exhibition, that would run from $100,000 to $200,000 to the ton. From a five-pound chunk of it, $500 could be pounded in a few minutes with a mortar and pestle. Among the recent desk decorations of the First National Bank of Baker City was a 10-pound piece of white quartz from the same district, that was half pure gold, worth at least $275,000 to the ton; and a saucerful of samples of quartz from a new discovery near Auburn, running $400,000 to the ton, or fully three-fourths

gold. The office of Fred R. Mellis, of Baker City, the leading expert statistician of the Webfoot Eldorado, is a museum of mineral wonders. He has a mass of ore from the Ibex mine, in the Cracker Creek district, that runs $29,500 to the ton; and samples of ore from the famous Red Boy, near Granite, running $30,000 to the ton. Huge chunks of Bonanza ore, going $20,000 to the ton; 150-pound lumps of Columbia ore, running $30,000 to the ton; a big piece from the Carroll B., discovered by Jim Baisley, of Baisley-Elkhorn renown, mounting up to $60,000 to the ton; and nuggets, weighing from $10 to $200 apiece, from everywhere between Seven Devils and Canyon City, are other items in the marvelous Mellis collection, which includes hundreds of similar specimens. Ore was recently struck in the Golconda, six miles north of Sumpter, that runs from $100 to $10,000 to the ton, some of it going $10 to the pound. More than one great mine in this wonderland has been paid for by pulverizing the rock in an old-fashioned hand mortar, and washing out the gold in a pan.

IV.

Some True Fairy-Tales.

In a land of such ores, the whole air is full of glittering fairy-tales that are all true. No freak of fortune seems too wild for credence. No miracle of luck is strange. One jostles, at every turn, against the gilded creatures of romance and of fable in real life.

Three years or so ago, Franklin Mallory, of Spokane, bought a one-third interest in the Flagstaff mine, in the Virtue district, seven or eight miles east of Baker City, for $20. Within 60 days afterward, the mine was sold to French capitalists for $20,000, and has since produced over $100,000 a year. Six or seven years ago, the Virtue mine, eight miles east of Baker City, was offered for $20,000, with no takers. It has since turned out $250,000 in a year. The Badger group, near Susanville, Grant county, was bonded in November, 1897, for $8,000. Within a year afterward, it had shipped over 400 tons of ore, that averaged in smelter returns $150 to the ton, an aggregate of $60,000.

The Union-Companion, in the Cornucopia district, of Union county, is a combination of the two mines whose names it bears. A half-interest in the Union was sold, a few years ago, for $500, and the Companion was sold outright for $300. The two were bought shortly afterward by John F. Searles, secretary of the Sugar Trust, for $60,000. In 1897 the consolidated mine yielded $200,000; during 1899 it produced $287,000, paying a net profit of $110,000; and its sale at $700,000 was reported not long since.

It is but a comparatively short time since a half-interest in the now world-famed Bonanza mine, in the Olive Creek or Robinsonville district, 48 miles west of Baker City, and 16 miles southwest of Sumpter, was offered for $250, but nobody would have it. Albert Geiser, a young boy who was then driving an express-wagon in Baker City, took hold of it, and, with the aid of his mother and sisters, worked at it, under all sorts of difficulties and discouragements, till he was able, in September, 1897, to sell the control of it to the Standard Oil Company for $750,000. It has, for more than a year past, been producing $40,000 a month with a 40-stamp mill, and during February, 1900, its yield ran up to $110,000. It is said by experts to have from $5,000,000 to $8,000,000 of ore in sight, and its production is only limited by the capacity of its machinery, which is being steadily and rapidly increased. With a 100-stamp mill, it will easily pay $100,000 a month. Young Geiser, whose intelligence, energy and indomitable resolution developed it from Nothing to Everything, is today deservedly one of the foremost citizens of his region; a recognized leader in every forward movement and every worthy cause; an altogether admirable type of the level-headed, public-spirited Pacific-Northwest bonanza-king.

But, dazzling as this romance-of-fact is, even it pales its lustrous marvels beside the story of Ike Guker and his Great Northern mine. Guker was an illiterate German farmer. He caught the prevailing epidemic, and began what he called "brosbecting" on a piece of land worth, at an extravagant estimate, 15 cents an acre for a sheep-ranch, near Canyon City. The neighbors all laughed at him. He kept on poking potholes down into the ground, until he was dubbed "Crazy Ike." At last, in January, 1898, he struck a vein of decomposed quartz that ran from $100,000 to $200,000 to the ton. In a few weeks, he picked out something like $20,000 with the point of an old knife, many pieces of the gold running from $20 to $175, and one big chunk weighing $967. The fame of the mine flew to the ends of the earth. The fortunate finder speedily ceased to be "Crazy Ike," and became "Mr. Guker," which will doubtless soon be brevetted into Colonel or Judge Guker. People flocked from every direction to see the wonder. Guker gave away thousands of dollars in specimens. One woman, to whom he gave a two-pound piece of the ore, pounded $198 out of it. His displays of ore were the most wondrous feature of the mineral exhibit at the Omaha Exposition, and at the International Mining Congress in Salt Lake City, in August, 1898. Within a few weeks after the Salt Lake meeting, the mine was capitalized at $1,000,000, and the new company has successfully worked it ever since.

In September, 1898, a young nephew of Superintendent Nichols, of the Gold Ridge mine, determined to try his luck prospecting in Guker's neighborhood. He had nothing but a pick, and enough for a few weeks' grubstake. On a claim

adjoining the Great Northern he struck the same ore that has made Guker's fame and fortune. With an old hand-mortar and pan, he took out $1600 in a single day, and within three months he had made enough to buy a 10-stamp mill from the Risdon Iron-Works, of San Francisco, paying half cash down, and having the other half in bank ready to be paid on the erection of the mill.

Human genius cannot magnify or gild such facts. An army of Munchausens, with banners of yellow boominess, could not exaggerate the possibilities of such a region. And prospecting in it has hardly begun. Of all its more than 14,000 square miles of gold-bearing territory, scarcely 500 have been really prospected. The surface dirt is barely scratched. Hundreds, if not thousands, of mines are yet to be found in it; and hundreds, if not thousands, of great fortunes are yet to be made in it, without jeopardy of life, limb or health, in a land always and easily accessible, where the toiler for gold need deny himself no material comfort or convenience, and no pleasure of surrounding or association, while pushing his way to a bonanza-kingship.

Eastern Oregon is a prospectors' and miners' Land of Golden Promise, where every promise is fulfilled with interest that has been compounding ever since Jehovah laid the foundations of the Blue mountains and dug the channels of the great Shoshone.

V.

Baker City.

Almost exactly in the geographical center of this grand mineral empire has arisen, as its natural capital and metropolis, the handsome little city that bears the name of Oregon's soldier-statesman, General E. D. Baker, the hero and victim of Ball's Bluff. It is situated, at an altitude of 3,440 feet above the level of the sea, on the line of the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company, 345 miles southeast of Portland; and is the county-seat of Baker county, which, with an area of 2,322 square miles, is larger than the state of Delaware, and nearly twice as large as Rhode Island. Like all the other counties in the Oregon Gold Belt, Baker county is diversified with mountains, valleys and streams. The mountains are all mineralized, the valleys are all fertile, and the streams are all bottomed with placer-beds. There is hardly an acre of the whole domain that is not rich in mineral, timber, pasturage or agricultural capabilities. Wheat yields from 40 to 60 bushels to the acre. Sheriff W. H. Kilbourne has averaged 51 bushels. Assessor J. A. Payton made out a list of 42 farmers, two or three years ago, whose crops of oats and

barley averaged 65 bushels to the acre; and Anson Loenig, on Willow creek, raised 110 bushels of barley to the acre. The valleys in every direction yield abundant crops of all the leading grains, grasses and vegetables, and fine fruit is grown in the lower altitudes.

The climate is unsurpassable in all the qualities conducive to health and vigor. There are no extremes of heat or cold. The winters are so mild that cattle run on the ranges all the year without feeding or care, and prospecting can be carried on at all seasons. Thousands of cattle, sheep and horses are raised without expense.

Everywhere north and west of Baker City are magnificent forests of timber for all building and mining purposes, and from 25,000 to 50,000 feet to the acre is an ordinary yield. The whole region is watered by clear, pure mountain streams, Powder river running through the very heart of Baker City.

The Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company gives the young city every facility of transportation and communication with the outside world, and the Sumpter Valley narrow-gauge railway connects it with the great mines, forests, farms and ranges lying west and southwest of it. Well-constructed wagon-roads, either directly or by connection with the railroads, bring it the trade of a large part of Baker, Union and Grant counties, and the northern end of Harney and Malheur counties, besides much from the Idaho side of Snake river. It is the natural depot and distribution-point for the mines and mining-camps of the entire region, including something like a half-hundred districts.

With such a position and such surroundings, Baker City could not have failed to thrive as few western towns have done in recent years. It has more than trebled its population since the census of 1890, rising from 2,600 then to 8,000 now—a rate of growth, which, if continued, will give it from 25,000 to 30,000 people under the next decennial enumeration. The annual gold-yield of its immediately tributary region has increased, in that time, from about $500,000 to $3,500,000—a ratio that will speedily bring it up to $20,000,000 a year.

Since the last edition of the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company's Gold-Field booklet was issued, between 40 and 50 handsome business buildings of brick and stone have gone up in the little city, including the Geiser, Haskell, Pollman, Rust, Ison, Alfred and Waterman blocks, costing from $10,000 to $30,000 each. A 70-room hotel and several smaller ones have been added to the 15 that already offered hospitality to the incoming army of fortune-seekers. The Sisters of Saint Francis have built a $40,000 addition to their academy, and a $25,000 extension of Saint Elizabeth hospital is planned. An extensive cold-storage plant has been put in; scores of new mercantile and industrial establishments have gone into operation, including a smelter, two planing-mills, a steam laundry employing 32 per-

sons, two cigar factories, two wholesale groceries, and two wholesale liquor and tobacco houses; and over 400 residences have been erected to accommodate the growing population. Albert Geiser, of Bonanza fame, has just paid $40,000 cash for the Warshauer House, and proposes to spend $15,000 or $20,000 more in making a first-class hotel of it. The Masons have recently finished a $20,000 temple of Faith, Hope and Charity, and an opera-house, with all the modern metropolitan improvements, will soon be completed, and playing the same attractions that appear in Portland. A $100,000 waterworks system is being installed, and everything is moving with a rush.

The manufactories include six saw and planing-mills, with a daily capacity of about 175,000 feet of lumber, or something like 55,000,000 feet a year;—the Oregon Lumber Company alone employing between 300 and 400 hands, and having a capacity of about 30,000,000 feet. There are two mills near Haines station on the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company's line, 10 miles northwest of the city, with a combined capacity of from 20,000 to 25,000 feet a day.

The Powder River Land and Irrigation Company is rapidly pushing to completion the most extensive work of its kind in the state. Its canals and ditches parallel the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company's tracks for 20 miles. Its main reservoir, a half-mile east of the city, at an elevation of 60 feet, is a mile long by a half-mile wide, with a depth of 70 feet, and holds 400,000,000 cubic feet of water. It will bring from 60,000 to 100,000 acres of rich lands into cultivation, and will add at least $2,500,000 to the annual production of the region and the business of the city.

The neighboring mines give employment to from 1,600 to 2,000 men, whose pay-roll amounts to something like $1,500,000 a year, most of which is spent, directly or indirectly, in and about the little city. The First National Bank of Baker City, July 23, 1897, showed cash resources of $710,344; April 26, 1900, with all the new banks that have been started, these figures had risen to $1,145,893. April 26, 1899, its individual deposits were $936,325; and April 26, 1900, although three new banks had gone into operation in the meantime, these deposits had increased to $977,737. During 1893, this bank shipped, in gold dust and bullion, $264,165; in 1894, it shipped $274,505; in 1895, $360,268; in 1896, $529,266; in 1897, $750,000; and last year, with all the new banks, express companies and shipping facilities, its shipments neared the $1,000,000 mark. Could the rapid rise of gold production be more concisely shown? This includes no shipments of ore or concentrates, and no drafts, checks, or money-orders for sales made by miners. It is simply the gold-dust and bullion record of one bank.

The little city is equipped in metropolitan fashion with waterworks, gas and electric-light plants, a street-railway, and two live daily news-

papers and a half-dozen weeklies. The Morning Democrat, which has Mergenthaler typesetting machines and takes the full Associated Press dispatches, and The Evening Republican, may occasionally pull hair over political questions, but they are always found pulling together for the good of their city, county and region. The streets are broad and well kept, the churches and schools are numerous and handsome, and many of the public and private buildings would be creditable to a city of 50,000 people. The Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company has a large and conveniently arranged depot, a fine stone-and-iron warehouse, and extensive stockyards, and the Sumpter Valley Railway has ample buildings and terminal facilities. A number of new railroad branches and extensions are being planned, including one to the great Seven Devils Copper region of Idaho, and movements are on foot to establish smelting and reduction works on an extensive scale.

Baker City is one of the busiest and most prosperous little places in the West, and its future is loaded to the muzzle with golden promise;—but it is not the only municipal nugget on the creek. "There are others," and a glance at one or two of them will serve to form another short chapter.

VI.

Sumpter.

Thirty-two miles west of Baker City is Sumpter, the western terminus of the Sumpter Valley Railway, a narrow-gauge road that is said to have paid over 40 per cent. dividends on the past year's business.

It is a young wonder. Two years ago it was unheard-of, except as the camping-place of a small detachment of United States troops the day the Charleston-Harbor fort was fired upon, and the spot where recently a little lumbering railroad has run out in the woods. A year and a half ago, it was a crossroads village, with perhaps 150 inhabitants. In May, 1899, it had about [illegible] in May, 1900—just a year later—it is a [illegible] bustling little city of [illegible] population, with something like 150 business houses, including 25 hotels, restaurants and lodging-houses, 23 saloons, thre[illegible] offices, 15 or 20 real-estate an[illegible] offices, three live newspapers, four sawmills, a brewery, an opera-house, news-agencies, brickyards, millinery and jewelry stores, dance-houses, shooting-galleries and all the other boom mining-camp establishments. It has churches, good schools, telegraph and telephone connection with all the great surrounding mines and the outside world in general, a stalwart fire department, a $75,000

waterworks system with 15 fire hydrants, and a superb electric-light plant with 20 or 30 arc lamps, and 2,000 incandescents. All last winter, amid snow and what passes for cold in Oregon, carpenters and bricklayers worked, at big wages, every hour of daylight; and yet people poured in faster than roofs could be reared to shelter them.

Real estate has gone kiting skyward. A lot, that a Portland drummer named Collett had to take, two years ago, for a bad debt of $100, was recently sold for $2,250; and one, for which Ed. Geiser paid $200 in November, 1897, brought $7,000 in November, 1899—3,400 per cent. advance in 24 months, or 141½ per cent. a month, which is a pretty lively speculative profit in any age or land. In November, 1899, a Mr. Mayer leased a business room for a year at $50 a month; and, in December, he re-let it for the remaining 11 months of his lease at $100 a month. For the week ending December 18, 1899, the real-estate business, including town-lots, mining-claims, bonds, mortgages and releases, amounted to $136,604—more in that line than was done during the same time in St. Paul, with 165,000 population.

The town has six stage, transfer and freight-ing companies, and seven daily stage lines, employing 200 horses, carrying passengers, mails, express matter and special freight to and from the tributary mines and mining-camps; and it handles from 3,000,000 to 6,000,000 pounds of freight a month. Seven carloads of mining and milling machinery were recently received in a single day; and April 1, 1900, three big warehouses on the Sumpter Valley Railway contained 150 carloads of freight waiting for the mountain roads to dry up sufficiently to admit of heavy teaming. Its little railroad, last year, hauled out 7,000 carloads of timber alone, or about 600 carloads a month; and, with the constantly increasing rush of incoming travel, machinery and supplies, its facilities are being taxed to the utmost limit.

In short, Sumpter has risen, in a single year, from nothing almost to the size of Deadwood in the palmiest days of the Black Hills, and its boom has seemingly come to stay. The town is literally built on golden rock. It is walled in by mountains of gold-seamed quartz, and all its streams roll over golden sands. It is the center and supply and distribution point of hundreds, if not thousands, of square miles of gold-bearing territory, whose riches pass all ordinary computation. Immediately around it and tributary to it, 296 stamps are pounding out over $2,000,000 a year in gold bricks and concentrates, and every day is adding to the number of the mines and mills, and the amount of the yield.

Fourteen miles northwest of Sumpter, the young camp of Granite has risen from nothingness to rustling, incorporated cityhood, like a mushroom in a night. A few weeks ago, it was a rural crossroads. Now, it has a mayor and [illegible]ty council, six hotels and restaurants—one of

the hotels having 65 rooms and another 25;—stores carrying from $15,000 to $25,000 stocks; two wide-awake newspapers, The Boulder and The Gem; four saloons, four livery, grain and feed establishments, drug-stores, blacksmith and carpenter shops, and a gravity water system, affording protection from fire. Among the improvements contemplated or in course of construction are a $20,000 sawmill, an electric light and power plant, two churches, a public school, and a cold-storage plant. There are 12 producing mines immediately around the town, including the famous Red Boy, the May Queen, Cougar, Magnolia, Ajax, Quebec, Polar Star, Bellevue, Inter-Mountain, Tempest, Buffalo and Intrinsic. There are 2,122 mining locations recorded in the Granite district, and many of them give every promise of becoming producers. Hundreds of tons of machinery are going in to the Granite mines, and Baker and Grant counties are now spending $6,000 in improving the road between Sumpter and the new town. Surveys for the Granite-Hilgard railway have been made, and depot grounds at Granite have been granted and accepted. New and promising mines are constantly being discovered all over the region, and the town bids fair to become an important center of golden activity.

Prairie City, about 35 miles southwest of Sumpter, is rapidly growing; Carson, 20 miles north, is putting on city airs; and new towns are springing up everywhere so fast that it is hard to keep them mapped.

The mines, to which they all owe their existence and their growth, will form the subject of ano[illegible]—and a last—brief c[illegible]er. They are wort[illegible] volume; but, as they [illegible] somewhat elabo[illegible]resented in other [illegible]cations of the Oreg[illegible] Railroad and Navigation Company, a page or two of mention here must suffice.

VII.

Webfoot Bonanzas.

From the Seven Devils copper mountains of Idaho, 80 miles northeast of Baker City, to the [illegible] of Canyon City, 80 [illegible] in a vast mineral bed. [illegible] Snake River lies a free-gold zone of about 1,000 [illegible] miles, and westward stretches the field of smelting ores, mingled in many places with ledges of free gold.

Eight miles east of the city is the Virtue mine, which, amid many vicissitudes, has produced over $3,000,000, specimens of its ore often going from $50,000 to $250,000 to the ton. In the same district are the Consolidated Virginia, Mogul, Gold Dollar, Texas, Emma Monte, Perry, Ra-

chel, Alturas and Del Norte; the Flagstaff, which has produced $100,000 a year, the Cyclone, Red Jacket, Gordon, Lady Adams, Phillips, Bradbury and scores of others, all in ore and producing or promising. The White Swan, three miles east of the Virtue, has paid for itself and for all development and improvements, and $40,000 in dividends, without the investment of a dollar. One small shipment of ore from the Mabel yielded $24,000, and the Brazos, Friday and Columbian have all opened up rich rock. At Gold Hill, near Durkee Station, 26 miles southeast of Baker City, eight great parallel veins of $14 ore have been opened up; and about 35 miles southeast of Baker City is the Connor Creek mine, which has paid $1,500,000.

Away up among the Powder River mountains, in the northeastern part of Union county, is the Cornucopia district, with a mineral belt six miles long by four miles wide, on which ledges of ore, running from $5 to $50 to the ton, are exposed in more than 50 mines and prospects. Here is the Union-Companion mine, whose marvelous story is told in another chapter. Sold for a few hundred dollars, but a short time ago, it yielded $287,000 last year, and is expected to turn out $350,000 this year. The Red [illegible]et, the Simmons group and a number of othe[illegible]ve shipped ore that yielded rich returns, and th[illegible] mines in Eagle Creek district, southwest [illegible] nu-co[illegible]ia, a profitable pro[illegible] [illegible] th[illegible]inger d[illegible] southwest o[illegible] agle, [illegible]ger mine has [illegible]duced over $500,000 [illegible]m surface rock, and the Basin runs [illegible] mill on ore that goes from $10 to $60 to the ton. The placers about Sparta have yielded many hundreds of thousands of dollars—some authorities say millions—and rich placer and quartz discoveries have recently been made.

Starting westward from Baker City, the mineral beds begin almost in the municipal limits, rich quartz having been found within two miles of the courthouse. A short distance southwest is Auburn Gulch, that has yielded millions of placer gold, and the Robinson and Carpenter placers are steadily yielding golden dust and nuggets. The Tom Paine, near Pocahontas, eight miles west of Baker City, has turned out some of the richest quartz ever found in the region.

Sixteen miles northwest of Baker City is the Baisley-Elkhorn, which has produced over $1,000,000. The Robbins-Elkhorn and Maxwell are both old-time producers, the Beckwith has [illegible] Several rich strikes have been recently made.

About 35 miles west of Baker City, and six miles north of Sumpter, is the famous Cracker Creek district, where are many of the greatest mines in Oregon. The Eureka and Excelsior, which has produced $250,000 a year. The North Pole, located and abandoned as worthless a dozen times, now paying the Barings, of London, over $100,000 a year. The Golconda, which yields $150,000 a year, and in which a seam of ore was

recently struck that runs from $100 to $10,000 to the ton. The Columbia, which could have been bought not long ago for $1,000, and which has since yielded $480,000, paying for itself and all machinery and development, and putting $200,000 net cash in its surplus fund. The Ibex, which was sold in February, 1899, for $65,000, and resold in December for $300,000, and is set down as able to produce its full purchase price this year. The Ohio, Climax, Cyclone, Amazon, Bunker Hill, and a hundred other productive or prospective bonanzas, including such goldenly promising new discoveries as the Free Coinage and the Mountain Belle, adjoining the Golconda.

Six miles northwest of Cracker Creek lies the Cable Cove district, abounding in rich mines and prospects. The California has shipped ore that yielded from $60 to $200 to the ton. The Baker City group has a ledge of free-gold rock that runs as high as $200 to the ton; and a carload shipment from a new discovery made by Edward Ransom gave $58 to the ton in gold and silver. The Imperial, Eagle, Ivy May, Herculean, Red Chief, Crown Point, Mormon Boy, Winchester and Homestake are all in good ore.

Fourteen miles northwest of Sumpter is Granite, the center of a score or more of mines that would be wonders anywhere but here. Four years ago, the owners of the Red Boy were too poor to pay freight charges on a small shipment of material. They managed by hard hustling to borrow the necessary few dollars, ar[illegible] mine is now turning out $27,000 a month, or ov[illegible] $300,000 a year, in gold bricks; and negotiations are said to be pending for its sale to a London syndicate for $3,000,000. According to estimates of the Sumpter Bureau of Information, the Cougar will this year produce $350,000; the Little Giant, $300,000; the Magnolia, $150,000, and the May Queen and Bellevue, $100,000 each. There are many promising prospects, and new finds are being constantly made.

Sixteen miles west of Sumpter, on the same vast northeast and southwest mineral dike, on which lie all the mines mentioned in the last three or four pages, is the Bonanza, whose romance-dwarfing history is given elsewhere. In the same neighborhood are the Don Juan, Imperial, Pyx, Phoenix, Banzette, Snarr, Intrinsic and dozens of other dividend-payers of the present and near future, and the flourishing young town of Geiser has risen, as the postoffice and business center of the camp.

About 20 miles west of the Bonanza is the Susanville district, whose placers are panning out tens of thousands every year, where the Badger mine yields $100,000 a year, and where the Cabell, Monumental, Alta, Poorman, Stockton and Skyscraper bid fair to take their places among the producers. And at Canyon City, 50 miles southwest of Sumpter, where $2,500,000 has been washed out of the placers, is the Great Northern mine, from whose $200,000-to-the-ton ore Ike Guker picked fame and fortune with a hammer and an old pocket-knife.

All over this gold-strewn wonderland new discoveries of riches follow each other like cards from a practiced dealer's hands. A few weeks since, Prospectors Bee and Culbertson located two claims near McEwen station, and six days afterward sold them for $20,000. From a small piece of float rock on the newly found Concord, nearly $200 was pounded out in a hand-mortar in the presence of Editor J. W. Connella, of The Sumpter Miner, one of the livest and most widely quoted papers of the region or the state. On the old Sumpter and Granite stage-road, four miles from Granite, a ledge of ore two miles long, and running $29 in free gold to the ton, was recently found. In the very borders of Sumpter, in the shadows of its churches and schools, banks, hotels and Young Men's Christian Association building, a lot of Chinamen have, for months past, been washing out gold enough on the Ellis placers, to pay $320 a week in royalties, and the Downey placers, about a mile south of the railroad depot, are paying handsomely. Guy Reeder, of Colorado, landed at Granite with four dollars to his name. He soon located three claims, and May 6, sold them for $5,000 cash. Mrs. A. S. Jacobs, of Portland, got a three days' bond on the Knapp claims on Rock creek, and before the time expired sold them for $75,000 to J. B. Dabney, of British Columbia. Vast coal deposits have been discovered on the headwaters of the John Day, and copper fields that promise to rival those of Michigan have just been found between Baker City and Snake river.

There are 14,000 square miles of treasure-vaults yet to be prospected and opened up in Eastern Oregon! Why go anywhere else to find **fortunes?**

Baker County Oregon

The Bonanza Land for 1900

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