

## Aim to Recover Deep-Bedded Gold

Robinette—(Special) — In the most recent undertaking to recover the fine flour gold from the bottom of Snake river, the Submarine Gold Mining company, which plans to mine at milepost 28, Sturgill Bar, shipped in two carloads of lumber last week the first step preparatory to equipping the operation.

The lumber will be used to construct the boat to float the submarine equipment, with which they can mine 40 feet under the surface of the river. It is understood the men carrying on the venture are from Boise. They brought their trucks and trailer-houses for living quarters.

Much work is done annually on Snake river at low water, and many have hoped that some way to work deeper would be developed.

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March 10, 1938

## Working on Mining Device; Roads Bad

Robinette — (Special) — The Submarine Mining company received a carload of steel plates Saturday, which are to be used to build 32 pontoons that will support the diving bell being constructed to extract the gold from the bed of the river. The equipment can be used 40 feet below the surface of water. This mining operation is located about four miles from Robinette near Sturgill Bar.

April 13th, 1938

## DREDGE ON SNAKE RIVER LAUNCHED

Odd Diving Bell Outfit  
Invented by George  
Neider

**Special to The Democrat-Herald**  
HALFWAY, April 13.—The Submarine Gold Mining company, with offices in Boise, has launched the boat it plans to use in recovering gold on the bed of the Snake river. The launching took place at a point near Sturgill's bar on the Oregon side of the river.

The company intends to work 12 miles of ground between Sturgill's bar and Robinette.

Between 200 and 300 persons from Idaho, Utah and Oregon saw the boat launched and christened.

The boat is a part of the invention of George Neider, formerly of Cornucopia and Baker. The boat, constructed like a large doughnut with an oblong hole in the middle, will be used to support derricks and other necessary equipment. A crew of 16 men has constructed the boat and in the next three weeks plans to make a diving bell, which will be set down on the river bed.

The water will be pumped from the bell and when the bed is free of water workmen with electric lights to aid them and a signal system, will work the sands like any river placer miner. The sluice boxes are also a part of the diving equip-

ment. The bell when completed, Neider said, would weigh 24 tons.

The boat, launched and christened early Sunday afternoon, April 10, is approximately 80 by 40 feet in size.

George Neider was in charge of the ceremonies held Sunday. He introduced several other members of the company, Philip Roney of New Plymouth, Leo D. Adamson and Jack Parsons of Boise and L. W. Aldred of Salt Lake City.

Following a talk by Mr. Neider, explaining his invention, Mrs. Neider, formerly Delphia Anderson of Cornucopia, great granddaughter of Brigham Young, christened the flat boat "Eureka."

## BOAT PLANNED TO WASH GOLD OF RIVER BED

Submarine Mining Co. Has  
Boat Launched on  
Snake River

### BOAT INVENTION OF FORMER BAKER MAN

Gravel From Bed of River  
Will Be Dug Through a  
Diving Bell, Large Boat  
Launched Sunday.

HALFWAY—Last Sunday was an unusual day at Sturgill bar on Snake river, near Robinette, when the launching of the boat built by the Submarine Mining company, was the big thing of the day. A crowd of between 200 and 300 people gathered to see the launching. Langdon Rand, Baker photographer, was present and secured a number of interesting pictures of the launching and the crowd.

The launching of the hull was accomplished successfully. It was started down the ways side-wise, but stuck for a time, when 175 men directed by Walter Cundiff of Richland, succeeded in giving it a push that sent it on into the water. It was christened "Eureka" by Mrs. Nieder, wife of the inventor.

The hull of the boat is 40x80 feet with a large well in the center over which a crane is to be erected for lowering and raising a large bell through the hole. It is from this bell that it is proposed to work the gold bearing gravels from the bottom of Snake river and clean the bedrock in the stream. The bell will be dropped to the bottom of the river and compressed air turned into it to clear it of water so the men can work on the bottom. Gravel will be hoisted to the boat surface where it will be run through sluices for recovering the gold content.

The bell will weigh about 24 tons when complete. The entire plant is the invention of George Nieder, a well known mechanic and machinist, a resident of Baker for a number of years. He has made his home at Boise, Idaho for the past several years.

At the program during the launching Mr. Nieder introduced other members of the company, Leo D. Adamson and Jack Parsons of Boise; Phillip Roney of New Plymouth, and L. W. Aldred of Salt Lake City, salesmanager.

Mr. Neider in a short talk explained the manner of operating the boat and how it is planned to work 12 miles of the river bed from the Sturgill bar toward Robinette.

A lunch was served during the day to the people gathered to witness the launching.

CONTROL STARTS



### The Motorloggers Visit an Oregon Mining Area

This newspaper is co-operating with The Oregonian and the Oregon State Motor association in presenting a series of motorlogs, designed to stimulate travel in Oregon and the Pacific northwest. This article was condensed from a full-page article appearing in The Oregonian June 19.

By Gerry Weaver  
Staff Writer, The Oregonian

FOR three successive years this motorlogger has journeyed to the eastern edge of Oregon to see what was attracting the tourist... over that way, and the third time proved to be the charm. We've found it.

It's a four-letter word describing a certain substance that very few ever get enough of—Gold.

But don't ask Jack Keyes about eastern Oregon's gold—yea. The northwest advertising manager for the Shell Oil company, and representative of Shell's touring bureau in eight western states, was a guest of the Oregon State Motor association on this trip.

We—Keyes and I—reconnitered along the Snake river, two or three miles south of the mouth of Powder river, and had borrowed a gold pan. It was my companion's first session with the metal disc and "likely" sand.

He panned. He panned some more. Then he continued to pan.

It was with considerable reluctance that the borrowed gold pan left the new prospector's hands. Without doubt, there were to be had thousands, nay millions, in the next panful, you betcha! Gold, gold...

I picked up Jack Keyes at a downtown Portland hotel at what, to me, was the unconscionably early hour of 8 A. M. and pointed the nose of the motor association's white Travel Development sedan toward the east.

Road maps will tell you that it's 333 miles from Portland to Baker. My traveling companion and I were ready to concede they tell very nearly the truth as we rolled up to the Baker hotel and signed on the dotted line for a couple of beds to stretch out on later in the afternoon.

It was neither bright nor early next morning, which was a Sunday, when, immediately after



Jack Keyes looks for gold—minus beginner's luck

orange juice, Keyes and I headed our travel car eastward in the general direction of Idaho. We decided it was the altitude that made us want to sleep in on a Sunday morning in Baker. It's 3435 feet above sea level there.

A good gravel road took us 56 miles to a point due east of Baker on the Oregon-Idaho boundary—where the boisterous Powder river empties into the racing saffron Snake.

Old-timers call it Carpenter's bar. That's where we found the mining bell. Across the river on the Idaho side signs of old hydraulic workings identified Sturrgill bar.

An accompanying photograph shows what we beheld tied up to the near shore. The barge, scow, float, pontoon, boathouse—well, it was the project of the Submarine Gold Mining company, George Neider, inventor.

There was only a watchman to show us around and hint at its mysteries. Machinery was slow in arriving, he said, holding up the work on the project, but bell and all should be in operation within a month.

The Submarine company has a lease, we were informed, on the 12 miles of Snake river from Carpenter's bar southward, and the government has called that iden-

### Submarine Gold Mining company's \$30,000 project on the Snake river

tical dozen miles the richest known strip of river bed on the continent. The company proposes to exploit this reach of river bed by lowering a 30-ton bell, constructed of half-inch armor plate, to the floor of the stream, and two or three men therein will simply scoop up the gold.

It's a \$30,000 venture, and perhaps the only one of the kind anywhere. Its novelty is a topic of considerable discussion around Baker county, we found. Far more fascinating to us tenderfeet, however, were a few lines which ran something like this:

"Oh, the river is rich as rich can be. Only a few days ago a fellow was panning along here and color turned up. In four hours he had a nice little sock of \$3700 in gold, pretty as you ever saw! He took off his clothes and didn't give up the trail until he was diving ten feet under water."

Keyes and I threw interest into intense gear and bluntly called for a gold pan, which was supplied obligingly.

I've already related our success. Perhaps, if I'd had the pan instead of Keyes, perhaps—

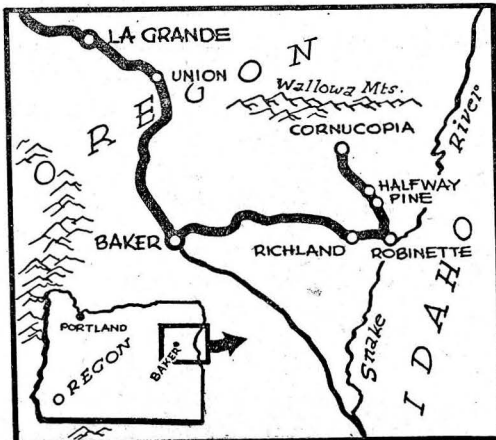
We were still smarting with the gold fever as we hurried over the 22 miles to Cornucopia, through beautiful Pine valley, past the little isolated town of Halfway and along roaring Pine creek to Oregon's heaviest gold producer.

Cornucopia had its first boom 50 years ago, and, according to present standards, approximately \$13,000,000 has been dug out, although only small sections of two of the "hills" 11 known veins have been worked to date.

The mine is doing a \$100,000 monthly gross business, employs 200 human moles and the monthly payroll is \$20,000. Every ton of the earth and rock brought out by the little mine cars has an average value of \$15 or \$20.

After this ore has passed through a flotation process—you'll have to consult your expert on flotation processes for an explanation—the chaff is removed from the wheat, so to speak, and a ton of the resulting concentrate is worth about \$500.

The concentrate is hauled away to a Tacoma smelter, which further reduces it to the yellow stuff Keyes and I were looking for along the Snake river.



Map indicates route of motorlog

Three miles above Robinette R. George Neider heads a company which is experimenting with a diving bell apparatus for working the bottom of Snake river for placer gold. It will likely be running later summer. —Illustration Courtesy the Oregonian.

Record Courier, Baker, June 30, 1938

## Experiment With \$30,000 Diving Bell Dredge to Get Snake River Gold

For years it has been a dream of many to be able to recover fine gold from the Snake river. Men who have tried it will tell you it floats right out on the water. Those who have recovered some will say they have had to be content with so small a head that washing great yardage was impossible.

For years, however, it has also been known that the 12 miles above Sturgill bar is one of the richest riverbed deposits in the west—a natural sluice box—if man could only turn off that head of water to clean it up! But Old Man River just keeps flowing.

### River Bottom Hold Gold

He came nearest to stopping a few summers ago, receding far back in his bed. Then prospectors went clear out on the bottom, dug through the overburden of rock and gravel and got down to bedrock. The coarse gold they found was evidence that crevices hold the treasure. Combing crevices — with fingers, forks, brooms, and whatever at hand — is profitable business, the record of a few miners at Robinette and up river reveals. Gold is where you find it!

Diving for gold! That was the idea that prompted R. George Neider to invent and patent certain mechanical devices which would make a diving bell useful to the gold miner. Neider knew submarines during the World war and worked on caisson and open-bottom bells in construction work. The bell idea is an old one. By raising the air pressure within the bell you can keep the water out. Within the limit of the bell on Snake river the water depth is not so deep that the pressure will be as much an inconvenience to the men inside, it is said.

### 30-Ton Bell

The submarine dredge that Neider has floating at Carpenter bar is on 22 steel sectional pontoons. The dredge itself is a mansion with living quarters, mess hall, bunk house and private quarters as well. Its chief function, however, is to carry the 30-ton half-inch armor plate diving bell which drops down through a hole in the dredge mid-section, raising and lowering by a hoist and riding up and down on two tubular steel spuds. The 80 x 40 foot boat will weigh 119 tons, carrying a 125 diesel-electric power plant

The bell will be lowered to river-bottom. A double canvas skirt around its lower edge filled with shot and aided by movable steel fingers inside the bell will conform to the irregular river bottom, the inventor claims. The air inside the bell will then be pumped to a pressure which will force out all water right down to the gravel. Three men can work comfortably inside the bell, scooping up high grade pay dirt into a 11-foot sluice right inside the bell, working around larger rocks and managing the intake of the 10-inch dredging pump.

### To Pump Gravel

The dredging pump picks up gravel and even passes 8-inch solids. This material is washed in the sluice on deck or dispelled as waste, of which there is about a foot and one-half overburden on Snake river, the operators say.

With the pressure inside the bell the apparatus and suction pump are said to be efficient up to a depth of 40 feet, although the bell will probably not be in over a few feet of water in most of its work. The round pipe on top of the bell, as seen in the accompanying picture, is fitted with an air lock through which the men pass in entering the device. Additional length of pipe can be fitted to this stub as depth requires.

Problem No. 1 in all dredging is handling the yardage at a cost that will warrant mining. The Submarine Mining company claims its method of reducing overburden will increase its pay-dirt capacity and make for profitable operation.

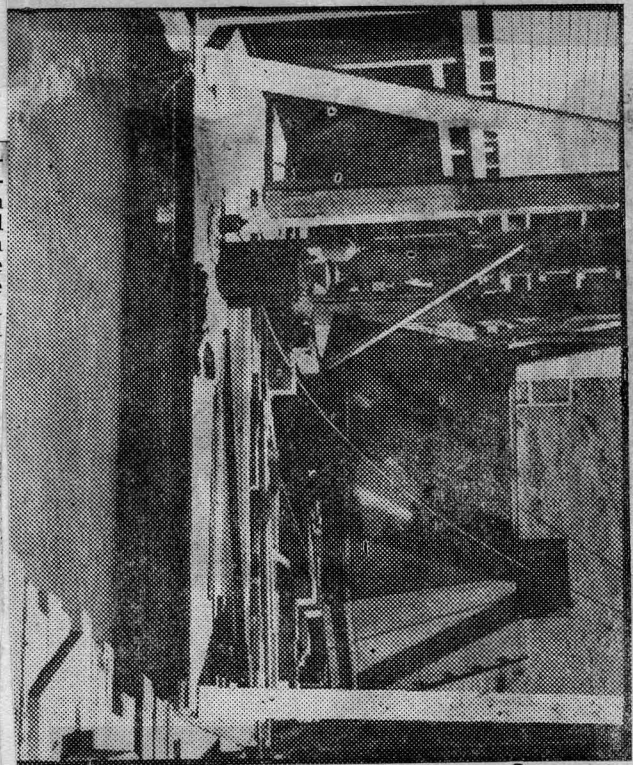
Problem No. 2 is to make the bell conform to a very irregular bedrock and boulder-strewn bottom. The inventor says his device will solve this problem and will be mobile enough to evade the impossible places.

Problem No. 3 is to recover the fine gold along with the crevice and coarse gold. The company here says that by proper introduction of water into the sides and by spray from the top of the sluice it can settle the finest yellow metal and that by shipping a concentrate of \$1860 to the ton it will let the smelter do the rest.

This enterprise is a stock company with R. George Neider president, Leo Adamson, secretary-treasurer, and L. W. Allred sales-

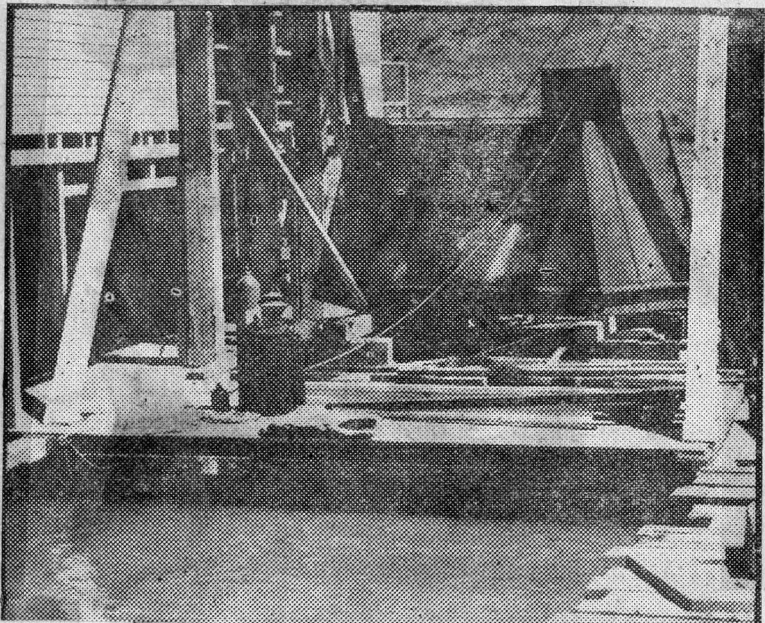
manager, all of Idaho. If the experiment proves successful it will run on a three shift basis with eight men to the shift.

Diving for gold! If this is possible there will be more dredges — or submarines — on Snake river, for it is claimed it will take six similar boats 30 years to work the 12-mile channel where gold is known to lie — in the "natural sluice box."



To Dive for Gold in "Sluice Box"

# To Dive for Gold in "Sluice Box"



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### **Still Installing**

Robinette — After a delay of perhaps three months the big diesel engine that will operate the submarine dredge several miles above town has arrived and was unloaded Saturday. The engine not only will be used to maintain the air pressure necessary to operate the diving bell on the boat, in which placer mining on the Snake river bottom will be done, but will also raise and lower the heavy steel device when necessary. The promoters of the venture now report it will be in operation in the near future.

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## ***Mining Company Seeking Permit On Snake River***

SALEM, Oct. 17 (Special)—Officials of the Submarine Gold Mining company with headquarters in Idaho appeared before the state land board here Monday and requested a contract permitting it to operate a submarine bell on the Oregon side of Snake river:

The land board was advised that the company already had received a contract to operate on the Idaho side of the stream.

The request was taken under advisement pending approval of a contract by the attorney-general.