

The Mining Journal, September 15, 1938

Fire is stated to have caused a loss of \$12,000 at the **Hidden Treasure** mine in the Virtue district near Baker, Oregon. The property is being operated by Miles D. Rombaugh and Mike Hoff of Baker, who have sunk the shaft to a depth of 150 feet and installed a cyanide pilot plant. This plant was just ready to be put into operation when the fire occurred, supposedly started when gasoline was spilled and ignited by a miner's lamp, which in turn caused two boxes of dynamite to explode. Surface buildings and equipment were reported to be a total loss. Reconstruction work is being started and some machinery will be purchased.

Baker Rec. - Cont.

13 June 1940

PUTTING IN MILL

Another small quartz operation was about to go on a permanent basis this week we learn from an announcement that the Hidden Treasure mine on Virtue flat is installing a small cyanide concentration plant. According to Miles Rombaugh who owns the property, the 10-ton plant will be ready in about two weeks. This mine has produced shipping grade ore for several years.

Virtue
Baker

Hidden Treasure Mining Property Lost in Flames

Miles Rombaugh, Mike
Hoff Burned in Ex-
plosion

GAS IS IGNITED
BY MINE LAMPS

Charles Julian Rescued
from Shaft Following
Blast

All of the buildings and equipment on the Hidden Treasure mine located in the Virtue district were destroyed and Mike Hoff and Miles Rombaugh, the owners, were burned Wednesday when flames started by a gasoline explosion swept the property.

The loss, estimated at from \$12,000 to \$15,000, was not covered by insurance.

Rombaugh was badly burned on the arms and face and Hoff was burned on the face.

The owners were installing a new engine in a cyanide test plant, which had just been completed, when the explosion occurred. An old gas tank without a cap fell over and mine lamps ignited the gas.

With the flames sweeping the plant and no way to fight them, Hoff descended into the shaft to rescue Charles Julian, who was working in a stope taking out ore. Realizing two boxes of dynamite that they had just taken to the mine would explode when the flames reached it near the ore bin, the three men dashed to the nearby hills to be clear of the blast. From their vantage point the men watched the fire proceed and saw the effect of the dynamite explosion.

The fifty-ton ore bin was about two-thirds full, and when the dynamite exploded, the ore, about ready to be shipped, was scattered in every direction.

The buildings destroyed included the assay office and all equipment, cyanide test plant, ore bin, head frame, electric generating plant, and hoist building. The fire also burned the timber in the shaft, which is 154 feet deep, and ruined the hoist engines and compressor and engine. Rombaugh and Hoff have been developing the property for the last five years and have been shipping ore regularly to the U. S. Smelting company of Salt Lake City for the last two years. The ore averages better than \$100 a ton. The men would have started operation of the cyanide test plant Friday.

Mine Activity Gains in Virtue District

A few miles east of Baker near the highway to Richland there are three mines in operation in less than a mile, giving that locality an air of activity.

There is the Columbian, a patented mining claim that had been closed for nearly 20 years, which was taken over in August by Robert Donald, a Baker mining engineer and operator. There is a shaft on the property 200 feet deep which was filled with debris when Mr. Donald took the property over. He equipped the property with hoist and compressor, cleaned the shaft down to the 100-foot level and has since been making regular shipments of the ore to the smelter at Tacoma. He trucks the ore to Baker for loading on the cars, shipping 50 tons to the car.

Near the Columbian is the Hidden Treasure, owned by Miles Rombeau and Mike Hoff. They have been operating the property the past three years, and in that time have shipped several cars of high grade ore. At present they are sinking their shaft down to another level. It is down 200 feet and as it is going down on the vein they are taking out ore as they go. The ore being taken out in the shaft is reported as going \$100 and more per ton.

The third property is the Friday where underground development is going on. A mill constructed on the property during the fall should be completed ready to run in a short time.