

State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

702 Woodlark Building
Portland 5, Oregon

NORTH FORK PLACERS: Calhoun & Howell operation (Au)

North Fork District
Grant County

Operators: Calhoun and Howell, Dale, Oregon. Operations are set-up on a limited partnership basis involving R. K. Calhoun, M. L. Howell and a Mr. Houston. Calhoun and Howell are in active management.

Owner: Calhoun and Howell own by right of purchase several groups of claims, the most noteworthy of which is the old Davis property. Many additional claims are held by lease from owners to numerous to mention.

Location: The property embraces the North Fork of the John Day river from T 6 S, R 31 E, section 33, which is in Umatilla county, to a short distance below Granite Creek in T 8 S, R 34 E, Grant county. Camp is set-up in Umatilla county in T 6 S, R 32 E, section 35 or 36. The ground held in Umatilla county is worked out except for a three mile section of the river downstream from the old Davis workings. The dredge is currently operating in Grant county about six miles above camp, and the bulk of unworked reserves extend on up-river in that county.

History: About three miles of river was worked with a good sized conventional dragline-doodlebug plant by Ralph Davis immediately prior to World War II. Otherwise past mining on the river was largely manual with a couple attempts of mechanized mining utilizing inadequately small equipment. The present company started operations August 1, 1947.

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Development: Thirty pits were sunk on a 7 mile stretch of river beginning on and extending upstream from the Davis property. Recovery from these pits checked with the record of the Davis operation in indicating consistent gold distribution in the gravel. The additional claims held by the company have not yet been tested by them.

Geology: Values are contained in the gravels of the present river channel. The river is characterized here by a moderate and uniform grade. The gravel ranges from sands with very little clay to occasional boulders of large size. While the ground would rate as being on the heavy side, the usual range of boulder size would appear to be a foot or less as judged from the tailings piles. Most of the larger boulders are of such dimensions as can be handled by the three yard bucket. In general boulders of this size have been found to occur scattered at random in the channel although adverse mining conditions due to concentrations have been encountered.

The depth to bedrock on the lower end of the property is around 6 feet. This is reported to increase to around 10 feet on the upper reaches of the river. Likewise the mineable channel width is said to increase from the 150 feet which prevails in the lower end of the property to 200 feet in the upper reaches.

The gold is mostly fine in grain size and often flat. Fineness is around 812.

Equipment: A caterpillar D-8 is used for stripping the ground preparatory to mining. Mining is done by a Bucyrus Monighan dragline with an 80 foot boom and equipped with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ yard bucket. The washing

plant consists of a 6 feet by 32 feet 6 inches trommel with 22 feet of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch perforations, riffles and a 75 foot stacker. It is of all steel construction except for the siding of the superstructure, and is mounted on three pontoons, the central unit of which is used for bulk storage of fuel. The pontoons are 8 feet by 4 feet by 40 feet which dimensions are within the legal limits for transportation on most highways.

The mining unit is supported by excellent shop facilities situated at the camp, and by a good road building equipment.

General:

Access road up-river from the vicinity of the camp has been constructed by the operators, and at the present time the road terminates at the dredge. The construction of this access road constitutes one of the major problems of operation here. Snow averaged only 18 inches during the winter of 1947-48, but it was found expedient to suspend operations for a one month period during the dead of winter and again at the time of the spring flood stage. Supplies are obtained from Pendleton or Pilot Rock, which towns are 65 and 50 miles respectively from Dale on highway 395.

Economics:

Production to date has shown the values to range between 20 and 30 cents per cubic yard of material handled. While operations have shown a profit so far, the margin is smaller than is desirable, due to the present high costs of supplies and the road building problem. Seven men are currently employed on two 9-hour shifts. The management plans to go onto a three shift basis as soon as competent help can be secured, and negotiations are underway with a lumber company for joint construction of the road. The increased

digging capacity of a five yard dragline would serve to
reduce the boulder problem and maintain a feed more nearly to
the capacity of the washing plant.

Report by: N. S. Wagner
Date of Exam: Sept. 16, 1948
Date of report: Sept. 18, 1948
Informants: Messers Calhoun and Howell
Published references: Dogami 14-B -- Davis placer, page 99
" " -- North Fork Placer, page 101 and 102.
Assays: IB-187-188

CALHOUN & HOWELL DREDGE

NORTH FORK DIST.

GRANT COUNTY

From the Ore.-Bin January 1947

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Calhoun and Howell are operating a 3-yard dragline on the North Fork of the John Day River at a location about 8 miles up the river from Dale.

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North Fork (John Day River) Placer Claims

NAME	OLD NAMES	PRINCIPAL ORE	MINOR MINERALS
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8 S	34 E	
T	R	S

PUBLISHED REFERENCES

... Grant..... COUNTY

... North Fork..... AREA

..... ELEVATION

..... ROAD OR HIGHWAY

..... DISTANCE TO SHIPPING POINT

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS

PRESENT LEGAL OWNER (S)

.....

.....

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

.....

OPERATOR

Name of claims	Area	Pat.	Unpat.

Name of claims	Area	Pat.	Unpat.

EQUIPMENT ON PROPERTY

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These placers are in secs. 32 and 33, T.7 S., R. 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ E. "The intersecting gravel deposit known as the North Fork or Klopp mine is situated on the south bank of North Fork of John Day River, opposite the mouth of Trail Creek. Adjoining it on the east is the placer mine of David West on Onion Creek, and to the north across the river are the now idle Dadum placers. All of these mines are situated on parts of the same or similar deposits, and may be conveniently described together.

"Mining has evidently been carried on here for many years, the size of the water-supply ditches and of the abandoned portions of flumes and hydraulic equipment showing that some of the former operations were on a large scale. Records of production are lacking but the reports of miners and others familiar with this locality agree that the operations though usually profitable were never richly productive. The volume of gravel worked to date in these mines is roughly estimated to aggregate 6,800,000 cubic yards, which, at a minimum of 5 cents per cubic yard, must have yielded at least \$342,000. During the season of 1914 Glenn and Henderson were operating two 4-inch giants at the North Fork Mine, and Davis West a small giant on the Onion Creek slope.

"The gold-bearing material covers about one square mile in a compact area that lies mainly on the south side of the river. The gravel extends from the river's level about 500 feet up the hills on both sides and is shown by the workings to be 60 feet or more deep in places. In this area most of the top layer and small percent of the deeper portions have been mined. The few exposures of the bedrock show it to be very irregular and to contain no well-defined channel.

"The gravel bed is a compact unassorted mass of sandy clay and rounded to angular cobbles and boulders. In places the latter comprise 30 or more percent of the whole. Many of them are very large having dimensions in extreme instances as great as 10 feet. The cobbles and boulders are principally of granitic rocks with a sprinkling of schists and a small percent of lavas. In addition a very few small cobbles of unmetamorphosed argillite are distributed through the mass. Although many of the boulders are firm and fresh looking, some are rusty and thoroughly decomposed. Fine particles of gold are distributed through the mass as deeply as it has been exposed, but accounts agree that the thin top layer is proportionately much richer than the rest. The gold is worth about \$14.50 per ounce or is about 700 fine.

"This heterogeneous deposit ends about 1/4 mile below the mouth of Trail Creek, and gold has been recognized in commercial quantities for about 3/4 mile above the same point. The same bouldery mass extends up the valley of the North Fork and its main tributaries well into the basins in which they head, but it does not contain gold in commercial quantities.

"The deposit is clearly the terminal portion of an old drift sheet laid down by the North Fork glacier. As gold-bearing moraines are very rare and of exceptional occurrence, the presence of gold in this one and its localization at the lower extremity suggest problems of particular interest. Adjoining this glacial deposit on the south is a broad valley known as Crane Flats to which Crane and Onion Creeks flow from the vicinities of the La Belleview and Monumental Mines. These streams, particularly Crane Creek, contain gold-bearing wash that merges into the sheet of gravel covering Crane Flats. This gravel sheet is similar in composition and general characteristics

to the terrace gravels of the general region, which are known to be of pre-glacial age. To the northwest across the river along Trout Creek there are terraced gravels which are similar in composition and occur at about the same level as those of Crane Flats. Although now separated by the North Fork valley, 200 feet deep, these two deposits are thought to be remnants of one continuous sheet. As is discussed in the following paragraphs it is believed that this ancient gravel sheet is the immediate source of the gold in the morainal deposits of North Fork.

"It is observed that all of the various kinds of rock fragments in the North Fork deposits except two, those composed of lava and argillite, can be traced to parent outcrops along the path of the North Fork glacier, and as these exceptions are the most common kinds of rocks in the Crane Flats gravels, the suggestion is had that these gravels supplied the argillite and lava cobbles and the gold as well to the new deposit.

"At the close of the terrace gravel epoch the North Fork is thought to have deepened its valley, separated the Crane Flats and Trout Creek gravel sheets, and produced at this point by reconcentration of these gravels a rich placer deposit. Subsequently the glacier descended the valley, plowed up the gravels and incorporated them with its own debris, but failed to render them absolutely unworkable or to sweep them away.

"Since the disappearance of the ice, ordinary weathering and erosion have slightly worn down the surface of this deposit enriching its superficial portion by removing barren soil and sand and leaving the gold behind".

The North Fork Mine (Klopp Placers) is now owned by W. T. Small, who has been carrying on a hydraulic operation for several years. This property was not visited. J.E.A. 1938.

References: Parks and Swartley 16:163 (quoted)
Pardee and Hewett 14:122

NORTH FORK (Placer)

North Fork District

North Fork Area

Owners: Ralph Davis Inc., Dale, Oregon and Boise, Idaho. Property formerly owned by M. R. Senter, SE 9th and Main Sts., Portland, Oregon; Tiejie Senter; and Joe Vandermeer. (See also "Davis").

Location: E $\frac{1}{2}$ sec.10, S $\frac{1}{2}$ sec.11, N $\frac{1}{2}$ sec.14, T.7 S., R.33 E.

Area: 18 placer claims totaling 357 acres situated on both sides of the North Fork of the John Day River.

History: On either side of the mouth of Lick Creek (center of S $\frac{1}{2}$ sec.11) there have been quite extensive old workings on a high bar 50-75 feet above the

river. This work is said to have been done in the 1890's. Property is now being dredged by Ralph Davis Inc. (which see).

Miscellaneous: Climate hot in summer. Up to 3 feet of snow in the winter. Water from tributary creeks available for 2 or 3 months of the spring. River grade is gentle. This property was being prospected by Mr. Hurlburt at the time the property was visited. 5 test holes 5 to 8 feet in diameter were sunk.

Development: About 1000 cubic yards have been moved (to a depth of 15 to 20 feet) on the old high bar at Lick Creek.

Geology: The gravels average 100 feet in width and 10 feet in depth, extending for a distance of 2 miles on this property. Boulders reach a maximum of from 6 to 10 feet in diameter, but average less than two feet, with a fine gravel and sandy matrix. There is no clay. Bedrock is granite. The gold ranges in size from coarse to flour gold, about 30 percent of the gold being in the latter class. Gold appears from 6 inches to several feet above bedrock, but none on bedrock.

At Lick Creek the valley widens to about 1/4 mile with sloping bars on both sides of the mouth of the creek, rising to about 75 feet above the river. Boulders in these old workings were usually less than 2 feet in diameter and the gravels from 6 to 15 feet in depth. The bar was partly an alluvial fan which forced the river south against granite cliffs. There is a gorge for 1/4 mile below this point.

The sampling outfit used by Mr. Hurlburt consists of a washing box 6 feet long and 22 inches wide leading to a sluice 1 foot wide and 10 feet long having a fall of 1 inch to the foot. Riffles consist of metal lath over burlap and metal door mat. Mr. Hurlburt says that this catches all the gold. None can be panned in the tailings. These bars are said to run \$0.40 per yard in gold.

Informant: Hurlburt; J.E.A. (10/13/38).

Claims on the North Fork of the John Day River from Oriental Creek east:

Oriental Mine, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ claims
North Fork Mine, 18 claims
Gulliford Mine, 1 claim

Curly Leach, 1 claim
Wilfloy (at Big Creek) 1 claim
Bennet, Hood River, 1 claim

Claims on North Fork of John Day River going west from Oriental Creek:

Mrs. Reynolds, Ukiah, 1 claim
B. L. Reynolds, Ukiah, 1 claim
Harry Reynolds, Ukiah, 1 claim
Sam Chilson, Ukiah, 1 claim
W. H. Phillips, Portland, 1 claim
Leonard Aldin, Walla Walla, 1 claim
C. F. Turnbull, Ukiah, 1 claim

Fred Shaer, Portland, 1 claim
W. L. Synder, 1 claim
E. F. Turnbull, Ukiah, 1 claim
Verne Kuhl, Hood River, 1 claim
C. F. Colcord and Albert
Anderson, 2 claims
Curtis and Haynes, 1 claim

Most of these claims have been purchased or leased by Ralph Davis Inc. of Boise, Idaho; and a dredge is being placed on the river. (4/16/41).

Informant: Walter Allison; J.E.A. (11/25/38).