

October 2, 1973

Mr. Lewis L. McArthur  
Oregon Geographic Names Board  
4154 S. W. Tualatin Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Lewis:

Got a good one for you. IDOL CITY is the name and the USGS map for the Burns quad, 1:250,000 scale, and the USGS Calamity Butte quad, 15-minute scale, are the culprits using it. Also the modern USFS maps for the Malheur Forest.

But to us in the department this has always been known as the IDLE CITY Mining District and is so listed in all files with one lode mine being even known as the Idle City Mine. And if this use of "Idle City" as a name is a misconception on our part, then the error has been shared by others as on their maps of the Malheur Forest for 1937 the U.S. Forest Service used the name "Idle City" also. This I know because I have one of their 1937 maps here in front of me right this moment.

The mix-up, however, isn't so nice and clean cut as the difference between Idol City and Idle City indicates. My reason for saying this is that in the Hendryx files of newsclips on mining topics there is a clipping dating December 20, 1899 in which the district is very clearly and repeatedly and definitely referred to as the IDEAL CITY MINING DISTRICT. Furthermore, the district is listed as "Ideal City" in all of Hendryx's special indexing and cross-indexing. This I know positively as a consequence of having gotten the Hendryx file out for the express purpose of checking his references to the place.

And so that you can see firsthand how beautifully and explicitly IDEAL CITY is spelled out in the December 20, 1899 clipping (probably Sumpter Miner), I am enclosing a photocopy of said clipping herewith, plus also a photocopy of the 1937 Malheur Forest map.

Sincerely,

N. S. WAGNER

NSW/aw

cc - Millard McClung

LEWIS L. MCARTHUR

4154 SOUTHWEST TUALATIN AVENUE

PORTLAND, OREGON 97201

November 4, 1973

Mr. Phil Brogan  
1426 Harmon Blvd  
Bend, Oregon 97701

Dear Phil:

The Jap Creek matter raised its head again at the interim committee meeting. I have a copy of the letter that Francis Juris sent to you in which he says that Foster probably took the nickname from the creek. However, the History of Central Oregon, page 707, quotes George Barnes writing in 1887 and telling of 1869 mentions the Foster boys, William and "Jap". There was a Henry Foster in the emigration of 1846 and the Crook County Pioneer records show that a Henry Foster arrived in Crook County in 1880. There was also a J. Foster on the 1880 census, Prineville precinct.

All this leads me to believe that the Fosters may have been early on the ground. Is there any way to check further this. I would like also to ask your opinion of the mining prospects along this creek. Have you ever heard of anyone ever getting any color in this area. It appears pretty slim to me but I am not a geologist. Also did you ever hear of early day prospecting on the lower reaches of Crooked River?

Tom Vaughan is anxious to have a full report to bring before the board in December. If this is a case where the name Jap has nothing to do with Japanese or Chinese, we both feel we should take a strong stand to prevent the Feds from ramming something down our throat. The Jap Hollow in Wasco County is another matter as this is definitely named for Japanese and the local feeling is that the name, if it must be changed, be changed to Japanese Hollow.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Norm Wagner to also ask his opinion regarding the mining activity. See you in December.

Best regards,



Lewis L. McArthur

Best regards,

11/5/73 w.g. Can you shed any light on this insofar as mining opportunities along Lower Crooked River. Also I've read your ~~Idol~~-Ideal-Idol bit, unless there is something wrong about dates, it should be Idol. Ifol post office was established in 1892, several years before any of the other spellings. I will have to do some more checking and any further info you can gather will be appreciated. Will go over in detail in December.

November 20, 1973

Mr. Lewis McArthur  
4154 Southwest Tualatin Ave.  
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Mr. McArthur:

You win and our files and records here have all been duly corrected to read "Idol City" instead of "Idle". After all, one can't argue with Post Office records. But before you apprised me of them I really thought I had a dilly of a fun snafu to work over.

About the Crooked River. There is gold in some of the Cretaceous conglomerates in the vicinity of Paulina, and more particularly around Supplee — these have been prospected on at various times by various prospectors. The results were disappointing from the standpoint of the gold being present in sufficient amount to be workable by the conventional means in force during past decades however; hence there has been no mining over and beyond that done by the prospectors during the course of their exploratory endeavors. But the auriferous character of these conglomerates is a recognized and duly accepted fact. And how far back in time the prospector interest in these conglomerates dates I don't know. But the odds are that some of the earliest prospectors in the business paused long enough to do a little investigating before moving on in search of better grade ground. After all, gravel is gravel, whether cemented or not, and whether it carries associated placer values is a question nobody can answer without digging and testing. Thus the oldest of the old-timers weren't likely to have passed up obvious exposures without doing at least enough testing to satisfy their curiosities, especially with gold being found in minable quantities in neighboring areas.

Near Post in the Crooked River Canyon and on down-river in the canyon of lower Bear Creek where it joins Crooked River, there are quicksilver occurrences. Most all of these have been prospected at one time or another in the past and some have supported sustained mining on a production basis. The Richer mine near Post is one with a long record of modest, but sustained, output.

And for good measure I can add that there are soda water (carbon dioxide) springs at numerous places in the river canyon a few miles up-river from Paulina. Also along the canyon of tributary Beaver Creek in the vicinity of Supplee and Izee.

And even though these have never been developed commercially, my understanding is that many a gallon was bottled and packed off during prohibition days. In fact, I have been told there were well-beaten trails to some of the springs in those days. For some obscure reason, that is.

Sincerely,

NORMAN S. WAGNER

NSW/aw