

A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON
HUMBUG CREEK PLACER
Jackson County, Oregon

Upper Applegate

By

Gailen T. Vandel
Grants Pass, Oregon

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HISTORY AND PRODUCTION

The upper reaches of Humbug Creek, like other creeks in the district containing rich creek-bed gravel deposits, was worked in the early days probably between the years of 1850 to 1860. Only the creek bed area along the upper stretch where the deposit was shallow, rich in gold content and sufficient grade available for sluice-box operation was worked in those early days. This area according to accounts of older residents of the district, oft repeated accounts handed down by "old timers", of course, was exceptionally rich having produced, at least along parts of the creek bed, as much as one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) per foot of creek bed length mined. The width in this section worked ranged between seventy-five (75) and one hundred and fifty (150) feet. It is further reported that the creek bed was worked in 100 foot claims and that some virgin gravel remains in the creek bed area at the present time; no shafts exposing bedrock in the tailing area are in evidence but it seems reasonable that some virgin gravel should exist. This early day work was confined to the creek above Ball Creek, in its greater extent, and so far up-stream as about 1500 feet above the confluence of the two creeks on West Humbug Creek.

At a later date, perhaps following the year of 1890, there was a revival of activity on the creek and considerable drifting in the deeper gravel deposit adjacent to the creek bed area below the confluence of the two creeks was conducted. In the drifts inspected bedrock was not reached until the West rim of the deposit was encountered and mining was then done along this rim. One of the drifts which is open shows a distance of one hundred and thirty (130) feet from the portal to the West rim and East of the rim to the portal no exposure of bedrock is noted. This deeper portion of the deposit extends downstream to the mouth of Humbug Creek near the highway and in various other sections of the deposit attempts have been made to open it up by drifting but the amount of work done does not indicate much success. In this deeper, virgin part of the Humbug Creek deposit, estimated at from ten (10) to forth (40) feet in depths, the greater volume of yardage exists.

According to old records the creek was equipped in 1912 for hydraulicking operations and was worked under the name of Benson Mine. The part worked was in all probability the higher bench gravels within the vicinity of the confluence of the two creeks, which extended up Humbug Creek for an estimated distance of 1000 feet. Since cessation of these operations the area has been periodically worked and especially in recent years by Mr. T. Ralph Pittock who has worked at different times both by drifting and hydraulicking on the West Humbug Creek.

As to total production of gold for the creek no records are available.

TESTING WORK AND REPORTED VALUES

The accompanying Sketch Map shows approximately the location of test work done by Hooper and associates as well as other significant data. The following table presents data on the four shafts:

Shaft No.	Depth Feet	Gold @ \$35.00 oz.		Description
		Value cu. yd.	Dollars	
1	8.5	0.70	0.35	Virgin gravel from 3' x 3' cut out of previously sunk shaft, to bedrock.
	17.0			
2	6.0	0.40		Tailing in creek near West bank. No bedrock as caving commenced near water level.
3	6.5	0.36		Tailing in creek bed. No bedrock as caved at water level.
4	10.5	1.14		Virgin gravel near West bank of creek. Sunk to bedrock.

Shafts No. 3 and No. 4 were sunk by Hooper and associates previous to my examination of the property. However, panning of various samples from both of these shafts would indicate such values per cubic yard as shown in the above table were reasonably obtainable. Shafts No. 1 and No. 2 were more recently sunk by Mr. Hooper and associates and during that time I spent a considerable time at the operation, obtained the gold for weighing and calculated values per cubic yard. The deposit in the near proximity of No. 1 Shaft is from seventeen (17) feet to twenty (20) feet in depth but the shaft opened up in the creek bed, from which the 3' x 3' cut was taken, was only eight and one-half (8½) feet to bedrock. Panning of the overburden above the shaft showed only a very small amount of gold so that if a zero value per cubic yard is used for the top portion we have \$0.35 per cubic yard as shown above. This is the value per cubic yard that must necessarily be considered. In Shaft No. 2 an old race was unfortunately encountered at a depth of approximately two (2) feet below the surface and nearly one-half of the material extracted was coarse rocks stacked back by early day miners.

From the location of Shaft No. 1 and downstream along the creek bed, near the base of hill Mr. T. Ralph Pittock reports values of from 30 cents to 50 cents per cubic yard recovered from hydraulicking operations. His work was not conducted in the deeper pay channel where better values should exist. Further downstream Mr. Pittock drove a drift into this deeper gravel area, which exists along West Humberg also, and reports to have extracted exceptionally rich values; in places along the drift probably several dollars per cubic yard.

A considerable amount of panning has been done by myself at different times in the creek bed tailings below the confluence of the two creeks and while an occasional pan showing no gold values is encountered the more usual run is from an estimated one-quarter to one-half cent per pan; a few two and three cent pans have been obtained but this is unusual. These values, as are other pan samples, were estimated but are believed to be reasonably close for the purpose. The gold is clean in appearance and is coarse enough that no difficulty should be encountered in recovering it in riffles.

Other samples which were taken from one of the drifts below the confluence of the creeks and near the West bedrock rim on bedrock give occasional blanks but more usually several colors estimated at from one-half cent to as high as five cents per pan. Several two cent pieces have been recovered from panning in this virgin gravel area and the five cent pans are not considered as usual run.

YARDAGE ESTIMATE

It is naturally difficult to make a sensible yardage estimate along a creek of this nature when the ground is uneven and only a limited amount of bedrock exposures are given for depth determinations. However, with these above conditions in mind an estimate of 1,500,000 cubic yards of gravel is given for the Pittock property on both Humbug and West Humbug creeks. No attempt has been made or could be made to give an estimate separately of the virgin and tailing gravel. No yardage is given for Ball Creek or Humbug Creek above the confluence. Downstream below the Pittock end line a large area of deep gravel exists and here is contained, in all probability, several million yards which, of course, is not under the Hopper option.

CHARACTER OF GRAVEL AND BEDROCK

The gravel contained in the deposit is not classed as generally coarse. However, near the upper end of the West Humbug Creek and near the South base of hill quite a few large iron boulders, measuring as much as five (5) feet in diameter, are noted on and near the surface as might be expected near the steep hillside. These are not nested and near the center of the valley a shaft was sunk by Pittock and the dump does not indicate any boulders of this size but gravel that would be considered as medium in size. Near the confluence of the two (2) creeks an occasional three (3) to four (4) foot boulder is noted which is surrounded by moderately fine gravel and most usually within a few feet of the surface. In the drifts above mentioned below the confluence only a few rock having a diameter of eighteen (18) inches were noted. The creek bed tailings, which of course is all that is exposed in that section at this writing, are shown to contain few coarse rocks as those, if originally existant, were broken up and stacked during the hand operations. Below the mouth of Ball Creek and for a short distance above there are many large boulders having a diameter of as much as six (6) or seven (7) feet. Several hundred feet downstream they diminish in quantity and fifteen hundred (1500) feet below the mouth of Ball Creek only a few are noted. It seems reasonable to believe that this flow of boulders came from the Ball Creek side of the valley.

The virgin gravel in places examined is shown to contain some clay which would undoubtedly offer difficulties if a short sluice-box was being used but where using a trommel no trouble should encounter in breaking this clay up. The gold in the creek-bed tailings no doubt owes it origin to the fact that considerable gold was retained in the clay discharged from the sluice-boxes of the early day miners. With the exception of the limited area near the mouth of Ball Creek it is not thought that any difficulty, other than that which would normally be expected, should encounter in an operation using a 1-cubic yard Dragline.

The bedrock in all places examined is well altered igneous rock which is locally called a porphyry but which is a greenstone. This may easily be picked and no difficulty from cleaning-up would be expected.

WATER SUPPLY AND CLEARING

The quantity of water expected in the creek during the dry season is not known. This June, which might be classed within an unusually dry season, there was an estimated three hundred (300) gallons of water per minute flowing in the creek below the mouth of Ball Creek. In the loose tailing area above, one is easily deceived as to the amount of water present due to the fact that it is on or near bedrock, which grade is about six per cent in places. Older residents report that a piping season of about eight (8) months was obtained in past years but this of course will vary depending upon the season. During the winter months an abundance of water exists and by reclaiming water from any mechanical washing-plant operation the number of months during which operations could be carried on would be extended.

Very little clearing would be necessary with the exception of the locality near the mouth of Ball Creek. The section has been burned over and in places only cattered firs, laurels, ash and brush exist. The upper part of West Humbug has been cleared for cultivation as far West as Shaft No. 1 and beyond only brush is encountered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It seems probable that there is a good chance of here developing an area of limited yardage on the Pittock property that would average fifty (50) cents per cubic yard or better. Of course, no conclusions or definite statements can be given with the limited data at hand but the testing that has been done to date would certainly indicate that the further expenditure of money for prospecting is merited.

(signed) Gailen T. Vandel
Mining Engineer 7/15/39

CRIB MINERAL RESOURCES FILE 12

RECORD IDENTIFICATION

RECORD NO..... M061424
 RECORD TYPE..... X1M
 COUNTRY/ORGANIZATION. USGS
 MAP CODE NO. OF REC..

REPORTER

NAME..... JOHNSON, MAUREEN G.
 UPDATED..... 81 05
 BY..... FERNS, MARK L. (BROOKS, HOWARD C.)

NAME AND LOCATION

DEPOSIT NAME..... HUMBUG CREEK PLACERS
 SYNONYM NAME..... INCLUDES BENSON, JOHNSTON, KUBLI RANCH DREDGE, AND PITTOCK PLACERS.

MINING DISTRICT/AREA/SUBDIST. UPPER APPELATE

COUNTRY CODE..... US
 COUNTRY NAME: UNITED STATES

STATE CODE..... OR
 STATE NAME: OREGON

COUNTY..... JACKSON
 DRAINAGE AREA..... 17100309 PACIFIC NORTHWEST
 PHYSIOGRAPHIC PRDV..... 13 KLAMATH MOUNTAINS
 LAND CLASSIFICATION..... 01

QUAD SCALE QUAD NO OR NAME
 1: 62500 GOLD HILL

LATITUDE LONGITUDE
 42-16-09N 123-08-20W

UTM NORTHING UTM EASTING UTM ZONE NO
 4679450.0 488550.0 +10

TWP..... 38S
 RANGE..... 04W
 SECTION.. 11-14
 MERIDIAN. WILLAMETTE

POSITION FROM NEAREST PROMINENT LOCALITY: CHANNEL AND TRIBUTARIES OF HUMBUG CREEK

COMMODITY INFORMATION

COMMODITIES PRESENT..... AU

EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT
STATUS OF EXPLOR. OR DEV. 4

DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSIT

DEPOSIT TYPES:

PLACER

FORM/SHAPE OF DEPOSIT:

SIZE/DIRECTIONAL DATA

SIZE OF DEPOSIT..... SMALL

DESCRIPTION OF WORKINGS

COMMENTS(DESCRIP. OF WORKINGS):

FIVE ACRES DREDGED (1941). HYDRAULICK AND DRIFT PLACERS

PRODUCTION

YES

SMALL PRODUCTION

ANNUAL PRODUCTION (ORE, COMMOD., CONC., OVERBURD.)

23 AU, EST

SOME

1884-1939

AU (0.01-0.03 OZ/YD)

RESERVES ONLY

ITEM	ACC	AMOUNT	THOUS. UNITS	YEAR	GRADE OR USE
1		1,500.00	CU YDS	1939	EST

GEOLOGY AND MINERALOGY

AGE OF HOST ROCKS..... QUAT

HOST ROCK TYPES..... CHANNEL GRAVELS

GEOLOGICAL DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. BEDROCK IS METAVOLCANICS.

GENERAL REFERENCES

- 1) BROOKS, H.C. AND RAMP, L., 1968, GOLD AND SILVER IN OREGON; ODGMI BULL. 61, P.241
- 2) OREGON METAL MINES HANDBOOK, 1943, ODGMI BULL. 14-C, VOL. 2, SEC. 2, 208P.