

February 21, 1903--(Oregon Observer)

"Frenchman's Lost Ledge" (Gold King)

A sensational gold strike has just been made in the Gold King group of claims, located on Josephine Creek, western Josephine County, the pioneer mining district of the State. The Gold King group of claims was recently bonded by M. Marks, a Seattle mining man. Since taking hold of the claims Mr. Marks has given them a thorough and systematic development.

In the process of running a tunnel he has uncovered a body of ore in which the free gold glitters in large grains. The rock gives assay returns of \$100. to \$1000. per ton free gold. The ledge is 10 feet wide and has been traced for a distance of 1200 feet up the mountain from Josephine Creek. Mr. Marks is jubilant with his good fortune and firmly believes he has found the bonanza of Josephine County. He will give the Gold King a thorough development and when sufficiently opened up, a mill and complete equipment for the working of the mine on a big scale will be put in.

Old miners here contend that this late strike on Josephine Creek is but the re-discovery of a rich ledge that was found and lost nearly 50 years ago. The Frenchman's Lost Ledge was the name of a find, or at least what was claimed to be a remarkable find on Josephine Creek. Lewis Belfills, a Frenchman, who mined and prospected through the pioneer diggings of Oregon during the early days, and who died in Willamette Valley, two years ago, made a discovery on Josephine Creek, while coming over the mountains by pack pony from Crescent City in April, 1852. He stopped to take a drink of water from the creek and while doing so was attracted by the glitter of gold from the bed of the stream. He gathered up a quantity of fragments of float quartz that were rich in gold, but was driven from the spot by a band of hostile Indians before he could make a thorough inspection of his find. In his haste he neglected to take a mental inventory of the ground and was never able to locate the spot again.

In after years, and in fact up until a short time before his death, Lewis Belfills searched from end to end of Josephine Creek and completely over the hills of Waldo District, but never again could he find even a trace of the treasure that he was given a glimpse of in the early days.

The Frenchman contended to his dying day that sometime the "Frenchman's Lost Ledge" would be found and that it would astonish the whole mineral west by its richness. Mr. Marks believes, at least he hopes, that he has found the long looked for Frenchman's Lost Ledge. (Note; Mr. Marks did not find the ledge. It was re-discovered by George Bour, a miner, of Kerby, Oregon.)

March 14, 1903--Oregon Observer.

Gold King Strike Still Holding

The Seattle people, who recently purchased the Gold King mine on Josephine Creek, continue to find cause for elation in the results obtained by the development of the property. Since taking hold of the property they have uncovered and blocked out \$100,000. worth of free gold ore. The ledge has a width of 10 feet. Development proceeds by tunnels and drifts.

April 18, 1903--Oregon Observer

Rich Gold King

The rich Gold King Ledge on Josephine Creek, recently uncovered by M. Marks of Seattle, and supposed to be the re-discovery of the famous "Lost Frenchman's Ledge" of the early days, is showing up richer as development proceeds. The property is owned by M. Marks, A.F. Nelson, Sam Bowden and W.C. Hale. Mr. Marks is in charge of the development. The vein has been traced for over a half mile along Josephine Creek, and is from six to eight feet wide. A great mass of the ledge carries gold in visible quantity. On the supposition that the vein holds out for only 100 feet in depth it would contain \$1,000,000., but the elated owners believe it will do far better than this and are unshaken in their faith of the Gold King becoming the greatest mine of Southern Oregon's mineral zone.

A working shaft is being sunk on the vein and when a depth of 100 ft. or more is attained, drifts will be run each way on the ledge. Assays made thus far on rock taken from the shaft range from \$30. to \$1000. to the ton. It is the intention of the owners of the Gold King to put in a 20-stamp mill so soon as they have developed the property sufficiently. Josephine Creek affords water power sufficient to operate a mill of this size, the whole season through.

May 30, 1903--Oregon Observer

Another Strike At Gold King

Another rich strike at the Gold King mine on Josephine Creek, the mine that is supposed to be the re-discovery of the "Frenchman's Lost Ledge", a "lost cabin mine" of the early days. (Note: There was no cabin.) M. Marks of Seattle, the man who is developing the Gold King, came into Grants Pass a few days ago, bringing with him 200 pounds of ore taken from the surface in an open cut on the ledge. The ore glitters with wire gold. The quartz is a white spar and peppered as it is with free gold, is as pretty a rock as has been uncovered anywhere. The ledge of the Gold King is from six to ten feet in width and has been followed along the surface of the hillside for a distance of 1500 feet. Even in the outcroppings, free gold values can be found. Open cuts have been made all along the surface of the vein, from which rich ore has been removed. Where Josephine Creek cuts the ledge the quartz is exposed, and it was here the discovery was made, the gold being seen glittering from the creek bed.

September 7, 1903--Oregon Observer

Development Of The Gold King

The Gold King mine, on Josephine Creek, is being opened by tunnel and shaft under the supervision of Mr. Marks of Seattle. The ore is a granitic, calcium silica, and averages \$26. to the ton, with a width of vein of from six to twenty feet.

September 19, 1903--Oregon Observer

Gold King Purchased

The Gold King Gold Mining Company, composed of Texas capitalists, who held the Gold King mine of Josephine Creek under bond, purchased the property a few days ago. The sellers were C.E. Harmon, Ed Daily, W.P. Sharmon, and Johnson and Bratton. The adjoining claim of Daily and Bour was also purchased by the Gold King Company.

The property is being systematically developed by the new owners under the supervision of M. Marks, of Seattle. The mine is making a fine showing and will undoubtedly be heard from in the future.

November 14, 1903--Oregon Observer

Gold King's Expansion

The Gold King Mining Company, which is developing the Gold King mine on Josephine Creek, has purchased the adjoining placer claims or mine of Geo. Bour and Ed Daily. The Gold King Company desires the new claims, not only for the gold that will be derived from the diggings, but for the water rights, which will be used in supplying the power for the development and working the Gold King. This mine has attracted much attention in recent months, or since its more recent development, by reason of the very rich ore that is being taken from it, and the further fact that it is believed to be the re-discovery of the "Lost Frenchman's Ledge", a lost cabin legend of the early days.

September 13, 1902--Oregon Observer--The Gold King

Another group of three claims in Josephine Gulch is owned by Robert Bratton, George Bour, Tom Johnson, and Ed Daily. The ledge running through this group is from two to six feet in width and the best ore found in pockets. In the prospecting, seams and stringers are found which trend to a certain point, indicating a main ledge. The general formation is serpentine and porphyry and the ore a white quartz, free milling and concentrating. Values of \$2500. and over to the ton have been taken from some of the stringers' pockets. From reliable accounts it can be stated, placer gold was first discovered in Josephine Creek in 1850, and the District was noted for it's rich diggings.

December 13, 1902--Oregon Observer--Gold King

Strike On Josephine Creek

On Josephine Creek, of Western Josephine County, where gold was first discovered in Oregon, a rich quartz strike has been made. Bour and Daily mines of that District, have uncovered a ledge ten feet in width, which can be traced on the surface for a distance of 600 feet. The values are carried in free gold and several pieces outcropping on the surface have been broken off, and in which the gold glitters visibly. Several other ledges have been discovered in this District, and are undergoing Development. Josephine Creek was worked for it's placer gold many years ago, it's bars and gravel banks being very rich, but after these were worked out it was practically abandoned till recently, when it has been prospected for ledges and a number of good finds have been made.

Wm Young

March 9, 1901--Oregon Observer

Mr. B.O. Meredith reports on the Gold King

Mr. B.O. Meredith of the Wilson and Meredith mine is in the city and informs us of another rich strike on Josephine Creek made by Geo. Bour in the traditional "Frenchman's Lost Ledge". Mr. Meredith says he was shown a newspaper full of rock that was literally full of gold and that would doubtless pay \$10,000. to the ton. Bour said he had dug out a wash-tub full of this very rich rock and that there was plenty of it. The Lost Ledge is situated 3 or 4 miles from Wilson and Meredith's hydraulic mine and was first discovered last year.

March 16, 1901--Oregon Observer

Ten Dollars To The Pound--Gold King
Rock Filled With Free Gold--Thought To Be the Frenchman's Lost Ledge.

Ed Daily was in from Kerby, Tuesday and Wednesday and confirms the report in last weeks Observer about the rich find on Josephine Creek. The find was made recently by Geo. Bour and is fabulously rich.

We are loath to publish accounts of rich strikes and will not do so except when assured of the truth of what we publish, but Mr. Daily is one of the owners of this new quartz find and had samples of the rock with him. He is thoroughly a reliable man and a miner, and we have no hesitancy in vouching for the truth of that report, which we received from him in person.

It seems that Geo. Bour was prospecting on the creek near Daily and Johnson's placer mine, about 3 miles from Kerby, when he made the discovery. He was panning and saw the gold sparkling in the rock in the water and after a little inspection found the ledge. The quartz is of a white and grayish mixture and contains seams of gold as thick as cardboard, while between the seams it is literally peppered with little bran-like particles. The gold is the natural yellow and is clean and pure, and the samples Mr. Daily showed us are the most beautiful specimens of gold quartz we have ever seen.

The ledge so far uncovered is between 4 and 6 feet in width and was uncapped by a big blast. It opens out of the steep bank of Josephine Creek and runs back into the hill. A large boulder weighing several tons, was discovered, lying half-covered by the water in the stream, which has apparently broken from the main ledge. Mr. Daily says the whole face of the ledge is a network of seams, and that when the sun shines in on the bank, it is a fine thing to look upon.

Six pounds of the average rock was broken up and pulverized in a mortar and panned out \$56.. Mr. Daily says doubtless \$5. or \$6. were lost in panning, this giving about \$60. to the six pounds of ore or \$10. to the pound. This was not selected rock which was broken up for it seems that whenever the gold is in the rock it is about as thick as it can be. One piece, about the size of a hen's egg was worked out and gave between \$7. and \$8..

There are estimated to be seven or eight tons of this rock in sight, which will pay anyway between \$15,000. and \$20,000. per ton, and how much of a ledge there is has not yet been ascertained but there is reason to think there is a big ledge running back into the mountain. It is very near the placer claims of Daily and Johnson and it has long been thought by old time miners that there was such a ledge in that section from the appearance of the placer gold taken out.

The owners of this ledge are Messrs. Ed Daily, Tommy Johnson, and Dave and George Bour. They expect to work it out and if there is sufficient amount of the rock, will put in a stamp mill. The quartz is very easily broken and works up well.

If people could see some of this quartz they would probably change some of their opinions about the possibility of making rich discoveries.

Mr. Daily brought in about \$480. in gold as a result of a cleanup in their placer mine and some of the gold taken from the quartz.

The Story Of The Lost Ledge---Gold King

Is about as follows: Louis Belfils, a Frenchman, well known throughout the State, is the man figuring in the finding of the ledge. He was a jeweler by occupation and had lived in Eugene, Corvallis, Roseburg, Grants Pass and other towns in Oregon, and was a highly respected and thoroughly reliable man, with a very nice family.

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Ten Dollars To The Pound--The Gold King (Continued)

In the year 1855, Mr. Belfils had occasion to come from Crescent City, Calif; through the mountains. He undertook the journey alone on a mule. This was at a time when all the Indian tribes of Southern Oregon were wielding the tomahawk and aiming the flintlock against the much hated palefaces, who were encroaching on their domains. Mr. Belfils was not much more than fairly started, when a band of Indians were on his trail in hot pursuit. Striking into the mountains as fast as he could, in order to avoid losing his scalp, he continued coming in this direction. He followed no trail, for the reason that there was none, but kept moving. Hunted and weary with his forced and perilous travel, and feeling that for a time he had evaded his pursuers, he stopped by a creek to rest, allowing his mule to refresh himself on the grasses growing on the banks. He bent down to the stream to drink, and as he drank there struck his eye a sight more refreshing, more exhilarating, than the crystal water. The rocks were sparkling with gold. The white quartz was covered with a network of pure and beautiful gold. Here was a wealth as great as that told of in fables, gold sought forever, regardless of peril. While the mule browsed Mr. Belfils looked about the spot and found the ledge. The spot was doubtless fascinating, for here was riches seemingly unlimited. But, delightful as was the contemplation of his discovery, there came creeping up within him that feeling of fear. of pursuit by treacherous savages, a score to one, and even then they might be near at hand or stealing nearer under cover of the brush.

Fixing in memory as best he could the surrounding of his treasure heap, he mounted his mule and came on, leaving forever this dale, where he had every reason to believe an artificial Alladin Cave could be made, already supplied with the enormous wealth.

What a consciousness to carry about, and how often would the thought recur to a man during the many years that followed. He knew he had seen it and that he had good reason to believe there was a fortune awaiting him. But he never found it again. Mr. Belfils finally emerged from the mountains and reached the settlements. After the Indian troubles were settled, his first thought was to go and find the ledge he had seen. He had brought a piece of the rock with him, about the size of a large hen's egg and found it contained about \$3. in gold. Perhaps there was more in it. He searched incessantly, always within a radius of a few miles of the place where the ledge was discovered by these parties, but was never able to locate the spot. Finally he gave it up and went away. After years of absence and while he was in business in Corvallis, the desire to find the Lost Ledge again, brought him here to search, but failure was the result. Afterward, while living at Eugene, he would make trips out here to hunt once more for the wealth he had seen. Mr. Belfils was not a superstitious man, but once while he was searching, he heard a voice say plainly, "Don't go there". Thinking that it might be someone that had made the discovery and wished to conceal it, he did go "there" and every place else in the vicinity but found nothing, nor was he ever able to find the source of the voice he had heard.

For thirteen years Mr. Belfills lived in Grants Pass, and conducted a jewelers establishment. He was an excellent workman in his line. He would occasionally be overcome with the desire to go and search for the sparkling rock that he saw so many years ago. He went again and again and searched the country for miles about Kerby, but fate seemed to have decreed that he was not to find it.

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Ten Dollars To The Pound--The Gold King (Continued)

Mr. Belfills grew to be an old man, but he was never free from the idea that sometime he would find his lost ledge. He died in this city (Grants Pass) last November (1900) the evening before election day. In the preceding August he had gone once more to hunt the secret so long known to him, but which had ever baffled his efforts at rediscovery. He sought six days this last time, but the wealth that makes no man poor was not for him. Could he have lived a few months longer there would have been a great deal of satisfaction in his knowing that a mine of this value had been discovered, even though he couldn't find it himself, for many people doubtless thought the old man was under a delusion and that he had never seen the ledge he sought.

Mr. Daily believes there is a probability that their discovery is the old Frenchman's Lost Ledge, as the rock is fully as rich, and the vicinity and location of the ledge in the creek make it easy to put the real facts and what has been considered by many, a fiction, fit each other as closely as could be expected.

April 30, 1984--Gold King

Note: George Bour, Dave Bour, Johnnie Bour, and Ed Daily, were among my best friends as well as being my next-door neighbors. I own the lots where Ed Daily lived and died. Ed, in 1928 and 1929, furnished the Kerby school with wood and I piled it in the old school woodshed as he hauled it. He paid me 15 cents per tier to pile it. He wrote me a check for my pay and spelled my name Glyn. We had known each other for years and as his cows and our cow and C.J. Howard's cow all grazed together during the day, it was up to Casey Howard and I to bring them in in the evening to be milked. I haven't forgotten those trips. Ed had one old white cow that was kind of cantankerous, but not really mean. Casey and I, as usual, went down to the river to get the cows. Ed's cow had a real young calf and they were separated a short distance by a clump of willows about fifty feet in diameter. I went around the bush to chase the calf up with the rest of the livestock and heard Casey yell "Run Glenn Run". Upon looking back I saw the old white cow running after me. I think I set a new unofficial record for the mile getting around that bush and about half-way around I met the old heifer coming the other way. With a nasty sweep of her horns she passed me by and ran over to her little calf. Casey and I cut a couple of willow switches and with very little persuasion the old cow coaxed her calf along and we headed for the barn. Ed also had a big white steer. Cord Canfield, an old miner, and very dear friend of our family, who lived about a hundred yards from us, used to come down to the house in the evening to "shoot the breeze". This one particular night he stayed later than usual, and as luck would have it, it was one of those pitch-black nights, when he started back home. We offered him a lantern but he refused, saying that he knew the trail by heart. There were three fir trees growing near the trail. About two minutes after Cord left we heard a loud yell and string of unusual language. Lighting a lantern we ran out to see what the commotion was, thinking he had encountered a skunk, of which there were plenty. Cord had stumbled over Ed's old white steer in the dark. The steer, and a couple of Ed's other cattle, had bedded down in the needles and leaves under the trees. No harm was done except the cattle were disturbed from their rest and Cord's dignity was marred. He was a fine old man also and I could tell many stories of our experiences together.

Dave Bour always did the saw filing for my brother Murphy and I when we first started cutting timber, and he was the best.

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Ten Dollars To The Pound--The Gold King (Continued)

I worked at the old Hart's hotel and Union Hotel in Kerby and all of these men got their meals there when they were not out on the creek mining. Others who stayed at the hotel were Bill Stillwell, Frank Grimes, old man Howe, Gus Galbraith, Billy Von Cannon, Bill Ward, and occasionally Pete Bour, Bill George and Lee Calvert. Ed Daily stayed at home but ate a lot of his meals at the Hotel. All of the men were bachelors, except for Lee, I do not remember. They treated us young teen-agers with respect and we loved them very much. In all my years around them I never heard a profane word or expression, except when Cord Canfield collided with the old white steer.

One day while working at the Hotel I was asked by a young married couple if i had ever heard of the Frenchman's Lost ledge. I had not. The irony of the matter was that Geo. Bour, Ed Daily, and Dave Bour were all eating at the Hotel but evidently the question had not came up before them. The young lady was the granddaughter of Louis Belfils. She and her husband left, never knowing that the mine had been found and mined extensively.

These men had all passed away by 1940 but they will never be forgotten. Except for Billy Von Cannon, who was a Civil War veteran, all of these men were too old for the World War One draft. They were really an easy-going lot, but very serious, unlike our present generations who seem to always have "an axe to grind".(Glenn C. Young)

March 21, 1901--Jacksonville Democratic Times

Gold King--Josephine Creek

The Mining Journal says that a great excitement exists on Josephine Creek and at Kerby, about 30 miles south of Grants Pass, by the finding of a very rich quartz ledge along side of old placer ground. The vein has been traced over 300 feet, and it appears to be from 5 to 10 feet wide. They have taken out \$8000. in a few days, and from present indications, the whole ledge is very rich. The rock that was seen at Kerby is literally covered with gold, and judging by that already taken out by panning and mortaring, it will go at least \$25,000. to the ton.

The mine belongs to Ed Daily and Geo. Bour.

March 23, 1901--Oregon Observer

That Big Strike--The Gold King
The Latest Reports Enlarge It's Value To Enormous Proportions:

The latest reports from the Josephine Creek quartz find only accord to it's greater proportions than were given last week. Over \$10,000. worth of gold has already been taken from the rock, and the ledge has been traced for hundreds of feet. This is unquestionably one of the greatest strikes ever made on the coast. The owners are now taking out ore to be brought to W.G. Wright's three-stamp custom mill in this city and expect to bring several tons in a few days.

This test will demonstrate it's real value beyond the range of rumor and hearsay. The Observer promises an accurate report, provided the owners grant us their permission to make the result of the test public.

The **Observer** proposes to be conservative and any report concerning mining matters in this column can be depended on.

March 30, 1901--Oregon Observer

Good Rock--The Gold King
The Low Grade Ore From The Josephine Strike Gives Satisfactory Results:

Two tons of the ore from the Daily, Johnson, Bour quartz mine on Josephine Creek were put through W.G. Wright's stamp mill in Grants Pass last Monday and Tuesday as a test and we are informed that the result was very satisfactory, even better than the owners hoped for. There is said to be a large body of this rock, such as was tested in the mill.

March 30, 1901--Oregon Observer

Mining Journal Reports on The Gold King

The Mining Journal representative, who visited the Daily, Johnson, Bour mine on Josephine Creek last week, after describing the property says: "Although this ledge is marvellously rich and the ledge matter can be plainly seen for 150 feet up and down the creek, and it is twenty feet high, no one has yet located an extension, which would be the case many times over in any country but Southern Oregon."

Now this doesn't sound reasonable and we have been informed by one of the employees at the mine that the ledge runs quartering across the creek and not up and down the waterway. He also tells us that the ledge is included in placer claims that were taken a long time ago and that he has been trying for two years to locate a claim for himself. This is indeed strange for a man who has been working within a few hundred feet of the ledge for two years and over and cannot get a claim there where they are going to waste.

January 10, 1903--Oregon Observer

Gold King Bonded for \$10,000

The Gold King Group of Quartz claims, situated on Josephine Creek, in Western Josephine County, has been bonded by M. Marks of Seattle, of Harmon, Daily, Bour, and Sharmon, for \$10,000. The claims are not developed to any great extent but present a rich and vast body of ore. The claims are located in the pioneer gold district of the State, as it was on Josephine Creek that gold was first discovered in Oregon in 1851. The district has long been noted for its production of placer gold, but has not been prospected for quartz till of late years. Mr. Marks has put a crew of men to work and will give his newly acquired claims a thorough and systematic development and put them in shape for a stamp mill and business.