



#### THE GREAT OPHIR BELT, OF IDAHO.

Of the great free gold and placer mines near Rocky Bar, Idaho, August Quitzow, M. E., thus writes in the *Elmore Bulletin*:

The Ophir mine, owned and operated by the Comfort Consolidated Mining Company, of New York city, is situated north of the old Hardscrabble placer mines and about two miles northeasterly from the town of Rocky Bar. This lode had been located and re-located by different parties, who were without the necessary means to develop the property, and although well satisfied that millions were there, they were forced by circumstances to abandon the claim, hence the Comfort Consolidated Mining Company have the honor of developing the first billion producer on the Ophir belt, simply because they were the first and only party that was able to couple good judgment with the requisite capital. Fortune has smiled upon them, and the outlay of a few thousand dollars has rewarded them with a well defined vein of ore, six feet in width, milling from \$75 to \$100 per ton. A fair estimate of the value of the quartz now in sight would not be less than \$1,500,000. Last fall this company was so well satisfied with the developments made by the superintendent, Mr. Steve Oglesby, that they resolved to erect a mill, although winter was staring them in the face. An improved Frazer & Chalmers twenty-stamp mill, with a large double-drum hoisting plant, two Golden Gate concentrators, and a three-compartment working shaft are in operation. The Empire lode, situated north of, parallel with and adjacent to the Ophir, gives every promise of becoming equally as valuable as its renowned neighbor.

Last fall, while on a prospecting tour in Central Idaho, the writer had the pleasure of meeting Major Comfort at Salmon meadows. The major, together with Superintendent Oglesby and Surveyor Towne, were on their way to survey some placer locations at the northeastern end of Long valley, on Boulder creek, Boise county. These placers were found and worked by Oglesby as early as 1868. Ditches were built and water brought upon them, but the Indians becoming troublesome, he was forced to leave. They have lately been re located and sold to the Comfort Company. After a thorough examination, the owners were so well pleased with their bargain that they intend to construct the necessary flumes, ditches, and hydraulic machinery to successfully work their ground this coming spring. They have twenty locations, with an area of 400 acres, and I believe they will meet with as good success there as they have at Rocky Bar with their lode-mining property. The reason why these placers have not been more extensively worked before is this: The ground does not afford sufficient fall for a dump, and although known to be rich, the old-fashioned miner had no means of obviating this defect. This company has secured a large volume of water, with ample pressure, from the numerous water courses and lakes in the mountains northeasterly from their ground, and intend to work with hydraulic elevators, thus raising the gravel to any desired height, and in this way securing a sufficient dump for their tailings.

While prospecting in the mountains at the head of Boulder lake, near the headwaters of Boulder creek, about ten miles from the above described placers, your correspondent, together with John Knox and others, discovered a well defined and val-

uable mineral belt, which we traced through the mountains for a distance of 12,000 feet. The average width of this lode is about five feet. Along the foot wall for about fifteen inches the ore assays \$33.15 gold and \$12.25 silver; the balance of the lode is strongly impregnated with chlorides, assaying 101 ounces of silver per ton. The surrounding country is heavily timbered with pine, fir and tamarack, as yet untouched by the woodman's ax; water and grass, with game of all kinds, abound here—in fact, this country is the hunter's paradise and prospector's realization.

Your correspondent, while returning from the mountains, again met the surveyor and his party, with theodolite, chain and staff, surveying and marking the boundaries of the rich placer bonanzas, while Major Comfort with a force of workmen had sunk about thirty shafts to bedrock and was filling as many different sacks with the golden gravel for shipment to New York. This gravel I am informed yielded far greater results than was expected and demonstrated beyond a doubt the remarkable richness of this property. When it is considered that this ground is midway between two of the richest placer fields ever discovered in Idaho, viz: Florence and Warrens on the north and Boise basin on the south, the results obtained from the gravel tested are not at all surprising.

Referring again to the mines near Rocky Bar, I will call attention to a mountain range, in which many rich prospects have been discovered, and which contains within its depths the famous Mountain Goat, so successfully worked by Major Frank P. Cavanah. As you ascend this mountain from the south, at a point about 1000 feet north of the town of Rocky Bar, you will find the Birdie Q mine, which has been worked quite extensively during the last two years by Messrs. Van Schaick and Quitzow, the owners. They have sunk an incline on this lode to the depth of seventy-five feet, and made connection with the same by means of a tunnel 150 feet long driven from the east end. The quartz taken from this incline and tunnel milled twenty-five dollars per ton. This lode is fully three feet in width and can be traced on the surface for nearly the whole length of the claim. West of the above claim and adjoining it, is the Mountain Chief lode, the croppings of which are from one to six feet in width, and prospects well in free gold. Aside from the annual assessment work required by law, little has been done on this claim. There is no doubt but that with a judicious outlay of a moderate amount of capital a mine could be opened second in value to none in the camp. This property is also owned by Quitzow and Van Schaick. Further up the mountain to the northwest is the Duncan mine. This lode has been cut through by tunnels and drifted upon by cross cuts from the same, showing a good lode but very irregular and uncertain, demonstrating the fact that this work has been done too near the surface. Were the owners of the mine to sink upon the lode at some point where the same is exposed in the tunnel, they would be rewarded for their trouble and expense.

The Idaho Consolidated Gold and Silver Mining Co., of New York City, are the owners of the North Pacific, Almaden, Golden Calif, Golconda and San Jose—five patented claims lying between the Duncan on the south and the Ophir on the north. Quite an amount of money has been expended by this company to get this property in a condition to warrant the erection of a