

Everybody drank to his heart's content, and the hilarious meeting did not end until five kegs of the liquor had been drunk. But next day Kelly was not so jubilant. When an attempt was made to retort the amalgam it melted, showing that it was principally copper. The fact was that the dirt thrown in was taken from under a house that had been the resort of legus dust operators.

The first quartz mill within the boundaries of the present territory of Idaho was the Elkhorn, which was erected in 1865, at the Elkhorn mine, fourteen miles north of Idaho City, then Bannock. The mill was constructed by Richard Wheelbach, who afterwards put up the Homestake 160-stamp mill at Deadwood, Dakota. An uprooted tree had thrown ore to the surface, which attracted the attention of a prospector. As this root resembled a pair of elk horns, "Elkhorn" was written on the original notice and so recorded. This circumstance, after the mine became famous, suggested the name for many others through Idaho and Montana. Mr. Wheelbach had charge of the mill, which was run by water, until 1868. Most of the machinery, which was brought from Umatilla, came on the backs of pack animals. The mine was located and the company incorporated in November, 1864. D. B. Kimmel, at present a jeweler in Boise City, and Claus Van Thun, a placer miner on More creek, were among the principal stockholders. The property has from that day to the present passed through many hands. Many times abandoned and re-located, it was considered by most people worthless, yet it has yielded largely for the amount of work done on it. As this was the first mill to produce a gold brick in the "Gem of the Mountains," a few words in regard to its operations will not be out of place. The first clean-up was reported in October, 1865, and was 225 ounces of gold—the result of a five days' run. The gold was worth \$12 per ounce. During the first three years the mill turned out \$554,000. After that it passed from hand to hand, George W. Richards, of the *Hailey News-Miner* newspaper, and Thomas Barry, a merchant of Idaho City, being among the number whose expectations were not realized. Eight years ago Hugh Turner came into possession of the property. He commenced work without a dollar, but was enabled to proceed after crushing some rich ore he found near the surface. He ran a tunnel 1,236 feet into the mountain, to tap the vein at the depth of 500 feet. This was a very expensive piece of work, and had it not been for friends the property would have been seized by the sheriff for debt. Finding no ore in the tunnel that would pay with the milling facilities he was obliged to accept, an upraise was made in search of better ore, and Mr. Turner's fondest hopes were realized by the discovery of exceedingly rich rock where he could not reasona-

bly have expected it. In less than twenty days the little mill turned out \$12,000 to gladden the hearts of Mr. Turner and his creditors. On March 18, 1888, Mr. Turner placed the mine in the hands of S. C. Bowen to sell. That gentleman has at last succeeded. A Boston company paid \$40,000 for the property February 1st last. Mr. Turner has taken \$98,000 out of the mine, and is now well paid for his years of privation and toil.

A short time after the Elkhorn commenced turning out gold bars the Gambrinus, a ten-stamp mill, six miles north of Idaho City, started up. It was owned by Green and Benjamin White, the former of whom is now sheriff of Elmore county. The latter died at Silver Bow, Owyhee county, several years ago. The rock near the surface of one of the veins was very rich. The mill turned out \$250,000 in three months; but, after working the chutes to the depth of sixty or seventy feet, the pay was lost, the mill moved away, and the mine abandoned. This and the Elkhorn will beyond a doubt add to the future wealth of Boise county. A ten-stamp mill was also erected at the Illinois, a mile or two south of the Gambrinus; but, like all other quartz mining operations in those days, proved a failure. These failures were not the fault of the mines, but high wages, enormous prices of supplies, and general extravagance and mismanagement. As an example of mismanagement, the operations of the Chickahomeny company stand out very prominently. Without a developed mine, a twenty-five-stamp mill was purchased and erected at the mouth of the Illinois gulch, on More creek, at an expense of \$1,000,000. These figures may seem extravagant, but they are not. A large amount of the expense was in freight bills, as the machinery came all of the way from the Missouri river on wagons. When the mill—which was a very fine one—was finished and ready to start up, people in all sorts of conveyances and on foot went up from Bannock to witness the turning on of steam. Steam was turned on, and that was about all. After thirty minutes the stamps were "hung up" because there was no more ore to crush. The mill never again crushed a pound of Chickahomeny ore. In 1867 it was moved to Quartzburg, on the west side of the basin, to work ore of the Lawyer and Pioneer lodes, by a San Francisco company, at an expense of \$40,000. Not paying after a two or three weeks' run, it again remained idle for some time, until sold, in 1869, on a year's time, to Abraham Johnson, William Lynch, Thomas Mootry, Jr., and David Coughanour for \$15,000. They purchased it to work ore from the Gold hill mine, but during the last two years it has run steadily and successfully on the Pioneer, one of the mines abandoned by the San Francisco company.

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