

# GOLD FOUND FIRST IN 1851 NEAR ILLINOIS

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By Wm. Mackey

Gold was first discovered in Josephine county in the year 1851 at the mouth of Josephine creek, close to where that stream empties into the Illinois river, near the foot of Eight Dollar mountain, which stands on the north side of the river west of the stage road and rears heavenward like a gigantic pyramid, built by nature that overlooks the beautiful little valley extending south. Through this valley runs the Illinois river and in it is situated the town of Kerby, three miles distant from the above named mountain.

Eight Dollar mountain is somewhat of a striking landmark. When viewed from the south from Kerby or other points on the stage road it seems like a great perpendicular high wall standing out in a bold red outline against the sky.

## Mountain Named

## Late Obituary-Edgar Gage Christie

Fifteen year Selma, Oregon, resident Edgar Gage Christie passed away peacefully on Saturday, February 26, 2011, in his home surrounded by loved ones.

Ed was born on September 27, 1927, in the bedroom of his parents house in Ingelwood, California. Proud parents Emily Katherine Gage and Leo Ward Christie raised a boy who had a love for animals, people, mischief and adventure. Ed joined the merchant marines at the age of sixteen to support the efforts of American patriotism in World War II and enlisted for two short years in the Navy.

Discharged in 1948, Ed returned to Lancaster learning to fly and finished his high school education. During the Korean War, he joined the Coast Guard patrolling Los Angeles/Long Beach harbors as an Emergency Security Guard rescuing a number of people from the sea.

In 1952, Ed married Rosa Lee Jones, and fathered daughter, Teresa Rochelle Christie in 1956 and son, Cameron Gage Christie in 1961.

In 1954, he went to work for South Gate, California

Police Department beginning his life long career in law enforcement. Working for the sheriff's office Ed investigated homicides spending a lot of time in the Palmdale Funeral Home and became an apprentice and part time embalmer.

In 1961, Ed left the sheriff's office to become an investigator with the Los Angeles County Districts Attorney's Office, Bureau of Investigation. While working for the D.A.'s office he made a trip to Africa for the government unable to tell his family the truth about his work as high security was involved. Returning shortly after two weeks the mission was aborted early and would not return to Africa again until assigned in 1975. Ed decided to leave the D.A.'s office and went to work for the Kern County Coroners Office as an investigator. Remaining there for eighteen years with few breaks for the Public Defenders office, and averaged about 648 homicides in his career. During this time he moved his family to a Tehachapi ranch and resumed his love for the great outdoors. Along with his best friend, Randall

The mountain is said to have received its name from the fact that a man wore out a pair of new "eight dollar" boots walking over it in one day. Josephine creek, and also Josephine county were named in honor of a girl, Virginia Josephine Rollins, who was the first white woman born in Josephine county, in the year 1851.

The townsite of Kerby, which was formerly called Kerbyville, was laid off in the year 1855 and was named after an old man named Kerby, a well-known pioneer. Kerbyville was the county seat of Josephine county from 1857 until 1886. The county seat was then removed to Grants Pass.

Kerbyville was the chief center of Josephine county for two or three years in the beginning and was frequented by thousands of miners and prospectors who flocked there from California and elsewhere, and thousands of dollars poured into the coffers of Kerby from the surrounding country.

## Fast Growing Places

In Kerby there were hotels and stores, dance halls and saloons and fast going places in the middle 50s. But the nearby mining camps of Josephine and Canyon creeks, although

yielding good returns, were not as extensive and lasting as those of Waldo and Althouse. Kerby was, after a short time, overshadowed and outdone by the flourishing mining camps of Althouse and Sailor Diggings. However, Kerby continued to be a place of considerable importance for many years on account of the circuit court which was held there twice each year.

The noted criminal lawyer, James D. Fay had a law office in Kerbyville and pleaded his first case in that town, as did Dick Williams, who was, in the 80s a law partner of Governor Thayer in Portland.

The late B.F. Mulkey, who was the prosecuting attorney and law partner of Judge Caples in Portland 50 years ago, said that Mulkey ran a pack train in and out of Kerby in his younger days, earning money to pay his way while going to school.

## Knew Pioneers

The writer, when a small boy, went to school in Kerby in the year 1869 and knew many of the old pioneers who were living there at that time. Tom Regan, the teacher, had mined on Althouse in early days. He was

from South Carolina, a rebel at heart, and sympathized strongly with the south. Tom Regan had a southern temper and when not teaching school often carried a big bowie knife.

In this year, 1869, William Chapman, an early miner on Althouse Creek, lived in Kerby and herded 3000 sheep in the vicinity of Eight Dollar Mountain. He was sheriff of Josephine county.

The writer knew Dave Kendal, who kept a saloon in Kerby at that time, and also John Bolt, the pioneer merchant. Sam Sawyer, who had a store at the time in Kerby, Bill Linn who ran the Union hotel in 1869 and Charles Hughes, who was county clerk during that period and held that office during seven successive terms were also his acquaintances. The writer was intimately acquainted with Jack Hendershot, the old California miner and Mexican war veteran, and his wife, who was known as Aunt Jenny. They lived on a ranch by the side of the stage road on the first high flat one half mile south of Kerby in 1869. He often saw said Hendershot, who resided at Kerby in the above mentioned year, and whose brother Jim Hendershot was sheriff of Josephine county in the year 1859.

Clagg, he worked cattle drives and became the Tehachapi Mountain Festival chairman.

Moving back to Bakersfield in 1974, he returned to the Coroners Office. He and Rose divorced that same year.

In 1976, Ed married Jane Frances (Pardy) Hansen and extended his fatherly love to her four children, Linda, Bruce, Martin, and Kristopher making a family unit total of eight.

After enduring a car accident and a broken neck returning from a homicide call falling asleep at the wheel, Ed retired from the County and purchased a local feed lot. Raising cattle and riding horses evolved as a cure for the pain endured in the care accident.

In 1985, Ed went to work for Occidental International Exploration and Production Company as the Security

Supervisor. Ed was sent to Massachusetts to attend the Tony Scotti School for anti-terrorist instructor training, which served a great purpose in training executives living and working in foreign countries. While working over seas Ed and his team became high priority targets for guerrilla/terrorist groups in countries like Colombia, Peru, Pakistan, Oman, and Algeria. During this time Ed's name appeared in the 1980-90 Who's Who In Security, a member of the National Association of Chiefs of Police, American Society for Industrial Security, the International Intelligence and organized Crime Association, and in 1988, received the J. Edgar Hoover distinguished Public Service Award from the FBI.

After retiring in 1994, Ed and Jane made the move from

Bakersfield, California, to settle in the small town of Selma, Oregon. During the fifteen years living in Oregon, Ed dug deep into American Indian roots being given the name Going Bear, assisted in keeping the peace in the surrounding county, volunteering with his good friend, Bob Clausen, at the local funeral home, and played an active role as a member of the community.

Edgar often times envied the sedentary lifestyle and career, but was far too restless and adventurous. He was a farmer, merchant seaman, navy sailor, pilot, plumber, coast guardsman, cowboy, district attorney investigator, police officer, deputy sheriff, apprentice embalmer, sometimes federal soldier, anti-terrorist instructor, security protection specialist and security supervisor. He

traveled to the Philippines, China, Congo, Chad, Peru, Colombia, Algeria, Russia (Siberia), France, Switzerland and Germany. Ed states it simply, "such has been my life".

Edgar is survived by his wife: Jane Christie,; half sister: Cherie Hipler; children: Linda Fabrizius, Bruce Hansen, Teresa Christie Nixon, Martin Hansen, Cameron Christie, and Kristopher Hansen; nineteen grandchildren; five great-grandchildren and one on the way.

A memorial service will be held at Hull and Hull Funeral Home in Grant Pass, Oregon at 4:00pm Saturday, March 5, 2011. In lieu of flowers the family has requested for all donations to be made in honor of Ed by raising the funds to publish his fourth and final book in the series, The Sweet Smell of Rotten Eggs.

This Week's Sudoku Puzzle Courtesy of  
**Illinois Valley News**  
541-592-2541

7	8	3	2				1	
		4			1			
				6			2	
					4			5
9			6	1				
	3				2	6		
	4							
	7	6		3		5	9	
		5					6	3

How to Play Sudoku Solution on page A-4

- Each of the numbers from 1 to 9 should only be placed once in each column.
- Each number from 1 to 9 can be placed only once in each row.
- The numbers 1 to 9 can appear only once in each 3 x 3 grid

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