

# Crook County Journal.

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## WURZWEILER & THOMSON

### THE BIG STORE

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## Central Oregon, Crook County And Prineville.

### QUICKSILVER AT LOOKOUT

One from Mines in Eastern Crook County Assay 6.62 Per Cent of Mercury—Value per Ton \$79

Present indications point toward considerable activity in the Lookout mountain quicksilver district before another year has elapsed. Practically all of the available mining claims have been located, Tacoma capital has interested itself in some of the best prospects, and individuals are working out their assessments with the intention of making their properties paying propositions.

The expectations of the latter are not without foundation. An assay of the ore taken from one of the claims was made by F. L. Davey of Baker City and shows 6.62 per cent mercury with a valuation of \$79.44 per ton. The ore was sent by J. F. Morris of this city who holds the assay as quoted above.

When it is taken into consideration that some of the largest quicksilver producing mines in the United States are getting less than 1 per cent mercury from their properties and are making fortunes out of ore which runs from \$4 to \$6 per ton, some idea of the value of the Lookout mountain district may be gleaned. The party of business men of this city composed of P. B. Pointexter, J. F. Spinning, Ed Crabtree and Dr. Taggart who returned this week from a trip to their claims in this district are of one voice in pronouncing the prospects the most promising that could be desired.

The Tacoma firm which is carrying on development work on property adjoining the claims of these men, has constructed two tunnels, one of them 300 feet long; the other has just been started, but is following the vein of cinnabar which first attracted the attention of miners to that section of the county. The ore which they are producing has assayed as high as that sent by Mr. Morris to Baker City, and it is probable that they will keep a large force of men at work on their property during the entire winter. At any rate the firm is not taking hold of the matter in a half hearted manner and the prospects which they are working are certainly rich enough to justify active operations.

Some of the business men in the city have held claims in that vicinity for two years, but it has been only recently that any considerable interest was manifested in this quicksilver field, and that principally in the face of the assays which show the properties to be superior in many respects to those in actual operation in other parts of the country, and which have not the percentage of mercury in their ore as is shown to exist in the claims at Lookout mountain. Another year is more than likely to see some promising developments, take place in this district.

### WILL SOON BE ON MARKET

Road Company's New Addition to Prineville Will Be Ready for Sale by January 1.

The plot for the new fourth addition to the town of Prineville has been completed and it is expected that the Wagon Road company will have its city lots on the market by the middle of next month.

Surveying work was completed some time ago and County Surveyor Graves since then has been engaged in getting the work plotted. The plots were completed this week and have been sent to the company's attorneys in Portland for approval. From there they

will be sent to the president of the company who in turn will send them to Prineville for dedication after which they will be in the hands of attorney Elliott for sale. The addition includes twenty blocks and will make a very desirable addition to the city. From the demand in the past for building lots it is not probable that much delay will be encountered in disposing of them.

It is the intention of the company to lay off another addition on the north side of the Ochoco and surveying work will probably begin on this property shortly after the first of the year.

### FREIGHT RATES ARE RAISED

Freighter's Union Holds Meeting and Agrees to Higher Rates for Hauling Merchandise.

The Freighter's Union, which now includes practically all of the teamsters plying between Shaniko and Interior Oregon points, has raised on the traffic rates for transporting merchandise from the railroad. The increase in rates between the latter point and Prineville amounts to 25 cents per hundred, and the difference to other inland points has been raised in proportion to distances.

The meeting was held last Sunday afternoon. The officers elected for the ensuing year are: John Chambers, president; Green Beard, secretary; John Pickett, treasurer. The freight rates agreed upon per hundred pounds are as follows: Shaniko to Prineville, \$1.25; Shaniko to Bend, \$1.50; Shaniko to Paulina, \$2.00; Shaniko to Burns, \$3.00; Shaniko to Silver Lake, \$2.50; Shaniko to Haystack and Culver, \$1.25; Shaniko to Hay Creek, \$3.50; Shaniko to Squaw Creek \$1.50.

The raise in rates is the result of the heavy roads and the increased price of hay and grain, the latter being the principal expenses in transporting goods from the railroad to their destinations. The new schedule will not go into effect until the 1st of December. It was thought advisable to make the change on that date as many contracts for hauling between Shaniko and Prineville have been made this month for one cent per pound. It is expected that all of these contracts will have been filled by the first of next month.

### RAILROAD MEN ARE BUSY

Suits Are Being Started to Get Right of Way for Extension of Line from Arrington.

Railroad matters in Gilliam county are rapidly taking shape. The Eastern Oregon Railway company has been granted a franchise through Arrington, paying \$2000 for same and putting up a bond of \$5000 as a guarantee that they will have fifteen miles of the road completed inside of the first year. This company has commenced condemnation proceedings for right of way against Henry Horst, W. W. Weatherford, J. E. Stephens, A. A. Carothers, George Marvel, J. A. Miller and T. C. Moby. The papers in these suits were placed on file in the county clerk's office Tuesday, says the Condon Times.

J. N. Davis, a Portland attorney, representing the Columbia River and Central Oregon Railroad company, was in the city yesterday. This company is trying to purchase right of way and has paid T. C. Moby \$2000 for a permit to cross his ranch. Another farmer was offered \$4000 for right of way across his land but refused the offer.

### BLUE BUCKET IS REVIVED

Some Current History Relative to the Early Discovery of the Famous Mine.

History records the fact that gold was first discovered on the Pacific coast in what is now El Dorado county, California, in 1848. As a matter of fact, gold was found by an old emigrant train on the old Steve Meek cut-off, in Crook or Harney county, in eastern Oregon, between the Malheur and Deschutes rivers in 1855. This fact can yet be sufficiently attested by living witnesses.

My grandfather and his family were in the wagon train that broke the trail afterward known as Meek cut-off. My father was at that time a boy 14 years old. He told me the full particulars in a different country, having removed from Oregon in 1869. It was not the train he was in that found the gold but the one following them, and he repeated to me from memory the story as told at the time: unimpaired with the version of modern years.

The train encamped on a small stream somewhere along the rim of Harney basin, there being hills to the northward and the level stretch of desert to the south. A freshet had sluiced out the gulch leaving the bedrock bare. A lady passing over this bare spot picked up some yellow pieces of metal and came to camp, carrying it in her apron and calling attention to it. No one seemed to know what it was and when asked how much of the metal she could have picked up had she wished, she pointed to a wooden water bucket painted blue and replied she thought she could have picked up the bucket full in a little while; hence the name given this lost mine, "The Blue Bucket Diggings."

The suggestion made by some one that it might be gold, brought the wise men to the fore. He is ever with us, and it is upon these special occasions that he is wont to exhibit his marvelous wisdom. He explained that gold and silver were the only metals that had a natural ring to them (he had evidently forgotten that it was the alloy in the coin that gave it the "ring"). He forthwith hammered a piece out flat on the wagon tire and tested it for the ring. As it would not ring, he promptly pronounced it brass. (he had also forgotten that brass was not a specific metal, but composition) hence sometimes called the Wagon Tire Diggings.

Some of this gold found its way into the Willamette valley, being preserved as curios, but it was not until after the discovery of gold in California that those people knew what they had found and lost on the old immigrant trail.

The old Blue Bucket has never been rediscovered. A much credited version that Canyon City was the place is undoubtedly erroneous. After a personal examination I am confident upon this point.

### CROOK COUNTY IS NOT WORRYING

Crook's Indebtedness Will Be Only \$2500 if no Taxes Are Collected Next Year.

The question of the special session of the legislature and the enactment of a remedial tax law is one of the few things which is not bothering Crook county at the present time.

She is out of debt with money on hand in quantity almost sufficient to meet the running expenses for another year if the present tax law remains intact and no money is collected for expenditures.

County Treasurer Bell says the financial condition of the county is way ahead of many others, and that a failure to collect taxes simply means a slight derangement of business and nothing more. Debts will be paid and practically all expenses met and the deficiency at the close of next year is not likely to exceed \$2500.

At present the county has a surplus in cash of \$17,668.24. The expenditures for the year 1902 amounted to something over \$14,000 exclusive of the building of bridges and highways, and the expenses for next year, it is estimated, will reach a figure approximating \$19,500 which is inclusive of the new \$4600 county bridge west of town and the bridge at the Warm Springs agency now under consideration by the county court. This will leave a deficiency in round numbers of \$2500 which is a joke compared with the amount that some counties will be facing at the close of next year if no collection of taxes is made.

County Clerk Smith in commenting upon the situation the first of the week said: "Crook county compares very favorably with other counties in the state and I believe there are but one or two others that could come out at the close of the year in as good financial condition. There is no indebtedness to pay off and no interest on borrowed money accumulating, so the running expenses are all that will have to be met. The county can shoulder these and not be in the hole very deep at the close of the year's work. I think \$2500 would fully cover any deficiency."

### COAL FOUND NEAR DAYVILLE

Report Is Current That a Vein 140 Feet Deep Has Been Found on the John Day River.

The news has been spread that an unusually large bed of coal has been unearthed near Dayville on the John Day river, but The Journal as yet has been unable to verify the report. The Prairie City Miner, however, gives space to the story and comments as follows:

"Word has reached this place that the crew of miners prospecting for coal on the river near the home of James Small have drilled through a solid bed of coal to a depth of 140 feet. Nor is the bottom of this wonderful stratum yet reached. Should these reports be confirmed, and they are made on good authority, this will prove to be one of the largest deposits of coal ever discovered.

The operations are being conducted by P. A. Downs, a Boise coal expert, and the question of quality has most likely been settled, as these investigations have been going on quietly for some time. Had not the quality proved satisfactory it is not probable that he would have placed heavy machinery on the ground and employed a number of workmen to investigate the extent of the deposit.

It is rumored that Mr. Downs represents the O. R. & N. company, but whether this be true or not matters little, for as soon as such vast deposits of coal of a commercial quality are proven to exist in this valley, transportation will be provided. A number of different railway companies would hustle to be the first to get their lines into the field."

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