

SUMPTER DISTRICT.

Mining Engineer Gives Concise Facts to Enquirers.

W. H. W. Hamilton receives daily enquiries from parties at a distance about the mines of this district. He has prepared the following concise statement in answer to these questions:

The now world famous Sumpter mining district is situated in the northeast corner of the state of Oregon, and comprises the entire northwest portion of Baker and the northeast portion of Grant counties, covering an area of about twenty-six miles square.

Access to the district is by the Oregon Railway and Navigation company's line to Baker City, thence by the Sumpter Valley railway, thirty-two miles in length, to Sumpter.

The town of Sumpter has an altitude of 4430 feet, and is so situated that it is the distributing point not only for this vast area, but for the Prairie City district also, every pound of machinery and provisions must pass through Sumpter's principal streets to get to the mines.

The principal mines of the district are between 4700 and 8000 feet above sea level, situated on mountains of moderate steepness, covered with timber of good quality and convenient size for all mining purposes.

The main rock masses of the district are argillite (called slate by miners), granite and various greenstones. In general the district shows very little intrusion of dyke rocks, although in a few instances I have come across dykes of felsite. This is probably the reason that there has been so little faulting of ore bodies in this district.

The widest veins appear to be in the argillite, (Bonanza mine for example), and are filled with a brecca of slate and silica, varying in width from a few feet to a hundred, the ore being from 30 to 75 per cent free milling, the balance of values usually being in an auriferous pyrite, although in a few parts of the district I have found a tellurided ore carrying very high gold values.

Among the principal mines of this formation are the Bald Mountain, Mammoth, Golconda, Columbia, North Pole, Mountain Belle, Bunker Hill, Ibex, Cougar, Magnolia, Red Boy and Bonanza, not to mention scores of others that are developed far enough to justify the erection of mills and that will be among the dividend payers in the very near future.

Until quite recently, for some reason or other, the people of this vicinity have been under the illusion that if a vein was not in a slate formation, that it would never make a mine, the reason no doubt being that the above list of dividend paying mines are all in the so called slate. But this illusion is now fast being dispelled, as evinced by the great activity and splendid showing now being made in granite and gneiss in the Cable Cove district.

This district begins about nine miles in a northeasterly direction from Sumpter, being connected with good wagon roads.

Among the best known mines of this district are the California, Baby McKee, La Bellevue, Last Chance, Imperial, Crown Point, Golden Rule, Lucky Boy, Morning Star, Evening Star, Lucky Kid, Gipsy King and Gipsy Queen. All of these properties are being systematically developed, and it is my opinion that more paying mines will be found closer together in the Cable Cove district than any of the other districts tributary to Sumpter, consequently this district alone should double the population of Sumpter and sustain it within the next three years.

From a careful consideration of the data

I have obtained in my travels over the district the last twelve months, I am convinced that within two years that there will be more paying mines in this granitic formation than in any formation in the district.

Most of the properties in the Sumpter mining district are owned by men of very little mining experience, and it is only recently that they are beginning to see the necessity for having a thorough mining man as manager.

In a word, if you own a farm, don't hire a miner to work it, hire a farmer; if you own a mine, get an up-to-date mining man to take charge of it, not a farmer, or someone else simply because he is a nice old man, or owns a little stock in the property or has some other pull, and it will be far cheaper for you in the end.

Water is abundant for domestic purposes and in a great many cases the mines have enough for power.

Taking into consideration the natural advantages of the district, such as plenty of water, fine timber, the fact that snow-slides are unheard of here, the accessibility of the mines and the soft nature of the ore, I see no reason why the ores of this district should not be mined and milled at a cost not to exceed four dollars per ton.

There is every indication of permanency to the veins here; the larger veins being strong and persistent and often traceable for thousands of feet, being (as before stated) wider and of lower grade in the argillite than in the granitic rocks.

The district north of Sumpter needs better transportation facilities, such as an electric road to Cable Cove, but I think it only the matter of a short time when some enterprising individual or company will see the need of it, and I confidently expect to see an electric road, at least as far as the California mine, in the very near future.

I believe that the Sumpter mining district offers a better opportunity to the mining investor than any other district in the west. Of course there are wild cats here, as in every other mining district, but one can almost hear them howl before he reaches them, so to anyone selecting a property in this or any other district, I would emphasize the necessity of a careful examination and report by a competent mining engineer on the property.

While it is true that considerable prospecting has been done in the district, still it has in a great many cases been run over more than prospected. I know of no more inviting field than the Sumpter district for the practical, close prospector, especially the Colorado prospector.

By taking the average of several hundred samples which I have a record of, taken from the leading mines in all parts of the district, I find that the ore as it goes to the mill, month in and month out, will average from \$10 to \$15 in the argillite, and in the granitic formations from \$15 to \$25. What better would be asked of any district?

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