

STAMPEDE TO IDAHO.

Gold First Discovered in That State in 1860.

Recently the Salt Lake Tribune published this interesting story about the great stampede to Idaho after the first discovery of gold there, in 1860:

Gold was first discovered in Idaho in 1860. At Fort Walla Walla was a captain in the regular army named E. D. Perce. He had talked with a Nez Perce Indian, who told a romantic story of a bright and shining metal in the mountains. In the summer of 1860 Captain Perce, with two companions, visited the Nez Perce Indians and traveled along the Clearwater river. They got lost and no doubt would have perished had not a friendly squaw led them out of a wilderness of small cedars. Captain Perce went back to Fort Walla Walla, but immediately returned, accompanied by W. T. Basset, Thomas Walters, Johathan Smith and two brothers named John and James Dodge. Thus reinforced, Captain Perce continued his search. Toward the headwaters of a small stream that flowed into the Clearwater river, Basset started to pan the soil and obtained three cents in gold. The whole party panned for several days and got eighty dollars in all. They then returned to Fort Walla Walla. Although it was late in the season, Sergeant J. C. Smith fitted out a small party and went where the gold had been obtained. They camped for the winter, lived on government rations and took out \$800 in gold dust. Early in the spring of 1861, Smith made his way out on snowshoes, carrying the \$800.

It was sent to Portland, where it caused a blaze of excitement. In those primitive days a man who wanted to prove that he had found gold showed the metal as an evidence of good faith. In modern mining gold is seldom exhibited, the first intimation being usually a wheelbarrow load of mining stock to be sold for development purposes. This comparison is drawn to show the evolution in mining operations.

The news of the discovery traveled fast and a wild rush set in from Portland. Steamers arrived daily from San Francisco and Victoria, bringing thousands of adventurers. Inside of sixty days the country was overrun with miners. The Oro Fino mines were opened, then those at Pierce City and Elk City.

Later the crowd stampeded toward the south and discovered the famous mines of Florence. Toward fall James Warren located the Warren's diggings. The discovery at Florence caused tremendous excitement. The camp developed into one of the toughest places in the entire west, thirty men being killed the first year. Flour sold for \$1 a pound, bacon \$1.22, butter \$3, sugar \$1.25, gum boots \$30 a pair and everything else in proportion.

The amount of gold exported from Florence the first season was \$1,750,000. During April, 1862, 3000 persons left Portland for the mines, and by the end of May 25,000 persons had passed over the trail. The amount of gold accounted for during 1862 from the district was seven million dollars, and much more went out of the country, so no account could be kept of it.

The crowd of miners kept pushing south, and came to the mouth of the Boise river. They went up the stream to the present site of the town of Boise, and then traveled exactly north, camping in what has since been known as the Boise basin.

That whole section seems to have been lined with gold. More than \$18,000,000

was taken from that section during the following few years. Willow creek especially yielded prolific returns. But there, as elsewhere, placer mining has been succeeded by quartz mining. The ledges that yielded all that placer gold were necessarily rich and it is no wonder that in that immediate vicinity two such rich mines as the Checkmate and Friday should have been discovered and developed.

Development Without Money Impossible.

Two men owning a claim can work it to a depth of fifty to 100 feet with a rude windlass. All they have to buy is the rope, one hammer, a pick, a few drills and some powder. The buckets they can make by sawing a barrel in half. By and by the windlass gives way to the whim. That costs more, and is about as shortlived. The whim gives way to an engine and boiler. They must have capital for these improvements. They strike water. In due course, pumping machinery is required. Pumps cost money; the mine is not sufficiently remunerative to furnish it. A corporation is formed; stock sold. It is probably a very fair property, but to yield large returns it must be developed, sunk to great depths, levels extended into the ore bodies. More capital is needed. The next step is a sale of the whole concern, for the original owners are not equal to the frequently changing phases. The new corporation comes in. It doesn't take long to discover that its territory is insufficient. Adjoining claims are bought. Under proper engineering they are connected; the individual claims become a group, operated as one mine. Then it pays, but it has cost a lot of cash. Prior to these arrangements dividends were impossible; now they are earning profits for the men who put up the cash and have waited a long while for returns. Such, in brief, is the general course of the mining industry, and who shall say it is dangerous to the commonwealth or to the camps in which such methods have been perfected? Nothing can be clearer than that individual development unsupported by ample means is, save in rare instances, extremely limited, or an impossibility.—Frank Hall, mining editor of the Denver Post.

Smelter at Mineral Will Resume.

The old silver workings of Mineral, twenty-three miles from Weiser, Idaho, are to be reopened, according to a dispatch from Weiser. The dispatch says Ladd & Tilton, bankers, of Portland, have control of the smelter and several claims in the vicinity, and have made quite extensive improvements in putting in new equipment and machinery to make the smelter an up-to-date one with a 150-ton daily capacity. It is stated that G. M. McDowell, of Portland, an experienced mining man, has been engaged to act as superintendent for the Ladd & Tilton interests. Charles E. Ladd when shown the dispatch yesterday said that the news was premature, but that later he might have something worth while to give out. When asked if Mr. McDowell was in their employ Mr. Ladd replied that he was doing some work for them. Further than this Mr. Ladd would not talk, saying that such news when announced in advance was an injury to their camp and their interests.—Portland Telegram.

Harrison, the Giant Powder man wants every miner to make his office headquarters when in Sumpter.

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