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CRACKER CREEK VEIN EARTH'S RICHEST VAULT

Another Mine to be Opened up on This Great Gold Producing Ledge---Proven by 2000 Feet of Workings.

Professor Waldemar Lindgren, of the United States Geological Survey, in his report on the Gold Belt of the Blue Mountains of Oregon, has given the stamp of official endorsement to the great mother lode of the Cracker Creek district. In this report he says: "There is practically one continuous vein system, beginning at the Balsey-Elkhorn mine and continuing across to Cracker creek, * * * and some of the most important mines in eastern Oregon are comprised in it, the North Pole, E. & E., Columbia, Golconda, Amazon and Bunker Hill mines. In this distance of five miles the vein continues strong and unbroken * * * The gangue is quartz throughout, containing gold and sulphurets. The width is from five to 100 feet. It is easily the most strongly defined and persistent vein in the Blue mountains."

Many pages of the report are devoted to this ledge. The subject is treated from a scientific stand point by a man of long and wide experience. From the facts which he relates, he draws the conclusion that values continue with depth indefinitely, and that this is one of the great mining districts of the world.

Professor Lindgren made his geological survey and examinations in the summer of 1900. Up to that time the only sensationally rich strike that had ever been made on this vein was in the Golconda, and that ore shoot had, apparently, been exhausted; so he reported that incident as of no especial importance.

Subsequent development has, however, demonstrated that it was of the utmost importance; for it has been proven that this deposit had scarcely been touched, though several hundred thousand dollars worth of gold was extracted in a few weeks. Readers of THE MINER will remember that last May this marvelously rich ore shoot was picked up on the 200 foot level. Large quantities of rock was taken out that assayed over \$50,000, and it was then creditably stated that one ton was sacked that sampled and was sold for about \$45,000. This same chimney has been cut 100 feet deeper, on the 300-foot level, about 80 feet removed from the perpendicular. This unusual angle at which it dips

doubtless accounts for why it was lost three years ago. Only yesterday, Manager Robbins received a telephone message from the mine stating that the men were doubtless then entering the same shoot on the 100-foot level, as the point was in line with the angle of the dip. Assays had been made, which returned \$700 in gold. The history of the world has rarely recorded the existence of so large and deep a chimney carrying such wonderfully high values.

Regarding the Golconda's nearest neighbor on this ledge, the Columbia, no such positive statements as the above can be made; because the management does not care to take the public into its confidence, and General Manager Baillie handles the delicate problem with such courteous diplomacy that no one ever attempts to pry into the jealously guarded secrets of that mine. This much, however, can be considered reliable: About a year ago an eminent mining engineer came here from South Africa to examine the Columbia,—for what purpose no one knows. Shortly afterwards the owner received a bonafide offer of \$3,000,000 for the property, which was turned down without a moment's hesitation.

Adjoining the Columbia is the E. & E., of which little can be said, except that \$1,500,000 in gold has been taken from the stopes above the 270 foot level. The mine was shut down on account of legal complications, four or five years ago and is now full of water. It is reported that it will soon be reopened.

Then comes the North Pole, considered by mining men competent to judge to be the richest mine on earth. Recently the manager acknowledged to a newspaper reporter that the output from the ten-stamp mill some months exceeds \$100,000. Alexander Baring, of London, the owner, stated while here last spring that the ore in sight gave an intrinsic value to the property of between six and ten millions. Considering that ore bodies can be measured and their values estimated with approximate accuracy as much accuracy as corn in a crib, that was rather an indefinite statement; but it gives some idea of the mind staggering wealth that is stored in that now famous mine, unquestionably Nature's richest treasure

vault yet broken into by man. Within four months last spring and summer \$1,500,000 worth of ore was stoped, one-third of which is reported to be sacked and still in the workings.

The Le Roi mine in British Columbia was given a world wide fame on account of the million dollar check which was drawn in part payment for the property. It is as a peanut stand to a wholesale grocery compared with either of the above mentioned four mines. Stratton's Independence, in the Cripple Creek district, was sold for ten millions and has produced its price. That transaction made the district and every one connected with the sale famous throughout civilization. And yet, right here at our doors there is a mine that exceeds it in value at the present time and bids fair to discount it two or three times over. About a month ago the ore shoot that carried rock worth \$200,000 to the ton was encountered in the lower levels; subsequent to Mr. Barring's statement that the mine had ore enough in sight to justify a valuation of six or ten millions. If apparently reliable reports be true, that one chimney is worth more than the Independence.

And now the property adjoining the North Pole is being opened up, and it is just as certain as anything within the range of human knowledge can be that it will prove to be equally as rich. Some weeks since THE MINER gave an account of the financial fight between Alexander Baring, the great London financier, and a local syndicate, headed by J. H. Robbins, president of the First Bank of Sumpter, to get possession of this property, and how the latter won the battle royal.

These people, all prominent citizens of eastern Oregon, successful business and mining men, have organized a company known as the South Pole Consolidated Gold Mines company. It owns 4989.32 feet of this mother lode, besides several parallel claims, containing ledges of known worth. This is nearly double the amount of ground owned on this vein by either of the other "Big Four" companies, as they are locally designated.

And, although the mere fact that this company's holdings include such a large section of this wonderful Cracker Creek ledge, gives it an intrinsic value, this fact alone is not relied upon—the skeptical Missouriian can be shown. There is already 2000 feet of workings on the property, one-half of which are drifts on the great vein. This group was located years ago by different individuals and has been thoroughly prospected. It was on the Oregon Clipper that the second find of free gold in the district was made. The ore was rich and much of it exposed.

The South Pole company has one distinct advantage over all of its neighbors; in that it owns the apex of this gold vault mountain, making it possible to work the mine by the economical tunnel method for many years, just across the divide. The apex is 3200 feet above the bottom of the Columbia's shaft, and 1000 feet above its own lowest ground, on the

Rock creek side, from which point the working tunnel will eventually be driven. The Columbia has found its best ore on its deepest workings. The South Pole has ore on the top of its mountain which assays better than \$100. It needs, therefore, not to rely on its excellent neighborhood for its reputation, though it must be acknowledged that it is a satisfactory process to draw comparisons and formulate analogies.

Included in its holdings is one-half of the Yankee Jim, one-quarter of the Villard and one-half of the Yankee Jack, the North Pole owning the other interests in those claims. The end line of the Villard is only 200 feet from the \$200,000 per ton ore shoot in the North Pole's. More or Less.

The principal workings on this property are located on the Clipper, Rock creek side of the divide. There are two tunnels, one in 300 and the other 700 feet. By driving the latter 300 feet farther, it will be under the apex, giving a depth of 550 feet. Both of these tunnels are on the ledge and said to be modeled on the plan of a corker. A large force of men is now at work straightening them out. In the face of the upper one a cross cut was recently run thirty feet, without finding either wall. Consulting Engineer W. W. Robbins took samples across 25 feet of this distance, which assayed \$22. And good values are found everywhere. Later on, as stated above, the main working tunnel will be driven below these, which will give a vertical depth under the apex of 1000 feet.

Early next spring, before this work is started, electric power drills will be installed to drive this tunnel.

Andrew Hansen, who owned two of these claims, installed a 5-stamp mill, operated a few months in the year by snow water power. This will not be used at all; but a modern 50 or 100-stamp mill will be erected, when development work reaches a stage justifying such a move.

The people who are back of this gigantic enterprise don't know how to make a failure of any undertaking, have ample capital and can get all they want. The South Pole is, therefore, just as sure to be one of the world's greatest gold producing mines, as the sun is to continue rising and setting. There is no possible escape from this. It is going to aid materially in making this the most prolific gold producing region on the globe.

Alexander Clothing Company.

The Alexander Clothing company has opened a clothing store in the Wilson building, corner of Mill and Granite streets, and put in a full line of clothing and gents' furnishing goods. This company already owns several other stores and, buying in such large quantities, they are enabled to sell the latest and best goods on the market at the lowest prices. Wherever the company has done business it is known as the one-price clothing store, and this rule will be strictly adhered to in Sumpter. F. R. Wallbrunn is the manager and Jack Kissel, who is well known in Sumpter, will be clerk.