

THE OLD TIME PROSPECTOR

To the prospector for gold and silver the United States owes the rapid development of the West. The tremendous travel induced by the discoveries of gold and silver in California, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Idaho, and Colorado undoubtedly caused the building of a transcontinental railroad at least twenty years sooner than otherwise would have been the case. It would be incredible if the men who dared the terrors of what was then the Great American Desert and the hostile Sioux and Apaches were forgotten. Yet it is a fact that the names of Comstock, Gregory, O'Reilly, McLaughlin and scores of others are almost as completely forgotten as if their work had been that of obscure factory hands. Surely these men's names should be remembered and honored by the western commonwealths. Before it is too late, and while men yet live who knew them, the facts, as to those forgotten heroes should be collected and preserved for future generations.

Too generally an impression prevails that these old prospectors were not "nice" men. The fact best known concerning Gregor, the first discoverer of quartz gold in Colorado, is his picturesque blasphemy when he made his epochal discovery at Black Hawk. What finally became of Gregor and what kind of a man he really was, the school children of Colorado are not informed. So far as we can find out it is not known with certainty, where he died.

Recently, while digging out some figures from old government reports, which also are not appreciated as they should be, we came on an account of the last days of Henry Comstock, after whom was named the great Comstock lode of Nevada. The old man was living at Butte, Montana, in 1867 and in 1868, we find in the "Mineral Resources of the United States" this pathetic account of a magnificent character:

"Although a man of the strictest temperance, using no stimulant stronger than tea or coffee, and not even tobacco, years and the hardships and excitement incident to a frontier life are telling painfully on his faculties. In a conversation with him he referred to his past career, especially his connection with the lode that bears his name. His intellect appears to wander, although his hand still retains its cunning. He is a skillful prospector but his fading recollections carry cloudy images to his darkened understanding. He imagines he owns the whole Comstock lode, and the titles of Gold Hill and Virginia; but, as he has no immediate use for them, he allows others to live in his houses. The people are poor, and it would be hard to turn them out, especially in the winter. This feeling of benevolence in the old man is genuine, and one that he actually practices. He has a small claim that pays little more than wages. If a poor miner comes along without means, he gives him an opportunity to work in the claim until the suffering stranger has the means to go on his journey.

"Recently an emigrant came along who was sick and could work but little. Comstock and he worked together in the claim, the old man doing the most laborious part, until

the emigrant concluded to leave. Comstock then divided what was taken out and, seeing it was too small for a man to travel on, said: 'Now we will divide my half again; you will need it!'"

Nor was Comstock an isolated man of this class. We can recall many such prospectors in our travels through the western mountains. Three fine old fellows, especially, we are proud to have known: Joe Campbell, known all through the deserts of Nevada, California and Arizona, Jacob Bright, of Comstock days; Calloway, of Montana. All of them loyal, generous, courteous men, strictly temperate and of the finest, truest character. One, at least was scholarly and of wide and deep reading. Truly these men are worth more to humanity than the schemers who rule the money markets of the world.—Mining Reporter.

OREGON-IDAHO COMPANY BUYS SIX MORE CLAIMS

Time has not hung idly on the hands of the eastern parties representing the Oregon-Idaho Gold Mining company. The general manager, A. A. Hibbs and Dr. Brown, mining expert, have gone over the property of the company, making a study of the geological features with an eye to extensive future operations.

In addition to the claims now held by this company, six adjoining claims have been acquired. During the past week A. A. Hibbs, representing the Oregon Idaho Gold Mining company, has purchased one claim from J. Ferree, one from Chas. Grear, one from Al Ferree one from A. E. Wilson and two from Crain & Reese. These are all contiguous and form a very valuable adjunct to their holdings.

During the past six months, 400 feet of tunneling have been completed and a contract was let this week to A. E. Wilson and Chas. Grear for 400 feet addition work. Also an extensive order for mining material, including a ton of rails, has been placed with a local house.

Those in charge of this enterprise are of the conservative type, who do not rush head long into a milling proposition until assured of sufficient ore in sight to warrant the maintenance of such a plant. Owing to the lack of time Dr. Brown has not been able to make an exhaustive research as he desired, but from what he did see he is pleased with the district and its possibilities, considering the newly opened Copperopolis vein most promising.—Prairie City Miner.

Contract For Big Dam Awarded.

Bids were received by the Kilamaqua Lake and Reservoir and Rock Creek Irrigation company for the construction of the mammoth dam to be forty feet wide on the bottom, fifteen wide on top and 168 feet long, and were opened and the contract awarded on Monday to Leontas Fee, the lowest bidder. The work implies a considerable undertaking in the line of civil engineering and yet will be executed at a figure bordering on the thousand dollar mark. The bids were opened by the board of directors, ranging from the amount named by Mr. Fee to the sum of \$2,150. Work will be pushed rapidly forward, as it is a case of make hay while the sun shines in the altitude and the region of Kilamaqua, and the lake will be expected to supply the large and increasing demand now annually levied upon her exhaustless resources.—Haines Record.

McLEOD-MADDERN ARTICLES SIGNED

The McLeod-Maddern single drilling contest has passed the stage of speculation and is now within the realm of certainty. It will be, but where is conjectural. If Sumpter hangs up the largest purse, it will be here, and so with Baker and Bourne. Bourne has already, it is understood, put up \$130, and Sumpter and Baker are to be heard from. Ben Wood, the backer of Maddern, has so far expressed no preference, but it is naturally supposed that he favors Baker. He is here today with Maddern getting the meet in shape. McLeod's friends incline toward Sumpter or Bourne, but the town getting the largest purse in sight will pick the prize.

The following articles of agreement were signed in the law office of F. A. E. Starr this morning:

"This agreement made and entered into this the 7th day of September, 1904, by and between W. T. Maddern and M. D. McLeod, witness, that a drilling contest shall be had between the parties to this agreement, to be held in either the town of Bourne, the city of Baker City, or the city of Sumpter, the one putting up the largest purse by the 14th of September, to be the place. This contest is to be for a purse of \$500 on each side, and the same to be deposited in the bank on the 14th of September. The contest is to take place on the 29th of September, 1904. The steel is to be three-quarter inch, not swedged, and the hammer is not to be over four pounds.

In the event that either party shall fail to appear at the contest, he shall forfeit to the party appearing the \$100 forfeit money, providing that such non-appearance shall occur through sickness or accident.

In witness whereof, the said parties have hereunto set their hands seals in duplicate, this the 7th day of September, 1904.

Signed W. T. MADDERN,
D. M. McLEOD.

Ledge 1200 Feet Wide.

A dispatch of recent date from Phillipsburg, Montana says: A report of what is believed to have been one of the greatest gold strikes in his state within the past twenty five years has reached this city from Frogpond basin, in the Mooselake district, where the Miller brothers, who live here, are interested. William Neu, who is interested with the Miller brothers in mining operations there, came to town Saturday with the report that a ledge of gold ore 1,200 feet in width had been located in what is known as Whetstone mountain. Several assays of the ore taken from the ledge have been made and they show values ranging from thirty cents to several hundred dollars to the ton, the average being about \$7 a ton. It is said that the mountain is almost a solid ore bearing body and that the extent of the ledge is almost incalculable. Great excitement prevails as a result of the strike.

Hotel Sumpter.

Meals 15 cents and up; bottle Baker City beer 5 cents per glass; good rooms 50 cents.

MORNING TO RESUME SOON

H. H. Nicholson, consulting engineer for the Killen, Warner, Stewart company, Clark Snyder, interested in the Morning, and H. H. Ames, one of the stockholders under the Morning reorganization, left this forenoon for the property, in the Greenhorns. J. A. Green, chief engineer of the Bourne railroad, went along with them, ostensibly for the trip.

The gentlemen in question had nothing to give out for print, but it is generally understood that Mr. Nicholson is getting the matter in hand preparatory to the resumption of operations. When this will occur is not known, but the reorganization has been effected and the operation of the property is the thing contemplated. This will probably take place at a near day.

GRANDE RONDE ROAD AN ASSURED SUCCESS

A special from Pendleton to the Spokesman-Review says:

W. E. Davidson, secretary of the Eastern Oregon Development company, and member of the firm of W. E. Davidson & Company, mining brokers of Pendleton, says that the electric belt line to be built in Grande Ronde valley is an assured success. His father, T. W. Davidson, is in the east now interesting capital in behalf of the project, and at the present time the outlook is most encouraging.

Grounds for a terminal and depot have been donated by the residents of Cove. The Amalgamated Sugar company has agreed to raise 500 acres of beets along the line, where heretofore as the price of hauling has made their culture prohibitive. The right of way has been secured, and had it not been for Chief Engineer A. B. Browne being called to Canyon City as a witness in a suit at law, the survey would have been completed at this time.

The power proposition on the Minam river has not been looked into except to ascertain that at least 20,000 horse power could be developed.

WORKING ON JOHN DAY EXTENSION

Joseph Barton, general freight and passenger agent of the Sumpter Valley road, was out to Tipton today and returned to Baker on the afternoon train.

The Tipton station, Mr. Barton says, will soon be under construction. Bids for its erection are now being considered.

Regarding the John Day extension, Mr. Barton says it is the purpose to get in as much grading as possible before snow falls. A force is now at work grading beyond the divide, and although the completion of the line cannot be aimed at, it is the purpose, Mr. Barton says, to get in as much work as possible before winter sets in.