

J. H. BROWN BACK FROM MOUNTAIN CITY, NEVADA

That is a Great Mining Country, but the Boom Has Flattened Out Temporarily.

J. H. Brown, who left here July 6 for Mountain City, Nevada, returned home today.

He says that is a great mining country, that there is all kinds of the precious metals there, and the camp will doubtless be a hummer next season, but it is a dull proposition at this time. There was quite a feverish boom there in June and July, mining men came in from Denver and Salt Lake and bonded most of the old abandoned properties, it having been demonstrated that, though the ledges faulted vertically at 100 feet depth, they go down and become richer below. These people have stopped work now, for some reason or other; in order to get the mines on more favorable terms it is thought, which action has thrown a wet blanket on the whole proposition.

Mr. Brown says the Nelson is one of the biggest mines in the world, in his judgment. In the face of the tunnel at a depth of 400 feet there is five feet of ore that averages 890, about twenty per cent of which is gold and the remainder silver. This shoot is now proven for a distance of 125 feet and has widened in that distance from three to the present five feet. Large chunks of this ore carries so much native silver that it cannot be broken with a hammer and has to be sawed in two. A nine stamp mill was erected on this property some months since, but it didn't save half the values and is now idle.

The townsite of Mountain City is all "balled up," there being four different interests claiming it; agricultural, placer and quartz filings and squatters on separate lots. Its population is now only about 150. The town is one mile from an Indian reservation, on which there are fine hay ranches and much stock. The country is well watered, but sparsely timbered, mining timbers costing six cents a foot.

Mr. Brown prospected for a free gold ledge about twelve miles from town, but owing to the scarcity of water at that point so late in the season, made little headway and abandoned the search until next season. He later located a group of four claims only a mile from town, on the mountain where so much rich float was found, and there has a very encouraging showing.

Mike Mahoney, formerly of Sumpter, has gotten hold of an abandoned prospect, and some distance from the old workings opened up a body of very rich ore, and now has a "big thing." Dr. Faull of Baker City, is interested with him.

Struck It Rich in Nevada.

Dr. Carlton W. Faull, of Baker City, accompanied by Dick Eckman

in digging clothes, passed through Sumpter this morning, headed for Tipton, to buy town lots and see the gold grow on pine trees.

Dr. Faull recently returned from Mountain City, Nevada, whither he went with Mike Mahoney and George Probasco at the time of the spring stampede. The party struck it rich about ten miles from the main camp, by locating a ledge five feet wide and traceable for 6000 feet. The surface rock shows high values in silver. Probasco and Mahoney are still on the ground and Dr. Faull will return next spring. It was Mike Mahoney's enthusiastic reports on the country that impelled Lew Walker, of Sumpter, to depart for that region Tuesday.

SYNDICATE WANTS CORNUCOPIA MINE

Pierre Humbert, an eminent California mining engineer, who visited the Cornucopia mines of Oregon last spring in the interest, it is said, of a British syndicate, is again in Baker City, for the avowed purpose of reopening the property, provided an adjustment can be reached with its creditors. Supreme efforts will be made to cause a withdrawing of all suits against the mine in consideration of cash payment of claims. Mr. Humbert is reported to have \$600,000 back of him in his negotiations. He is being assisted by Robert N. Jones, the Oregon representative of John R. Searles, the bankrupt owner of the mine. The Cornucopia is in the hands of Receiver Beattys, of Brooklyn, The Federal court at New York has issued temporary injunctions restraining the execution of about \$300,000 worth of judgments against the property.

New Seven Devils Smelter.

The new Ladd Metals company's smelter at Landore, in the Seven Devils district, will blow in this week, according to a press dispatch from Weiser. The Portland owners are on the ground. The plant will then have a daily capacity of 150 tons.

John Day Electric Enterprise.

Electricity will light the towns of Prairie City and John Day after November 1. Machinery for generation of the necessary energy is being installed at the Bashford mill near Prairie City. Water will be the motive power, but an auxiliary steam plant is also being placed. The work is being rushed.

WOULD FIND BLUE BUCKET DIGGINGS

During periods of news depression, cow county journals fill space with revamped, revised, and more or less readable tales of mysterious Blue Bucket gold diggings found in 1845 or thereabouts, and lost ever since. The scene is laid anywhere from the Big Bend of the Snake to the fountain heads of the Crooked river.

Now comes an old Tennesseian, "Silky" Smith by name, who lives at Adams, on Wild Horse creek, above Pendleton, and adds a detail to the mossgrown old narrative by asserting that gold nuggets from the Blue Bucket diggings were used as sinkers by fisherman in that good old time.

"Silky" tells the following tale, as related in a Walla Walla dispatch to the Spokesman-Review:

"I am getting to be an old man, but I have an ambition that I must satisfy before I settle down and extreme old age overtakes me. That ambition is to find the famous lost Blue Bucket mine, and I have an idea that I can go to the spot.

"Quite a number of years ago I was freighting with an old man between The Dalles and Canyon City, who had been a member of the party which found the mine. He told me the story and the exact location of the spot where the party left their wagons and went overland afoot, I believe that my theory as to the location has some foundation.

"This man told me that some of them were fishing in a creek near where they camped and, needing sinkers for their lines, one of the company picked up something yellow and heavy from the creek, pounded it into shape on the wagon tire and fastened it to the line. They didn't know then that it was gold, but thought that it was some new metal. That was in 1847, two years before gold was discovered in California and was at a time when gold was a scarce article. They went on and the queer stuff became more plentiful. They filled two blue buckets with it and thought that they would carry it with them. They left their wagons at this place and journeyed afoot, and as the metal was so heavy it had to be left behind.

"After many hardships the party crossed the Cascade mountains and reached Eugene. They became separated, many died and some left the country when gold was found in California. Anyway they never got back to the mine. Several have looked for it but have never been able to locate the exact spot. I was along that way some years late and found the traces of the wagons and the grave were they buried a woman who died while they were camped there, and I think that without doubt that I can go to the exact spot where they camped and from the description given me by the old man I can locate the creek where they found the gold, which they named Sinker creek.

"I believe that all who have since searched for the mine have looked too far south and east. I shall look in the Warm Springs reservation on Crooked river, in Crook county. There are canyons and mountains in that reservation that I didn't believe that a white man has ever set foot, and in this locality I think the little band of emigrants found the fabulous Blue Bucket mine.

"I intend to start in the next two weeks anyway, as I wish to go there and get back before fall rains begin in the mountains. I have never found time to go before this year and as I have always wanted to look for this mine I will go this fall sure."

Perhaps Mr. Smith's theory is not all imagination. Applegate's history gives a clear account of the finding and then losing of the mine and the subsequent searches that have been made. It says that Joe Meek and his brother, Stephen, became tired of journeying along with the emigrant train and induced quite a number to abandon the train and go with them over a shorter route to reach the Willamette. They left the main body at the mouth of Malheur river, in Malheur county, and commenced their journey. As they progressed towards the interior a part of this band separated from Meek and took a directly easterly course toward Diamond peak in the Cascades. This party, under the leadership of Captain Fetherston, were the ones who found the mine. The history, however, gives the probable location as sixty miles east of Diamond peak and six miles north of Pauline marsh, in Lake county. The history says the party left their wagons and went down the Crooked river, which flows through Warm Springs reservation, and reached The Dalles. One of the party came back in 1882 and found the rotted remnants of the wagons and an old walnut ox yoke. Two years before that a United States surveying party was instructed to look for the mine. They found that all of the old settlers' traditions concerning the mine conformed, but after searching for some time they came to the conclusion that the drifting sand had covered the ledge. They left under the impression that the mine was near the marsh in Lake county in the open desert, while Mr. Smith's informer told him that it was situated in the rough mountains. From the fact that the party went down Crooked river it is not at all unlikely that they stopped in the mountains and found the gold.

Testimony in Golden Chariot Case.

Mayor McColloch, the attorney in the case, W. W. Wade, plaintiff, Messrs. Swiggett, Lynch and perhaps one or two other witnesses are in Baker City on the suit brought by Wade against Dr. Brock, seeking to secure an interest in the Golden Chariot, the sensationally rich find in Bear Gulch district. The testimony is being taken before a referee, to be submitted to Judge Eakin at the next term of circuit court. Attorney Johns, of Baker City, is counsel for defendant.

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