



THE SUMPTER MINER

Story of the Big Butt-in

Being Also the Recital of How a Michigan Man Came Close to a Snug Cleanup in Sumpter.

Here follows the story of the big butt-in.

The tale came to The Miner from the mouth of a man who knows.

It relates the peculiar circumstances surrounding the sale of the Ibez mine five years ago, and deals with some of the reasons why Colonel S. W. Ray, of the King's country up north, dropped the mine like a hot potato,—or, rather, why Arthur Hill, of the east, dropped Colonel Ray like a superheated tuber.

It all happened during the whoop-houray times of Sumpter's incipient boom in the fall of 1899. That particular period was replete with peculiar incidents relating to sudden wealth and equally sudden poverty.

Colonel S. W. Ray, a Canadian banker, made money in Rossland and the Kootenais in the middle 90s. It was easy. The only requirement was the purchase of a big mine cheap and its sudden sale for six figures. When in the summer of 1899, Ray discovered that all the cheap big mines in British Columbia had been bought up, he harkened to the plaint of his friend and fellow subject of the then Queen, Ex-Governor Charles H. MacIntosh, of British Columbia—author of that historical million-dollar Le Roi mine check—and came to Sumpter. There was a lack of ostentatiousness about the Colonel's arrival that threw about his personality the glamour of business. From a modest suite of rooms in the old Capital hotel he kept his finger on the mining pulse of the Sumpter gold fields. Endless and uncountable were the negotiations inaugurated by him with sundry and divers miners, prospectors, stock brokers, claim owners and so forth. He came within an ace of buying the Van Anda mine, and within a deuce of capturing the Bellevue.

Arthur Hill, of Saiginaw, Michigan, counts his money in the millions. He made it in sawmills and pine timber lands back in the lake country. It was easy. All that was required was to buy an immense tract of timber cheap, cut lumber and sell at top-of-the-market price. The best sawmill man in Hill's employ was Simcoe Chapman, who could cut enough lumber from a sixteen-foot pine log, full of knots, to build a barn. When Hill discovered that all the cheap big tracts of pine land in Michigan were

bought up, he sent Chapman to Oregon to invest in mines. Some way, somehow, through some means, Chapman bought the Ibez mine, eight miles from Sumpter, paying, it is said, \$65,000 in cash. One-third of this sum was Chapman's money. He bought the mine itself, its tunnels and shaft, its dips, spurs and angles, for Hill. For himself he had eyes but for pine. His part of the investment represented timber on the Ibez group.

It is said that Chapman immediately became clamorous for a mill on the Ibez. "But, sir," expostulated his principal, the Saginaw millionaire, "what do we want of a mill when we have so little ore?" "Ore! — ore!" responded Chapman. "Who cares for ore? I want a sawmill!"

Colonel Ray was a typical Englishman—tall, military looking, deliberate, with regulation side-whiskers of the Pickadilly weepers variety, in vogue forty year ago on Thread-needle street. Simcoe Chapman was a typical Yankee—cute, voluble, witty, alert. Why these two extreme types of men should have foregathered and become almost chums in a booming camp like Sumpter in '99, is odd. And yet they did. Out of their friendship grew a deal for Ray's purchase of the Ibez. Chapman pointed out that here, at last, was a chance for the colonel to make a cleanup. Here was an opportunity to buy a big mine, instead of investing in one. Here the colonel could operate the Ibez, instead of sell it, and could sit in his Canadian bank office and receipt for gold bullion shipped straight from his Oregon mine.

It required many days for the deliberate, calm and unenthusiastic colonel to decide. Chapman talked as he never talked before. He sent for his son, Fred, who was a chip from the old block, and who could himself talk a hois through a granite boulder. Even these two word-painters failed to ruffle the colonel's calmness and deliberateness. Then Chapman recalled one of those moss-grown old methods used to advantage in Michigan to coerce a recalcitrant purchaser of pine land into paying spot cash. He brought a third party into the negotiations—a mythical intending purchaser of the Ibez—who began to send telegrams to Chapman at the rate of one

a minute—clamorous telegrams, demanding the immediate execution of a deed and the receipt of ready money.

And still the colonel was unmoved—a second Phineas Fogg. In dire straits, Chapman embodied his mythical telegrapher—gave him a local habitation and name, and caused him to leave Spokane on a certain day bound for Sumpter, with a bagful of gold doubloons and with his eye on the Ibez. The name of this man, according to the telegrams which Chapman showed Ray, was Patsy Clark, the Spokane plunger, multi-millionaire miner.

There was method in Colonel Ray's madness. All his calmness was exterior. He really wanted the Ibez—wanted it bad—but he didn't have the ready money. All during the time Chapman was receiving myriad telegrams, Ray was secretly keeping the wires hot between Sumpter and his home town, with messages at intervals to Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Liverpool, and clear over to London. The Boer war was at that time bathing South Africa in blood, and every counting room in the British empire felt the effects. Money was hard to get. Only promises were easy. But when Colonel Ray learned that Patsy Clark was heading for Sumpter to kick the Ibez out from under him, his fighting British blood began to get warmer, the gambling instinct, which is inherent in every man, bubbled to the top—and the colonel took a long chance. He closed with Chapman for the Ibez at three hundred thousand dollars—\$10,000 spot cash (Ray had that much on tap) and the balance in six months and a year. It was a good deal, and all men rejoiced—none more than Chapman, who saw visions of a big sawmill somewhere in the heart of an inexhaustible body of pine timber.

As aforesaid, the Ibez cost Hill and Chapman \$65,000. Eleven months had elapsed between their purchase of the property and its sale to Ray. The difference between the purchase and the sale price was \$235,000. This, then, was making money at the rate of \$23,180 per month, or over \$770 per day. Good wages in any camp.

Colonel Ray, when he signed his \$10,000 check and contracted to pay \$290,000 in a year's time, shed his calmness like an ulcer. He was no longer a Phineas Fogg—he was a Yankee gambler—taking a long chance.

Blood continued to stain the Transvaal velt. Every kopje battle made the world shudder, and every time the world shuddered, British money withdrew further into British vaults. By the time the six-months payment was due on the Ibez, Colonel Ray realized that he was up against it—hard. Try as he would, he couldn't "raise the wind" in British financial circles. He was far

too loyal a subject of the Queen to let Americans in on the ground floor, and the result was that he traveled from Victoria to Ottawa, from Ottawa to Quebec, from Quebec to London—and back again—empty handed. He fought to the last ditch, but when the show-down came, Chapman and Hill took back the Ibez, permitted Ray to retain a one twentieth interest, and the incident passed into history.

Hill is still in Saginaw, Chapman is running a sawmill down on the coast, Ray is in his bank office in the British Columbia, and the Ibez is still eight miles from Sumpter. A detail not touched upon in the above recital is that there is a heap of gold in the Ibez. It's vein is narrow, but rich; its shaft is crazy-crooked, but it reaches the ore. Some day when there are no wars nor rumors of wars, some man will snap up the Ibez, and when this occurs, Colonel Ray will get his money back as payment for a big butt-in.

SALE OF BUCKEYE MINE FINALLY CONSUMMATED

W. H. Gleason returned yesterday from Baker City, where he went several days ago to close the deal for the Buckeye group, Cracker Creek district, to a syndicate of Spokane mining men, represented by W. F. Kippen; which was done, the consideration being \$65,000, payable at intervals during the coming year or two. The property is owned by himself and J. N. Doune. It is designated in the deed, now in escrow, as the Crown group.

Mr. Kippen and his associates took a preliminary bond on the property some months since, in order to do a certain amount of work, to show up the ledge. This work has been done, the showing was entirely satisfactory, a cash payment has been made, extensive surface improvements are now being made in preparation for winter work; so it may safely be called a bona fide sale in which real money will change hands.

Mr. Gleason carries around in his pocket a gold button weighing nine pennyweights, and ten grains about eleven dollars, which he panned from four and a half pounds of rock from this ledge, accurately weighed. The Miner has frequently made mention of the fabulously rich ore taken from this property. This was a picked sample, of course, but there is two feet of ledge matter that will run \$500.

The hoist at the Black Butte is working night and day, while sinking on the vein which furnished the Black Butte placers with so much gold.