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RETOLD TALE OF A RICH POCKET IN VIRTUE MINE

Reciting How a Lessee Opened a Blow-Out
of Bull Quartz From Which
\$117,000 Was Taken.

Mrs. Norwood, owner of the Keystone quartz mine, an extension of the famous old Virtue, arrived in Sumpter this morning from Baker City on business connected with the Sumpter smelter, to which plant she will arrange a shipment of Keystone ore.

Since the marriage of Miss Kate McCubben, of Alamo, and the resignation of Mrs. C. M. Koester as superintendent of the Buckeye Copper mine at North Powder, Mrs. Norwood is the only woman mine operator in Baker county. She is an enthusiastic miner, and is possessed of far more than the usual knowledge of veins, lodes, ore deposition and occurrence, dips, spurs and angles and all such stuff. She has controlled the Keystone mine for a number of years, resisting many attempts to purchase made by general manager Arthur Buckbee, late of the Virtue, and General Manager W. L. Vinson, now of the Emma, on an adjoining property. These gentlemen greatly desired to possess the Keystone, upon which sufficient work has been done under Mrs. Norwood's management to show that it carries the main Virtue and Consolidated Virginia lode. When it is remembered that a trifle more than two and a half million dollars worth of gold has been taken from a 1,300-foot payshoot in the old Virtue, ore being stoped above the 700-foot level, it will readily be seen that the owner of an extension of that vein possesses something valuable.

Rather an interesting story is related of one of Arthur Buckbee's repeated attempts to buy the Keystone. It happened in the spring of '01, when Buckbee's Canadian stockholders shut down their Cumberland mine, at Silver City, Idaho, moved its pumping plant to the Virtue, and ordered Buckbee to get a move on and deliver some goods in the shape of bars of gold bullion. Buckbee was given a free but empty

hand; that is, the Canadians refused to dig up ready cash to pay for reopening the flooded 800-foot shaft, and revamp the rickety old twenty-stamp mill. Buckbee was empowered to do everything except to ask for money. He swore around awhile and then settled down to dull despair.

Enter Fred Braze, a Dutchman, owner of the Little Pittsburg claim, adjoining the Chicago claim of the Virtue group. Braze saved both Buckbee's reputation and his own life by discovering a quartz blow-out on the Chicago claim. Buckbee gave Braze a verbal lease on the ground, with the understanding that all ore taken out, grading below \$10 per ton, was to be milled by the Virtue mill at \$3.50 per ton, but that if better ore was found, sixty per cent of the resultant bullion was to be Buckbee's. Braze and a partner sunk a twenty-foot hole on that Chicago blow-out and worked like beavers night and day. However, they sent no ore to the Virtue mill, a fact which caused Buckbee some suspicions. He entered Braze's shaft one day, nosed around the face, surreptitiously pocketed a handful of pulverized quartz found beneath a drill hole, and went away, with Braze dining into his ears the statement that the claim "was boom." "I was yerk for nuddings," moaned the Dutchman.

Buckbee went down to the mill, panned out his pocketful of pulverized quartz, swore luridly, grabbed a gun and fairly sailed back to the Chicago shaft. "Bring that ore down to the mill right now," he commanded. "Vat ore?" innocently asked Braze. "I was have no ore here. I have plenty bool quartz—barren as mud. I take it down, right avay youst now." "Well, you hurry up," growled Buckbee.

Braze hurried—nit. He and his partner put in a night and day sorting ore. All the barren-looking bull quartz was sacked and dragged down to the mill. The other kind

of ore—well, what Braze did with it hasn't been given publicity yet.

Five stamps pounded on that bull quartz. Buckbee stood by the battery and watched every ounce of pulp ripple over the plates. When the cleanup was made the amalgam retorted an even one thousand dollars.

Braze spluttered and gasped. "Donnervetter," said he to his partner in the privacy of their cabin, "Vy in hell did you put in that kind of ore. Ve are rooned!"

Buckbee told the writer about it later. It seems that Braze must have allowed a chunk of gold-lousy ore to find its way into those sacks of bull quartz by mistake.

"I made that Dutchman sit up," continued Buckbee. "I put a couple of men to work on the Chicago, milled out the pocket and cleaned up about \$117,000. One chunk, weighing ninety-two pounds, yielded \$14,000. Four sacks of sorted ore resulted in \$40,000 worth of gold bullion."

Buckbee compromised with Braze by paying him \$2,500 cash for his Little Pittsburg claim, after threatening him with the penitentiary.

With the monee derived from the Chicago pocket, Buckbee reopened the old Virtue, bought 300 acres of placer ground adjoining, purchased the Consolidated Virginia, and made an offer for the Keystone. Mrs. Norwood refused to sell. She did let go of an abutting claim for \$1,500. Buckbee paid her with a check. She wanted cash, so together they went to the First National in Baker and drew the money. Mrs. Norwood swept the entire sum, in gold and silver, into her apron, rolled it up and went home.

The whole region over around the Virtue abounds in such pockets as Braze found on the Chicago. It is a matter of history that Jim Baisley—"Lucky Jim"—the man who located the \$2,000,000 Baisley-Elkhorn mine—opened a pocket on the Mabel mine, in Pleasant valley, sunk 165 feet and took out \$30,000 in gold. Not another ounce has been found in that claim. Across the gulch from the Mabel, Jim Baisley, Porte Coude and W. L. Vinson opened a pocket on the Carrol B, taking out \$12,000. Letson Balliet bonded the Carroll B for \$20,000 and paid \$17,000 before he threw up the bond. The old White Swan was pockety.

And yet the Virtue's big payshoot—1,300 feet long and 700 feet deep—was one of the richest in the Northwest.

News comes from Baker City that the Virtue will resume operations about January, under the management of J. K. Romig, of the Sanger mine, and under the superintendency of a mining man from California.

Teams are still hauling lumber from Sumpter to Craue Flat for Burch & Burbridge's big gold dredge.

DISTILLATE BEATS STEAM IN PRICE

Mountain View Mine Management Highly Pleased With New Mill and Power.

Forty-nine big steel tanks, capable of holding ninety and 100 gallons each, have accumulated at the warehouse of the Basche-Sage Hardware company here, and will shortly be shipped to Colorado to be refilled with distillate, a low grade of gasoline, for the Mountain View mine. Five full tanks per day are moved from Sumpter to the mine and back again empty. Two tanks at the mine hold 10,000 gallons. The distillate is used as a motive power at the Mountain View, where a gasoline engine is used to operate the new quartz mill, now in commission. The Mountain View, under the management and superintendency of Dr. Techow, is owned by a Portland company, and is the latest addition to the list of Sumpter district producers.

Dr. Techow is highly satisfied with the new mill and its power. He says that distillate costs just about as much per horse power generated as wood costs under similar circumstances at \$3 per cord.

Reduction Plant for the Indiana.

J. W. Messner, general manager of the Indiana Copper mine, at Medical Springs, north east of Baker, was in Sumpter yesterday on business connected with the smelter. He was accompanied by J. H. Keller, Percy Brown and J. C. Hurd, all of Mt. Carvel, Illinois, who are stockholders in the Indiana, and who came to Sumpter to be present at a test of Indiana ore made by the smelter. A couple of shipments of high grade copper ore have been made by the Indiana, and the returns have been highly gratifying. Manager Messner states that owing to the high cost of transportation, no further shipments will be made until a reduction plant is installed at the property in the spring.

L. R. Bellman, manager of the California and Cracker Oregon, went up to Bourne this morning on business connected with the latter property, upon which work is being vigorously prosecuted by contract.