

The Jacksonville Miner

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The Editor Speaking

(Continued from page one)

of their years, had Indians, the rush for gold, the fight for mere existence and the job of hewing a home from absolute wilderness to expend their energies on. They could, when imbued with an itch to "take a chance," throw caution to the winds, shoulder a rifle and take a lone jaunt through the woods, join an Indian-fighting regiment or saddle a burro, promote a grubstake and get entirely away from the world.

But today, 1932, what can the young buck with three squares a day (if he's lucky) and plenty of ambition do? Take a chance? Sure—grab a pint of moonshine, jump in a high-powered car and run the risk of landing in the bastille, escape of which might be just as thrilling as saving one's scalp a generation ago. Today every young fellow's biggest adventure generally is his first real "drunk," his escape from modernism and the machine age. Hateful no end, and certainly a vice.

That is just one of the many problems we have, with the aid of our blessed civilization and constant "advancement," placed in our midst and is of our own making. When we settled the wilderness, put redmen on reservations and mechanized our lives we removed those chief outlets of a virile, ambitious race and our children, born of such blood, must look to escape from convention and rationalism for an outlet. And, rather than condemn and punish the younger generation for present circumstances, we should be a bit more sympathetic and tolerant.

And, summing it all up, we suggest for this week's "famous last words" the hackneyed phrase, "It's

a great world!" (Did we hear a second, or was that an off-key Bronx cheer?)

PAIR DISCOVER GOLD RICHES IN CITY CENTER

Cluggage and Poole Not First Discoverers Rich Gulch Millions in Gold

By R. CLAY CHAPPELL

Unfortunately little effort to record the early history of Jacksonville was made until most of the actors in those stirring pioneer scenes had passed away or their memories had been dimmed by remorseless time.

Out of the maze of conflicting traditions that have been handed down it is almost impossible to establish accurately the date and location of the first discovery of gold or even the names of the lucky finders.

As nearly as can be gleaned, in the early winter of 1851 two young men traveling the old Oregon trail from the California gold fields to the Willamette valley camped one night on the little plain where the town now stands. It was then a grassy meadowland traversed by two sparkling mountain brooks and the following morning they found their pack animals grazing along the banks of a small rivulet tributary to Daisy creek.

As one of the travelers stooped to drink of the crystal waters he was startled by the gleam of yellow particles thickly scattered among the grains of sand. It was gold! Virgin gold!

Wildly excited they rushed back to camp for their frying pans and so rich was the deposit that even with these crude utensils they soon panned out several teacups full of the precious metal.

Fabulous wealth lay at their feet yet there were many difficulties in the way of recovering it. Supplies must be secured and, worse, they were surrounded by hostile tribes which rendered peaceful working of the claims impossible. As the only practical solution they struck out for the nearest settlement, which happened to be Yreka, to outfit and recruit a company

strong enough to withstand the savages.

It was now that James Cluggage and J. R. Poole, who are often erroneously credited with the initial discovery, came into the picture. Possessing the necessary capital they outfitted and led the expedition to the new bonanza. Incidentally, from this time on we find no mention of the young men who actually made the discovery.

Arriving late in December or early in January of the following year Cluggage and Poole, with their associates, James Skinner and a man named Wilson, located 400 feet along the stream which was henceforth to be known as Rich gulch.

Despite the utmost secrecy news of the rich strike, where men could rock out a pint of gold per day, spread like wildfire and before spring hundreds of miners had rushed into the district and every available foot of ground was staked out.

As early as February a store was opened in a tent by Appler and Kenney of Yreka. Its stock was rather meager in the necessities of life but there was a plentiful supply of whiskey which was perhaps more important.

The first log cabin was erected at the head of Main street by W. W. Fowler and soon after clapboard houses with real sawed floors and window frames, began to appear among the tents, for a small mill had been built at the upper end of the valley and lumber was also being whip-sawed at the modest price of \$250 per thousand.

By mid-summer the rude mining camp had changed into a solidly established town and with the transformation had come, too, the plagues that thrive upon easy money. Saloons sprang up like mushrooms; gamblers, harpies and slickers of all types flowed into the new El Dorado; faro, monte and roulette flourished unrestrained, and entrancing strains of music and the voluptuous charms of the dancing girls helped to solace the "honest miner" as he parted with his dust.

But notwithstanding the loose and reckless character of a large portion of the population and the fact that the territorial laws had not as yet become operative in the town, crime was exceedingly rare. This may have been due to that higher, sterner law than can be found in any written code and which has so often been invoked throughout the old west for the protection of the pioneers—the peoples' court.

In Jacksonville its findings were singularly just while its decrees were inflexible and its punishments certain.

The first court of this character convened in the camp was in 1852 to consider the case of a gambler, Brown, charged with wantonly shooting to death a miner named Potts.

W. W. Fowler was chosen judge and a jury of 12 men selected. The trial was then conducted in a calm and orderly manner under the rules of right and wrong, devoid of all legal technicalities and when, after due deliberation, Mr. Brown was found guilty he was promptly hanged to an oak tree near the present site of the Presbyterian church and buried on the spot.

The court then quietly dissolved, refusing to claim further jurisdiction, but the lesson was highly effective.

The following year, 1853, so many

disputes arose over water rights and mining claims that the people decided to establish a permanent court and appointed a man named Rogers as "alcalde," after the Spanish style, with unlimited jurisdiction. He soon proved to be incompetent and unworthy of the high position and finally handed down such an unjust decision that the miners rose en masse and angrily demanded its reversal. The alcalde stubbornly held his ground, however, and for the moment they were balked until someone logically suggested that the power that could create an alcalde could also create a superior alcalde. This the miners promptly did, the decision was reversed and justice triumphed.

(To be continued)

● Mrs. D. C. Kunkler of Thompson creek, who went to California two months ago in the hopes of benefiting her health, has become

worse and is in a hospital, according to word received on the Applegate. She and her husband had been residing at Fern.

● Mrs. Harold Nelson and daughter Marcella of Thompson creek are among those employed in Medford's fruit industry.

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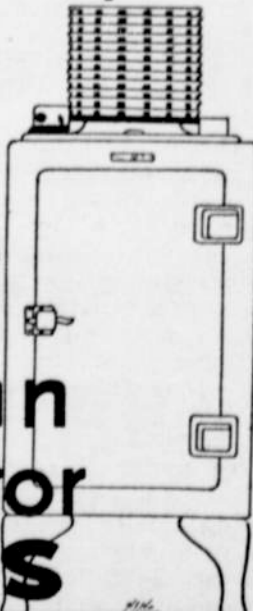
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