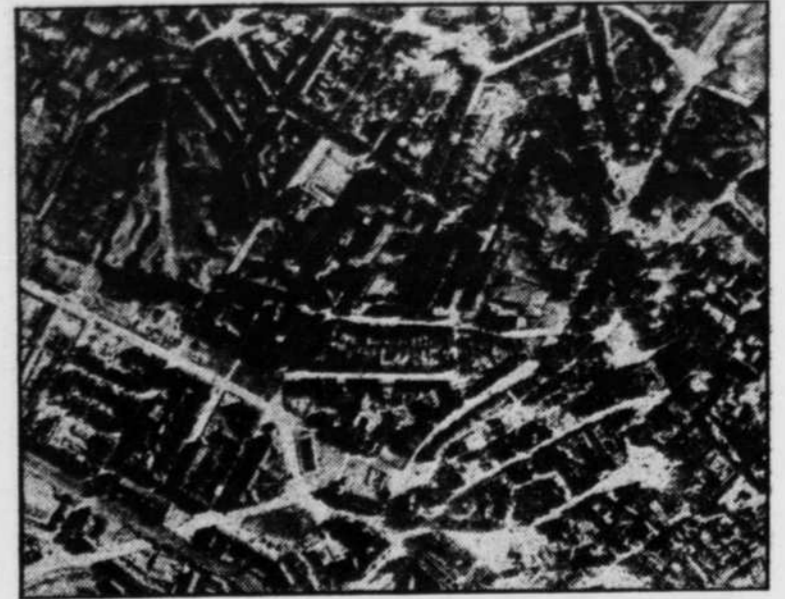


LIFTED from the depths of the mountain lake by winches and chains, the submarine vindicates alleged tellers of tall tales.



A BRASS BAND plays as the legendary "Nautilus" is rescued from the watery grave where it had lain for 45 years.

## A Night Over Essen With R. A. F. Raiders



BRITISH BOMBERS, concentrating on the great Krupp works at Essen, leave the area gutted.

HERE is a slight moon and the sky is patchy with cloud. Good visibility and convenient cover for raiding aircraft. It is what the people of Essen call "R. A. F. weather."

"Wonder if they'll be over tonight," office and factory workers say as they go home. The last raid is still fresh in their memories; it was a grim experience.

At 1 o'clock in the morning the air raid sirens wail over the city. It is the most horrifying sound in the world, the howl of a city which cannot escape its doom. Within five minutes the drone of Britain's latest and most powerful bombers can be heard over Essen. Bunches of searchlights finger the sky and the perimeter guns are beginning to boom.

The first bombs are practically inaudible. They are incendiaries; hundreds of thousands falling in a fiery rain over a dozen square kilometers of buildings. Some are beaten out by the fire fighters while others explode harmlessly in the road. But such a deluge of fire bombs is more than the Civil Defense authorities can handle. Many have penetrated roofs and set buildings ablaze. There are hundreds of good-sized fires. The R. A. F. have achieved their primary object of lighting up the target for high explosive.

The high explosive comes. It is like music by an insane orchestra. The hum of a bomber is heard and then the whistle and shriek of a descending bomb, followed by a crash which shakes every building for a hundred meters around and flattens whole blocks like a child's toy town that has been trampled. The theme is repeated again and again at intervals of a few seconds. The entire factory area rocks as in an earthquake and buildings erupt into volcanoes.

As an accompaniment, defense guns boom and shells go whirling into the sky. Occasionally the city is lit up by a glare more brilliant than a bomb burst. It may be a flare or a falling bomber hit by A. A. gun fire.

In the purely residential districts the people feel fairly secure. The R. A. F. seeks military objectives. But bombs do not always fall where they are intended, and nobody is safe. Houses miles from the danger zone may actually be hit and their occupants injured by dud shells from their own guns. Those who make total war must expect to be in the front line wherever they are.

IN the factory area people rush to the shelters. They get in the way of the fire engines and the rescue work is complicated by accidents that happen to some of them through falling shell fragments or masonry.

At Krupp's there are some explosions which are greater than even the latest block-busters can produce. The fires have evidently reached an explosive store and shot the entire building and adjacent edifices into the air. One huge workshop has its entire roof taken off by the tornado and its lights, now unshielded, offer a new beacon to the bombing force.

For 20 kilometers around Essen the red pulsation of the flames can be seen in the sky. Volumes of reddish brown smoke caught in an air current trail over the countryside. The attacking bombers occasionally use their guns on batteries of searchlights. There is a rapid popping sound and one or two searchlights snap out, their crews dead.

For more than an hour the bombing goes on. The defense is overwhelmed. Adjacent towns, fearing imminent attack, dare not release their fire engines. More distant cities might help, but it would take hours, and meanwhile Essen, the greatest industrial center in Germany, is burning.

The last bomber has dropped its load and its engines die away in the distance. An eerie quiet

# The Ghost of the Mountain Nautilus

By Gene Lowell

THE moniker of "ghost town" is a fighting word to the sturdy folk of fabled Central City, high in the canons of the Colorado Rockies.

They'll fight you, hip and thigh, in the middle of historic Eureka Street, if need be, should you so much as hint a tendency to use the shoddy phrase in reference to their town.

Central City, fabulous one-time capital of the "Little Kingdom of Gilpin," where gold dust poured out of the creeks like wheat from a thresher spout in the days when the West was young, demands that the visitor recognize the specters of its past in the grand manner.

If it's super-ghosts you have in mind, swell. The latter-day soundbatches will show you everything, from the Face on the Bar-room Floor (the original, well protected by shellac) in the Teller House bar, to the place in Russell Gulch where tenderfoot Horace Greeley found a hunk of high-grade and conceived his memorable admonition to young men.

They'll show you the world-famous Glory Hole, into and out of which fortunes poured as fortune seekers blasted and picked at the gold lined innards of Quartz Hill. They'll trot out swashbuckling spooks of a glorious past, always carefully cleaned and pressed, that will sit right down and have a smort with you.

But since the war, with the last of the gold miners kicking the muck off their boots and heading for the shipyards, and with memories of the summer travel of the 30s already beginning to turn the same somber shade of yellow as the rest of Central City's turbulent history, even the super-ghosts were getting a little out of at the elbows and shiny at the seat of the shroud.

SO the folk of Central City decided it was time they modestly admitted they had an extra-special-super-ghost and time that they produced it. And they did it, but big.

From the icy depths of a frozen mountain lake, 9000 feet above sea level, they hauled the time-ravaged hulk of nothing less than a submarine!

A "ub, it was, that had lain on the lake bottom for 45 years, accumulating for itself a lot of seaweed and the libelous repute, in many minds, of being the greatest hoax and the tallest tale in a community where all tales have shown a marked tendency to tower since 1859.

They hauled it out on the pine-shadowed shore of Missouri Lake, three miles up the mountain trail from the Teller House bar, and dangled it in chains to public view while newsreel cameras whirred and a high school band played "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

That's Central City for you. And true to the tradition of the "Little Kingdom," they did it the hard way—in mid-winter, through 16 inches of ice—just to show that Central City ghosts are lusty.

Oldtimers, who for more than 40 years had variously put and took on the growing legend that the "Mountain Nautilus" was a colossal hoax, and that those who claimed they saw it launched on a summer afternoon in 1898 were simply telling

naughties (or the Central City equivalent for those who do), winked sagely among themselves as the dripping hulk rose from the water.

"Knewed it all the time," croaked one bewhiskered prospector from up around Nevada—a really defunct gold camp where the ghosts never had a chance to grow.

"Knewed it all the time," echoed, in chorus, lanky Fred "Smoothbore" de Mandel and gray-haired, eagle-eyed Sheriff Oscar Williams, guiding spirits of the exploration party that found the sunken hulk just after Christmas.

To the oldtimers, the mere presence of the dripping, moldering hulk, hanging in its winch-chains above the hole in the ice from which it had emerged, was enough.

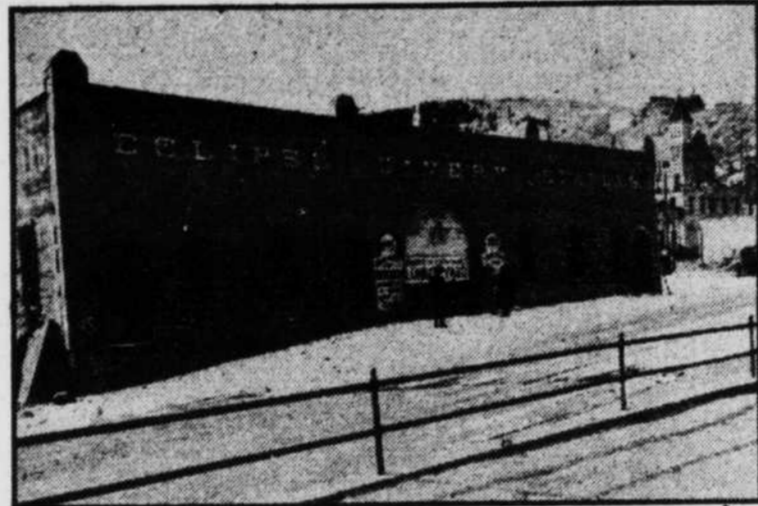
To the newcomers and the visitors, though, occurred the obvious question—"How come?" It takes old "Smoothbore," resident of Colorado since '79 and a son of a pioneer buffalo hunter, to tell the story—along with some assists here and there from Oscar Williams, who was born and reared in Gilpin County and has worn its badge of law enforcement for more than 20 years.

IT was de Mandel who actually found the sub. Fred was a strippling, doing odd jobs along Eureka Street, when first he heard the rumor of "the boat that dives."

A man named R. T. Owens—gold camp contractor, engineer, inventor, but most of all, dreamer—had hatched a crackpot (most everyone agreed) scheme. He reckoned he could build a ship that would sail under water.

The word was passed from bar to bar that there were goin's-on in a shed behind the Eclipse Livery Stable, down below where Eureka Street and Lawrence came together in a sunburst of five saloons.

Billy Lamont and Fred Ballard, a couple of early-day carpenters who had helped build some of the sets for the Opera



BEHIND the doors of this stable the submarine was built, then hauled two miles for launching.

House stage, where Bernhardt, Drew and others had trod the boards, knew all about it.

And, under proper stimulation, they talked—a little. It seems, according to the recollections of de Mandel, this inventor Owens had an idea that he hoped would prove the pudding cooked up by Jules Verne in his book. Owens had dreamed and planned and drawn specifications. Better still, he had received the financial backing of several substantial citizens of the Central City-Blackhawk diggings. Lamont and Ballard were building the boat to Owens' plans in the livery stable shed.

It was 1897, about the same time Simon Lake was tinkering with his historic Argonaut, Jr., grand sire of the present U. S. pig-boat fleet, on the Atlantic coast—but prosaically at sea level. That meant nothing to Owens. Missouri Lake, four acres of nice, deep, glacier water, was just a whoop and a holler from the mountain gulch. What need of an ocean, he apparently reasoned, for just one boat?

So Lamont and Ballard pled their adzes and their whipsaws secretly behind the stable doors and fashioned the chassis of the Nautilus—as good a word as any for a hull built nearly two miles

above the sea—out of hand-made two-by-fours.

SHE was 18 feet long, three and a half across the beam and five feet deep in the middle. Shaped like a fat perfecto, her wooden hull was sheathed with sheet-zinc, soldered at the seams.

Unfortunately, de Mandel recalls, few if any now alive ever looked upon Owens' super-secret—the means of propulsion for the Nautilus, and how, if at all, it was placed.

Equally unfortunate were the circumstances that took de Mandel to another part of Colorado practically on the eve of the launching and, on the very day, took Oscar Williams out on a mail route he then rode over the mountain trails.

Consequently, neither saw the Nautilus take to the water for what was to become probably a world's record for a sustained crash-dive . . . 45 years!

On a huge hayrack the Nautilus, with Owens and his backers pacing nervously beside the rig, made her jaunt up the mountain trail to chilly Missouri Lake. A considerable crowd accompanied the launching party, Williams' stable foreman, the impromptu dock-master, recalled afterward.

AT the lake shore the wagon was backed into the water after considerable jockeying by the jerk-line team that drew it. Owens climbed to the two-foot-square hatch on the deck, opened the trap door and prepared to board his "dream boat."

Friends, horrified at this display of rash zeal, dissuaded him at the last moment and convinced him that the maiden plunge of the Nautilus down the hay-littered ways should be made with none aboard. Instead, she was ballasted with rocks.

The teamsters heaved and ho-ed and in she went. And down. She never came up.

The failure apparently broke Owens, heart and spirit. Sheriff Williams says he learned in later years that Owens died "somewhere in the east," a disillusioned man.

And so the legend of the Nautilus was hatched. Sundry subsequent drownings in the glacial waters of Missouri Lake gave the pond an evil name. Stories grew—sponsored largely perhaps by parents who wished their young to give it a wide berth—about mysterious riptides and bottomless caverns within it.

Few if any cared to risk a dive beneath its waves for any purpose, least of all merely to confirm whether a good tall tale, to be spun winter nights around a roaring fire at Ramstetter's store, was worth its salt.

Then came revival of the "Little Kingdom." The diggings were close to empty, but in the lusty pageantry of the camp's history a group of Denver intellectuals saw a means to preserve a little bit of the past. They refurbished the ancient stone opera house where Bernhardt, Duse and Mansfield had played. They blew the cobwebs off the Teller House bed where President Grant had slept and put on clean sheets. They formed the Central City Opera House Association, back in 1931, and each succeeding summer until the war, sponsored an opera season with world-famous stars in the old theater.

WITH the war, things lagged again in Central City. No opera. Even the remaining hard-to-come-by gold was a non-vital metal. But the association still had Fred de Mandel and his convictions about the Mountain Nautilus.

Things seemed pretty dull, old "Smoothbore" decided, so he went hunting for a ghost.

On Jan. 10 they found it with their pike poles. She was lying in 15 feet of water, about 10 yards off shore. The rest was merely a matter of rigging heavy hoisting gear and beating the tocsin up and down Eureka Street.

Chains and winches creaked. Up came the weed-draped snout of the Nautilus through the cracked ice of the hole that had been sawed for it. Rock ballast showered from the rotted, leaky hull. Her zinc hide was in tatters from corrosion. Her strakes and beams were water-logged and blackened. Nothing but twisted rods and pipes, so eaten by rust that their original purposes were beyond determination, remained inside as the vestigial relics of the super-secret of Owens' dream boat—What was supposed to make it go?

The Nautilus is drying out in a backroom of Sheriff Williams' garage. Soon as she's cleaned up she will become a museum piece—another marcher in Central City's pageant of super-ghosts.



SHERIFF Oscar Williams, foreground, and Fred de Mandel, who were instrumental in raising the "Nautilus," examine the sub's rusted hull.

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