

# News of Western Mining Activities

## Mountain City Mine Starts Drilling Deep for Copper

Development of a copper-producing district of the first importance in northern Elko county is in immediate prospect as the result of new activities in the Mountain City and Cope district, where deep churning drilling is in progress on property of the Mountain City Consolidated Copper company and where engineers of the geophysics division of the US bureau of mines are conducting an extended geophysical survey.

This survey, said to be one of the most comprehensive in area to have been undertaken in the west by the federal bureau and results of which are expected to appear shortly in bulletin form, covers the western extension of the broad copper belt from which a large production has been made in late years in the Rio Tinto mine of the Mountain City Copper company, an Anacosta unit.

**Large Area**  
Adjoining the Rio Tinto property on the west, the Mountain City Consolidated claims cover a large extent of the gossan-capped copper belt, in which three separate ore zones of channels have been exposed by surface work accomplished by stripping with bulldozer.

Churn drilling equipment of the most advanced design and capable of sinking to great depth is now operating at this point, the first hole having reached a depth of over 350 feet at mid-week. This hole, drilled on the most northerly of three parallel ore zones, will be continued to at least 650 feet and other holes will be drilled on all three of the copper veins or channels.

Study of the district geology, both on the surface and in underground workings, indicates that below a depth of 500 feet the

drill will reach the permanent water table and the sulphide zone, in which the high-grade copper ore of the adjoining Rio Tinto mine is found in massive bodies, more than 100 feet wide in places. It is the purpose to continue drilling for some distance below the water table and the point of transition from oxidized to sulphide ore.

**High-Speed Drilling**  
With the high-speed drilling program well under way, the Consolidated management is completing preparations to sink a main working shaft to depth at a point indicated by the drilling to be within the most highly enriched area.

The drilling is conducted by A. E. Hosack, drill contractor of Nampa, Idaho, while M. E. Bohannon, manager for the Consolidated company, is on hand to direct the sampling of sludge and to prepare equipment for shaft sinking. Drill crews are reported working three shifts daily.

Operating plans of a half-dozen or more companies, organized several years ago to acquire claims in the district, are said to depend upon the results of drilling now in progress and officers of these companies, some of which are controlled in other states, are reported to be planning active development if results are favorable.

The Mountain City Consolidated Copper company is an all-Nevada corporation, organized and owned by Nevada men and with offices in Reno. A considerable area was added to the original holdings around three years ago. George B. Thatcher, Reno attorney and mine operator, is president, and Pat Mooney, deputy US internal revenue collector for Nevada, is secretary and treasurer.

## Homesteading in This State Is Showing Marked Decline

CARSON CITY, Sept. 23 (UP)—Homesteading, a practice which helped many agricultural sections of Nevada, has almost disappeared within the last few years, most of the suitable lands being purchased either by private interests, corporations or by state and its subdivisions.

Extent of the decline in homesteading was revealed in a report made public here by the general land office in Washington, D. C., in which it was indicated the greatest drop in homesteading public lands in Nevada occurred between 1934 and 1935.

Showing a gradual decline from the year 1930, a total of 49 homesteads were taken in 1934 and the following year only 11 were registered in the state.

Most of the homesteads have been taken for use in stock raising and most have been recorded in entries of 160 acres.

**Disposal of Land**  
Besides disposal of public lands through other means than homesteading, private acquisition of available water supplies in arid states such as Nevada has discouraged further settlements on the public domain.

Some quarters believe the decrease in homestead entries due to passage of the Taylor grazing act; however, the land office figures indicate homesteading in Nevada already plunging into a decline as early as three years before passage of the act in 1934.

In 1931, when the decline became more noticeable to the land office, it was thought the deepening depression might encourage settlement on free lands, but it apparently had little effect.

The decline in homesteading is not peculiar to Nevada, the report continued. It is a condition prevalent throughout all the public domain states where remaining public lands are largely unsuitable for agricultural purposes.

It was, in fact, this steadily increasing depletion in acreages which led, in part, to the formulation of national conservation policies embodied in the Taylor act, the report said.

Among these policies was the requirement all public lands, before subject to disposal by the government, must be classified as suitable for the use to which the homesteader wished to put it.

**Offers Protection**  
Rather than acting as a direct discouragement to homesteaders, this measure has actually protected many from undue financial risks and probabilities of failure when they were prevented from entering lands which could not possibly support them, the report maintained.

During 1930, 146 persons took

homesteads in the state, totaling more than 47,000 acres, 37,000 of which were taken for stock raising purposes. The following year the number had dropped to 101 homesteads on 29,000 acres.

In 1932, Nevadans homesteaded 140 acres of forest land, the only instance of such lands being taken within the last several years. That year, a total of 81 homesteads on 25,538 acres were entered on the books of the land office in the capital.

Nevadans took 82 homesteads on 27,000 acres in 1933 and in 1934, the year before the big decline, took 49 entries on 13,329 acres of range land.

Eleven homesteads were registered in 1935 on only about 2000 acres and the following year only three were taken on 872 acres. The decline has continued to the present with only one or two registered annually.

Within the last 14 years a total of 483 homesteads have been filed on 148,226 acres of Nevada lands and more than one-half of those were on lands to be used only as grazing ranges.

## Use Reindeer in Packing Supplies In Arctic Circle

FAIRBANKS, Alaska, Sept. 23—Continued development of asbestos at Shungnak by the Arctic Circle Exploration company gives promise of the possible establishment of a permanent industry even though it may not be a big one according to J. P. Robbins, general manager of the company, who spent several days here recently attending to a number of business matters.

The deposit was discovered last year at the crest of a 3,000-foot hill. Exploratory and development work has been continued since with promising results. The ore is tremolite and is used extensively in the manufacture of filters.

**Reindeer Replace Dogs**  
Difficulty in moving materials and supplies to the top of the hill has been a heavy handicap. Dogs were used for a time. Men carried 60 pound packs on their back but this has been to slow and expensive.

Next the company is going to try an interesting experiment, Robbins said. Twenty reindeer have been obtained and a reindeer pack train will be organized. It proves successful transportation difficulties will be solved.

The company is also interested in the development of other minerals. It has uncovered a deposit of quartz crystals, samples of which have shown high value. These are a necessity for radio and intricate telephone communication systems. The extent of the deposit has not been determined, but exploratory work is still in progress.

The company's main business is gold mining.

## Lost Mine Gave Up Fortune; Its Location Mystery

TONOPAH, Sept. 23—Lost mine yarns are always acceptable, not only to Nevadans but to men everywhere, and the number is legion. Not many of these yarns are laid in Nevada proper, but we do have the Breyfogle and others, says Clyde Terrell, Tonopah mine operator.

But here is one from Mexico. The facts back of this story are indisputable, for I'm giving names, dates and the name of the bank which figured in the episode. Here it is:

One evening in the summer of 1922 a weary prospector driving a burro limped into the El Tramado mine camp in Sonora, Mexico. He asked to be put up for the night and later told the late D. E. Coughanour, mine superintendent, what sounded like a fantastic tale of a rich gold deposit in the Altar desert within two days travel from the El Tramado mine by burro.

**Gold Dust, Nuggets**  
Coughanour was skeptical until the old prospector produced over 70 pounds of gold dust and nuggets. Some of the latter weighed an ounce or more. He told the mine manager that he had found the gold in a small mound, and there was enough of it to make a dozen men rich. From the prospector's description Coughanour figured the deposit had been a large outcrop or chimney of hematite which had eroded to some extent, leaving the free gold on the surface.

Coughanour melted the 70 pounds of gold and ran it into a bar. Assayed, the bar was worth some \$20,000 under the old price of gold. A day or two later Coughanour took the prospector and his bullion to Nogales, Arizona, where the prospector left the gold on deposit with the First National bank. He promised to return to the El Tramado mine as soon as he finished some business up north, presumably in New York, and agreed to take the mine operator to the scene of his rich find.

The prospector never came back to the desert. Coughanour in time closed the El Tramado mine and waited for months for the old desert rat. Finally he had to leave but as late as 1941, I believe, the bullion brought up out of the mysterious depths of the Altar desert still reposed in the vault of the First National bank of Nogales. By this time, however, it is likely the gold has been escheated to the federal government for lack of a claimant.

## Bandits Rob Stage Carry Off Big Bars Of Silver Bullion

Away back in 1868 it wasn't very safe to ship anything of value via stagecoach, as bold bandits often "stuck up" the driver and carried off all valuables they could lay hands upon. The following, taken from the Reese River Reveille, Austin, June 11, 1868, demonstrates how daring the bad men really were in those days:

**Robbery of the Overland Stage**  
—It will be seen by the dispatch from Virginia City of this date, published in another column, that Wells, Fargo company's stage was robbed by three men six miles east of that city at 11 o'clock last night. The robbers carried off the bullion and "went through" the passengers for about \$1,000 and two gold watches. Following are the names of the passengers who left there for the west on the afternoon of the 9th instant, and who were undoubtedly plucked by the robbers: Miss Susan J. Hodgson, D. B. McGee and wife, J. W. Heath, Bernel Dougherty, and Antonio Aguayo. Mr. McGee was for some time a resident of Belmont and Dr. J. W. Heath was an old resident of this county.

**Two Bars Recovered**  
Friday evening, June 12—Two of the bars recovered. We learned today through telegrams received at the office of Wells, Fargo & Co. in this city, that two of the bars of bullion stolen by the robbers of the stage near Virginia City on the night of the 10th instant, have been recovered. Besides stealing the bullion the robbers obtained \$100 in coin belonging to the company, and two gold watches. There is reason to believe that the larger part of the coin was taken from D. B. McGee, lately of Belmont, who left his city in the stage of the 9th instant with \$1,000, which he preferred carrying about with him in paying one per cent for a draft on Virginia City. The robbers are believed to be the same rascals who stopped the stage at Desert Wells last summer, and kept the driver and passengers tied for several hours. One of the telegrams stated that there was no prospect of recovering the third bar of bullion. It was the product of ore from the Murphy mine of the Twin River company, and shows the peculiarity of being about 650 fine in silver and one-fourth in gold.

## "Imitation Money" Without Gold Backing Is in Danger

Prestige of bank notes is on the wane everywhere outside the United States and England, in spite of the fact that nearly all currencies of the world today are subject to systems of complete government control, systems established to protect them politically and economically, as well as strategically in the case of the belligerents. And once the war is over, the world probably will face a new wave of devaluations beginning with monetary systems of the defeated axis nations, says Barrons. Continuing, that publication comments as follows:

Over the entire continent of Europe, in North Africa and the Near East, in India and the Far East, distrust of paper money has been spreading since the beginning of the second world war. Any intelligent traveler returning from the lands between Dakar, which lies at the westernmost tip of Africa, and Chungking at present the last outpost of the allies east of the Tibet, will tell you that gold is the only means of exchange accepted for any goods or services beyond bare necessities. Precious stones are a second choice. In the Indian bazaars the price of gold is the equivalent of \$63 per ounce, compared with the official level of \$33 in the United States.

**Rooted in History**  
The reasons for the attraction of gold are rooted in history. Every currency that has ever existed was either devalued or destroyed in time. In 146 B. C. at the end of the Second Punic War, the Roman senate was forced to devalue the "AS", and that was not the first case of coin clipping on record. Since then, there have been hundreds of devaluations. And after each such event, the aim of governments, whether open or secret, continued to be the return to gold as the currency base. For gold has a record of stability of value, or increasing value, dating back more than 2000 years. It has never been devalued.

The second world war is nearing its end. The victory of the

United Nations can no longer be doubted. Only a few people, however, realize that one of the probable consequences of the war will be a new wave of devaluations.

The cost of the second world war already can be estimated at three times that of the first world war, which was followed in about 18 years by the destruction or devaluation of every currency, even those of countries which were not belligerents.

**Define Currencies**  
After each devaluation, currencies must again be defined or given a valuation in legal terms. The Hindu merchant in Bombay as well as the French farmer or the Greek wine dealer, and the Egyptian cotton exporter, and the Chinese trader — all these and many others will want to know how much the money in which they transact their business is worth in gold. They will not be won over to either Banco or Unitas or any other paper currencies. Gold is the international measuring rod.

The best currencies of the world, therefore, will be those which may be exchanged for a fixed amount of gold at any time. Such was the case 400 years ago, when the goldsmiths of London created the first gold certificates, which were fully covered by gold and represented the first important, sound paper currency. No substitute for their invention has yet been discovered.

## New York Mining Men Buy Big Group Goldfield Claims

Goldfield mining men are interested in the report that certain mining interests, presumably of New York origin, are active in acquiring by purchase from Esmeralda county and by supplemental locations, an extensive group of claims lying below the old Goldfield Consolidated mill site and Klondyke on the Tonopah and Goldfield railroad. This area is assumed to cover the drift of wash and erosion from the rich hills of the Goldfield mining district which is credited with a total production of some \$130,000,000 gold during the lifetime of the camp. The idea back of the operation is the belief that somewhere along the course of the wash that winds down into the desert from the hills of the famous old camp, placer gold will be found concentrated.

**To Start Drilling**  
M. Millstein is the man responsible for the fresh interest manifested in the Goldfield area. Millstein spent several weeks acquiring the property involved, but is now in New York, where he was suddenly called by wire. He stated in Goldfield before he left that two complete drilling outfits had been ordered and would shortly be in operation on the claims acquired, and that the property is to be thoroughly prospected.

It is said that other operators in the past, with the same idea in mind, tentatively prospected the area below the rich hills of Goldfield in the hope of locating commercial placer accumulations, and while results were negligible, some gold was actually found. It is possible that a drilling campaign, intelligently directed, might bring to light an area big and rich enough to warrant extensive mining operations.

## Seldom Seen Is Slim of Ballarat But Still There

BISHOP, Cal., Sept. 23.—Sun-baked adobe walls crumbling back into the desert dust, a lonely loping herd of wild burros wandering in the brush-strewn streets, and the nearly obliterated graves of a hardier generation are all that remain of Ballarat, hustling, tough, little gold camp of the '80's, in the desert lands of southern Inyo.

A tourist mecca in pre-war days, the ghost town seldom sees an automobile these days unless it is the duty "C" card-bearing pickup of a modern-day prospector. Ballarat isn't completely deserted now, however.

According to recent visitors, it has four semi-permanent residents among whom is the gaunt, bearded prospector, familiar to southern Owens Valley residents, named Seldom Seen Slim.

The old town once had a lot of people, old-timers say. In 1880 Ballarat boasted 800 inhabitants and was the supply center for Panamint City and other smaller and long-forgotten camps in the vicinity.

**Had Boothill Cemetery**  
That some of the inhabitants remained — though not for long — is attested by the town's "Boothill" out in the desert across from the jail with its heavy wooden doors and steel bars. There lie buried 12 of the booted, gun-toting prospectors who once made Ballarat their headquarters. Seldom Seen Slim says he knows for certain that the occupant of one of the graves died a natural death.

Center of activity in the old town of Ballarat was Chris Wick's saloon and pool hall. Its interior lies open to the sky — the roof long since caved in, and in recent months partly salvaged by a man who has a chicken ranch down at Ridgecrest.

In a niche in the adobe partition of the crumbling building is a rusty old steel safe, bearing the name "Dominguez Etcharrren" across its top in gold letters. Etcharrren, according to old-timers, was the original builder of the saloon.

Door of the safe is in the street, twisted and battered by the dynamite charge of a more-recent gold seeker.

And yet, with its ruined walls, on which lizards lie basking in the sun, and the deserted streets, interior-crossed by winding coyote tracks, the forlorn old town has a conscious air of picturesqueness, as if waiting for the day again when the war's end will bring a stream of tourists to pity and to photograph its despair.

## Indium Ore Now Worth \$10 Ounce

Resembling aluminum in metallic form and within late years designated as a "mystery" metal, sources of which are still unknown to the prospector, indium is a very soft, heavy (specific gravity 7.28), silvery, easily melted (melting point 155 degrees C.) metal that boils at red heat.

According to Dyer as recently as 1924 it took several months to round up a total of one gram of the metal at a cost considerably higher than that of platinum — \$10 a gram. The present price is \$10 an ounce.

A little research showed that it was a stabilizer for certain non-ferrous metals and when sizeable quantities of indium bearing ores were found in Mohave county, Arizona, the deposit was explored by shaft and drifts.

This property, which is owned by the Indium Corporation of America, is reported to be able to supply large quantities of the metal. However, the potentially large production of indium from metallurgical residues more than suffices for current needs.

## Recalls Bad Old Days of Oil When Bullets End Trouble

By ROBERT B. SQUIRES  
PITTSBURGH, Sept. 23 (UP)—Some old timers refer to the good old days but one old-time oil well driller thinks differently. James Whitfield, itinerant "caser," now living near Black Rock, Pa., has, in his active 86 years, seen all kinds of holes "come in." Starting his career in this state, he later drifted to Oklahoma and Texas. His accounts of early day mushroom towns around these "diggings" include the now famous Osage sinkings.

Law was still a thing for the lawless when he got there, he said. Ludes was what people talked about until the fellow got shot; then the townsmen chipped in and gave the deceased a nice burial.

Whitfield said the Osage wells came in bunches. Practically anywhere a hole was sunk, "black gold" came pouring out.

**Fought for Keeps**  
In those early days, Whitfield lived with two cronies called Lobo and Mex Pete. They worked hard, fought for keeps, and were usually left alone.

Boom-towns and Indians followed these sinkings everywhere. He recalled the Oh-saw-gee Indians parading down a mud-morass called Main street in all their finery. They were looking for trouble and usually got it.

Whitfield said there were bad and good "injuns," but "both looked very nice dead."

When the pipes were run, he said, trouble usually started. He remembered a small town called Lone Hole. Mex Pete and Lobo went there to help bring the well in — an entirely different operation then from the crane-lifting and steam-fitting of today, as all of it had to be done by hand.

Lobo was knifed over a quarrel involving 30 cents. Mex Pete quit his job to look for his friend's murderer.

**Knifed Wrong Man**  
The last time he saw Mex Pete was in an improvised morgue alongside another hairy individual called "Seagar." He said he learned Mex Pete had knifed the wrong man and was shot for his pains.

When asked about women of those days, he grudgingly admitted:

"Some were the toughest, hell-fire females I ever saw. A woman was no good in the field unless she could hold her own."

Whitfield said people who

grumbled now about high prices should have known those days. He paid \$2 for an egg, \$1.50 per slice of ham, 30 cents for a potato, and 30 to 35 cents for a weak cup of coffee. The usual grease-joint restaurant meal was from \$5 to \$10.

With all the rioting, feuding and killing, the town people had a very nice church which was full every Sunday.

"They had a woman preacher. Everybody called her 'Reverend' and I never did know her right name," he said.

It was almost fatal not to go to church. The reverend did some good. She stimulated the people to bring about law and order, open up new businesses and start living decently. Osage, in later years, thanked the reverend for her efforts.

LEADVILLE, Colo., Sept. 23—The old mining camp of Kokomo to the north of Leadville is developing into one of the richest mining districts in the west. The Lucky Strike tunnel operation, financed to a great extent by small interest buyers, made the discovery that has put Kokomo on the map again after almost 40 years of inaction. The prospect tunnel known as the Lucky Strike struck rich silver, lead, zinc ore from which more than 15,000 tons have since been shipped to the smelters. This strike made in 1941 started a new mining boom at Kokomo and now several operations are under way.

The richness of the silver, lead, zinc ore opened in the Lucky Strike prospect started a rush for properties in that district. The American Smelting & Refining company, realizing the tonnage possibilities of the ore body, stepped into the picture and entered a contract for the purchase of the Lucky Strike property. This Lucky Strike ore has carried consistently high values, a smelter settlement sheet showing a return of 31.9 ounces silver and 51.4% lead or about \$53 a ton. To this is added the government premium of \$23 a ton. This 35 ton car brought \$1700 from the smelter. Mining men at Kokomo are predicting that ore shipments from the Lucky Strike property will total \$1,000,000 or more.

**Fortune in Ore**  
After the contract was entered into between A. R. Rhine et al of Denver, owners of the Lucky Strike property, and the American Smelting & Refining company, a controversy developed over labor and materials said to have been furnished the smelting company by Rhine. To settle this claim the smelting company has given a quit claim deed to Mr. Rhine for that portion only of the Washington patented claim that lies above the present level of the floor of the tunnel. The quit claim does not include extra lateral rights below the tunnel or outside the block of land involved.

The American Smelting is driving a lower tunnel to contact the rich ore body at depth and is said to have diamond drilled into the extension of this Lucky Strike ore body between the original Lucky Strike tunnel above and the lower tunnel where the smelting company has laid heavy rails and installed a mechanical loader to speed up work. It is stated by mining men familiar with these operations that the smelting company is certain to ship a large tonnage from its workings. Lucky Strike shipments are said to total approximately \$150,000 to date with only a small fraction of the Washington claim owned.

## Nevada, Utah Ore Tonnage Increases

A summary compiled by the Salt Lake Tribune shows that one output of Utah mining properties and districts and Pioche in Nevada last week include the following:

Bingham: U. S. Smelting, Refining & Mining Co., 587 tons; American Smelting & Refining Co., 540; Combined Metals Reduction Co., 496; Utah Copper Co., daily average of 863 85-ton cars.

Park City: New Park Mining Co., 1105 tons; Park Utah, 110; Silver King Coalition (concentrates), 272.

Tintic: Chief Cons., 22 carloads; Tintic Chief (lime), 2; Tintic Standard, 11; Mammoth, 10; Eureka Lilly, 3; Utah Fire Clay Co. (silica), 2.

Pioche: Ely Valley mines, 1294 tons; Pioche mines, 615; Combined Metals Reduction Co. (concentrates), 1184; Bristol Silver, 300; Salt Lake Pioche, 62.

**ENGINEER VISITS ALASKA**  
ANCHORAGE — W. A. Richardson, mining engineer for the Kennecott Copper corporation, was here while on a field trip for the company. He has been studying coal and mining possibilities in the Anchorage area. For many years he was a resident engineer at Kennecott.

**BILLY BRAND**

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT'S THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER? YOU READ ABOUT HIM AND YOU'LL SEE.

INDIA RUBBER FASCINATED CHARLES GOODYEAR AS A BOY.

YOU COULD DO WONDERS WITH THIS GUM ELASTIC IF ONLY IT DID NOT STICK TOGETHER SO.

ONE WINTER HE TRIED MAKING SHOES OF RUBBER, BUT THEY MELTED THE NEXT SUMMER.

DOGGEDLY HE KEPT TRYING DIFFERENT CHEMICALS MIXED WITH CRUDE RUBBER, ONCE SUCCESS ALMOST SMILED.

MRS. GOODYEAR WAS RIGHT. THE MAILBAGS MELTED TOO. TIME AND AGAIN THE INVENTOR WAS JAILED FOR DEBT.

AS SOON AS I GET OUT OF HERE I'LL TRY AGAIN.

UNCLE SAM WANTS 150 MAILBAGS TREATED BY MY GUM ELASTIC PROCESS.

O CHARLES, IT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!

ALMOST DESTITUTE, GOODYEAR KEPT ON EXPERIMENTING IN THE KITCHEN.

THAT YOUR BREAD IS BAKED, MY DEAR, LET ME USE THE OVEN FOR MY RUBBER MIX.

HEAVENS! WHAT A HORRIBLE SMELL!

ONE DAY HE ACCIDENTALLY LET SOME RUBBER MIXED WITH SULPHUR DROP ON THE RED-HOT STOVE.

LOOK! IT DOESN'T MELT! IT'S JUST CHARRIED AND NOT STICKY!

FIVE HARD YEARS HE STRUGGLED BEFORE PERFECTING THE PROCESS USED THE WORLD OVER TODAY.

CALL IT I'LL VULCANIZATION AFTER THE ROMAN GOD OF FIRE.

YOU OUGHT TO GIVE IT YOUR OWN NAME. YOU'VE GIVEN YOUR LIFE TO IT.

GOODYEAR DIED A POOR MAN, BUT HIS INVENTION MADE HIM THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER TODAY.