

ORE IN BEAVERHEAD

COUNTY IS LADEN WITH MINERAL AND OTHER RICHES.

HAS SEVERAL GOOD MINES

In Addition It Contains Oil and Coal—Much Development Work Done There During the Summer—Had First Gold Dredger.

With reference to the mines and oil fields of Beaverhead county and vicinity the last issue of the Dillon Examiner says:

It cannot be truthfully said that the year now drawing to a close has been a progressive one in the mining industry of this county. Still, there has been considerable work done in mining circles and the annual product of precious metals will compare favorably with any one of recent years. There have been no new fields save the petroleum shale of Jeppits, opened up, but the old districts have been producing steadily and several hundred carloads of ore have been shipped out of the county. To the best knowledge of the Examiner there has not been a pound of ore treated in the county this year, all mined having been sent out of the county for reduction.

Lead and gold are the principal minerals produced in this county, the lead coming from the Argenta and Hecla districts and the gold from the Grasshopper, where the dredges made a successful run the past season.

Hecla the Best Producers.

The Hecla mines were the best producers of the year, several hundred carloads of galena ore being shipped from the Cleve and other properties to Omaha and Denver. The group owned by the Hecla Consolidated Mining and Milling company has been a famous producer in the past, having yielded, since their discovery, over sixteen millions of dollars worth of ore and paid dividends to the amount of nearly \$3,000,000. The mines are still producing and it is said that the annual dividend will soon be declared. Hon. Henry Knippenberg is president of the company and George B. Conway is the courteous gentleman who looks after the affairs of the company during the greater part of the year.

Stir in the Argenta.

In the Argenta district there has been more than the usual stir during the past few months, a large number of leases being at work. Throughout the year carload shipments of ore from that district

have been of frequent occurrence, and it is said that nearly every carload yielded good returns. At the present writing at least a dozen leases are being worked and with one or two exceptions, all have ore in sight, which is being taken out for shipment. Some little work has been done on the placer claims in that section, but the gold produced is not as great as in years past, mainly on account of a scarcity of water during the placer season.

Not the Proper Seald.

In the northwestern part of the county is the Vipond district, rich in gold, and with an abundance of fissure veins. The Queen of the Hills is the principal mine of the section and it has been developed by a shaft nearly 200 feet deep. Considerable ore has been shipped from the district in times past and one or two deserted mills show where attempts have been made to reduce the ore on the ground, the wrong process being tried. Quite a number of Butte people are interested in this section.

Just Across the Line.

Just over the line, in Madison county, the Stone Creek copper mines have been opened up to some extent by several Chicago companies, but as yet little is to be seen except a good surface showing. The Montana Copper and Gold company had quite a large force of men at work throughout the past summer. The shaft on the Ballarat claim has reached a depth of 200 feet with all indications favoring the opening up of a permanent copper ledge.

Quiet in the Blue Wing.

The Blue Wing district has been unusually quiet this year and at present there is scarcely a pick being struck save for representation work. A number of the claims in this district, as well as in Argenta, were surveyed for patent during the year. The New Departure mine, owned by the L. A. Brown estate, has been the best producer of that section in years, and that was closed down early in the spring. At present there is not a pound of ore being shipped from the district.

Polaris a Good One.

In the Lost Cloud district the Polaris, with its long history of ups and downs, is the principal mine that has yet been discovered. It is now under lease to J. E. Morse by former Governor Rickards and John MacGinniss of Butte. Until a few months ago there was quite a force of men at work on the property, driving an upraise to connect the lower tunnel with the upper workings. When this upraise was completed the men were all laid off temporarily, it was said. This upraise, it is claimed, revealed one of the best ore bodies ever found in the mine. The Polaris has been famous in the past for the extent and richness of its ore bodies. The bond held by Messrs. Rickards and MacGinniss will expire in the early spring and it is confidently predicted that the gentlemen will then take it up and develop the mine on an extensive scale.

Elkhorn, famous since the early days of the county, is another district which has had a quiet year. A few months ago about 40 claims were bonded to a representative of Hon. W. A. Clark, but little work, save that necessary for representation of the claims, has been done in the district this year.

Some recent discoveries have been made on Bald mountain, but their character has not yet been revealed, as the discoverers are very reticent about telling of the extent and richness of their claims.

Best Little Mine in State.

One of the most persistent producers in the county is the Indian Queen, situated in the Birch Creek district, and which has been under a lease to Butte parties for two years. It is said to be one of the best little mines in the state, that the ore found in its depths is rich in copper and gold. There are several other claims in the same district which have excellent surface showings, but the Queen is the only one upon which much development work has been done.

In that same section one of the biggest iron mines known in the state is found. The ore is strangely magnetic, and in the early days of the best smelter, a considerable quantity of this ore was hauled to Glendale to be used for fluxing. Later on, however, a better fluxing ore was discovered in Soap gulch, near Melrose, and the Birch Creek iron lode was abandoned.

Mineral in the Big Hole.

The Big Hole basin has been opening up considerably as a mining section during the past few years, the main range of the Rocky mountains having offered an inviting field for prospectors. The Saginaw mine, owned by Dunc Wadams and leased by Butte parties, is said to be one of the best in the county. It is situated on the South Fork of the Big Hole river, near Jackson. The ledge has been tapped at a depth of over 300 feet, and a vein of copper ore two and one-half feet wide has been developed. The mine has been equipped with a steam hoist and a smelter for the reduction of its products is among the possibilities of the coming year.

On Swamp creek, also in the basin, is situated a mine which promises to be one of the greatest producers of the state. It is named the Ajax, and is owned by J. J. Morse of this city and A. J. Noyes of the Basin. It has been developed by two tunnels and a shaft, the latter having a depth of 60 feet, the tunnels being 60 and 30 feet respectively. The ore has a value of 30 to 75 per cent. In load and from \$4 to \$1000 in gold. In places the ore bodies have a width of eight feet. During the past year considerable ore has been taken out and hauled to Divide for shipment. In another column of this paper is an excerpt from the Big Hole Free Press, telling that 2500 sacks of ore have been taken from the mine recently, and all of it assays over \$100 in gold to the ton. To facilitate the working of the mine over 12 miles of wagon road has been built. A tramway 800 feet long was erected during the past summer to connect the mine with the new wagon road.

Throughout the entire Big Hole mountains excellent copper prospects are found, Jahnske Bros. and B. O. Fournier having recent showings. On the claims of the former a diorite reef stands sheer against the skyline and in places it is several hundred feet high. At a distance of 1000 feet away the green copper stains which pervade the cliff can be clearly distinguished. This diorite reef is in a formation of granite and stratified porphyry. Ten tons of high grade copper ore are on the dump of one of the properties owned by Messrs. Jahnske in readiness for shipment, and it will probably be sent out of the basin next summer. In order to get the ore to the wagon road it will have to be carried a distance of three miles on pack horses. On Miner creek several promising gold claims have also been located, and on the other side of the mountain on the Idaho side a great deal of development work was done during the past summer. Steel creek is another part of the basin which is beginning to attract attention by its mineral wealth.

In several parts of the Big Hole promising placer properties are being developed, and it is said one of the best dredging propositions in the state is found on Battle creek.

Had the Pioneer Dredger.

In dredging for gold Beaverhead county was the pioneer of the country. The first gold dredges that ever proved a success were erected on Grasshopper creek. The four boats which worked in this county last season had excellent success and the cleanups were regular and valuable.

Oil Prospects.

During the past few months more than a little excitement has been aroused over the discovery of prospective oil fields in Smallhorn canyon and thousands of acres of land, claimed to be oil bearing, have been located in the southern part of the county. An oil well is now being sunk in Smallhorn canyon, and it is expected that the existence of a lake of oil underlying the Smallhorn section will soon be established.

Graphite Deposit.

Not the least of the new developments of the past year are the graphite deposits in Van Camp's canyon, which have been worked to some extent by the Crystal Graphite company. The group consists of eight claims and the vein, which is continuous through the entire eight claims, varies from 12 inches to 4 feet in width, and is in one of the oldest geological formations. The graphite is found in nearly a pure state and some of the blocks weigh as much as 10 pounds. Van Camp's canyon is the only place known in the United States where graphite in a crystal form is known to exist. During the summer three test shipments were made to Eastern points. These shipments varied from a thousand pounds to a ton. One of them was sent to the Dixon Crucible company, Newark, N. J., and that firm reported that it is equal to the best grades imported from the Island of Ceylon, and to be superior to any other graphite mine in this country. At last reports the company had about 10 tons of this material on its dump in readiness for shipment.

Coal and Silica. Coal is found in several parts of the country, but its development has been limited to a little "gophering" and the extent of the beds are not known.

The best silica rock found in the state is taken from the quarries in Ryan's canyon. In the Big Hole canyon large quantities of excellent lime rock exist, and are mined to some extent. Building stone of excellent quality is found near Dillon, and the discoveries of the past year would seem to indicate that Beaverhead's resources in a mineral way have just begun their development.

HARD LUCK STORY

WALTER C. BOOMER RELATES ONE OF THE FINEST.

SUES RAILROAD FOR \$2,000

Wants Damages for a Long List of Woes and Misfortunes Which He Lays at Northern Pacific's Door.

Walter C. Boomer has sued the Northern Pacific Railway company for the sum of \$2133.80, which he claims in damages, and thereby hangs a dolorous tale of the misfortunes of a man seeking work, if Boomer's complaint, filed in the district court, tells the truth.

Boomer sues "for money paid for a ticket at Whitehall, Mont., \$4.50; for storage charges at Phillipsburg, Montana, \$1.05; railroad fare from Silver Bow to Butte, 25 cents; eight days actual lost time, at \$3.50 per day, \$28; damages for loss of job at Phillipsburg, \$400; for damages caused in the way of hardship, suffering and injury to health from exposure, \$1000; for pain, suffering and humiliation caused the plaintiff by reason of being ejected from train of defendant company at Silver Bow, Mont., as alleged, \$500; for penalty provided by the statute of the civil code of Montana, section 977, the amount of \$200; total, \$2133.80."

Details of Complaint.

In his complaint Boomer says that the railroad company, on the 30th of last November, in consideration of his having paid his fare, which he says he did, "undertook and agreed as a common carrier, to transport, safely convey and deliver the plaintiff and his baggage" from Whitehall to Phillipsburg, Mont., and issued him a ticket, good from Whitehall to Phillipsburg, for \$4.50.

He alleges that he was not allowed an opportunity to read the conditions on the ticket; nor to learn of the time limit on it, and that the defendant, contrary to the section of the law named, placed a time limit on the ticket that made it impossible for him to reach his destination while the ticket remained good.

Boomer says that he placed his baggage in the care of the railway company and rode on its train to Butte, and that at Butte he was told by its agents and employees that he would have to change cars and stay over in Butte till the next day, which he did; and that the next day, when he came to the railroad station at 10:10 a. m. he was told by the station agent that the train had gone at 9:35, instead of 10:35, as the agent had told him the day previous.

To Stay Over.

He was told then, he alleges, that he would have to stay over to the next day, and this he did, but was ejected from the train at Silver Bow by the conductor, who refused his ticket and said it was not good any more.

The conductor asked him for his fare, he says, but he had less than a dollar, and he was compelled to return to Butte, where the agent told him nothing could be done for him in the way of getting him transportation to Phillipsburg.

He goes on to relate that he had been offered a job at Phillipsburg and had accepted it previously to this, and was on his way to get it.

So, he says, he set out to walk to Phillipsburg from Butte, and that after he started "the weather became inclement and snow fell to such an extent as to render walking a matter of great hardship and suffering."

Boomer alleges that he walked two days and nights and reached Garrison. There, from physical suffering and hunger and cold, it became impossible for him to proceed further, he says, and he remained in the station at Garrison for three days, "with but little food, suffering greatly from hunger and cold, and without sleeping accommodations."

Job Already Taken.

Fare was furnished him after that, he alleges, by the man who had directed him to apply for the job, and he bought another ticket over the Northern Pacific and finally came to Phillipsburg; and then, to cap the climax, he found another man had got the job that was to have been his.

But that was not all Boomer says. The railroad did not find out that the ticket covering it had lapsed, and it did not eject his baggage.

In view of all the troubles and hard luck narrated he asks the amount in damages named.

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