

SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 17, 1907.

LEE DISTRICT LIKE THE DAYS OF FORTY-NINE

Rich Strikes Attract Many Miners

Rough Life in Wide Open Towns Resembles the Early Days of Frontiersmen in the West

BY STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nevada has been the "Back of the Beyond" for many years. Within the rim of mountains that has cut her off alike from moisture-laden winds and the civilizations that have grown up on each side of her, the Great American desert has been a no man's land, a land peopled only by driftwood, by wrecks from eastern cities, by adventurers in whose blood are the germs of a great restlessness—Tumais, whose hands are against the world and against whom the world's hands are turned.

The wagon trains of the first emigrants led westward by the lure of California gold, found in Nevada only barren wastes of sand and salt-waters in which many sickened and more died.

There was little to change the hereditary distaste for the desert country in the minds of the coast dwellers until the discovery of gold, when the country, like a great closed book, began to have written in it the stories of Tonopah and Goldfield, and now the tale of the goldfields of the south of Bullfrog, and of Echo-Lee, under the shadow of the Eulien Funeral mountains.

Hears Stories of Riches and Death

A month ago I went into the southern mining country, expecting to find a waste of sand and cactus. Instead I found mining camps in which the life of California of '49, of Klondike of '98, and of Nome a year later, is being lived over again; for the strikes on the Gilt Edge, the Gold Grotto, the Hayseed, Tulip, Stateline and Storm Cloud have attracted the fortune hunters of the country.

In the saloons of Rhyolite, Beatty, and Las Vegas stories of rich strikes, of miners dead on the desert with pockets filled with specimens of \$10,000 ore, of fortunes lost on the turn of a card at the faro table, are on every lip, and on every face is written the story of the constant hope that leads men to pass their lives in the out of the way corners of the globe. Travelers are inoculated with the virus, and from Las Vegas to Rhyolite, the talk of the trains is of strikes, of high-grade and dips. This was my introduction to the country.

We were due at Rhyolite at 6 o'clock, but long after the sun had tipped the western peaks and the hills had changed from brown to lavender and had run the kaleidoscopic gauntlet through purple and violet, to velvet black, and the stars—bright as stars only on the desert, had come out to shed a ghostly light on the interminable desert stretches, we rolled and bumped, rattled and jarred across an uneven road bed toward the western hills.

Desert Flyer Arrives

It was 10 o'clock when the combination brakeman, conductor of the "desert flyer" cashed in his checks in the poker game in the rear section and announced the approach of Rhyolite. We stretched ourselves thankfully and began to gather up the day's accumulation of newspapers and magazines. Brakes creaked and rattled, escaping air whistled through the pipes, the long line of freight and the outside wheels grunted ominously, a tented station slipped past the murky window panes, and we in the single passenger coach and baggage-smoking car crowded out onto the narrow platform.

On the bottom step one hotel runner grabbed my suit case and another my overcoat. A frantic fox terrier assailed my legs, and from the driver's seat of one of the biggest and best of the motor trucks that has ever been my pleasure to view, Dick Whittemore, millionaire and in civilization a club man, waved a brown-paper cigarette at me.

Reaches Best Hotel

My baggage rescued from the hotel men, the machine, minus muffler and exhaust pipes, as are all "desert rats," gave a few premonitory explosions and backed out of the crowd for the quarter-mile run from the desert siding to the metropolis of the southern mining country—Rhyolite.

At the first blush, Rhyolite is not attractive. A tent does duty for ticket office, a baggage room at the station, and in spite of a stove in the winter and a liberal supply of sprinkled water in the summer, managed to keep a fair representation of the outside weather at all seasons of the year.

At the Southern hotel we found a wooden building with telephone partitions, which was erected two years ago at a cost of \$65,000, when lumber was hauled overland from Tonopah at the rate of 5 cents a pound and when fittings and furnishings cost in proportion. Down stairs there is a bar, a lunch counter and an office, while above are "suites" of single rooms in each of which there are two beds, a wash stand, one towel and room for one dress suit. I sat on the bed to undress and went out into the hall to wash.

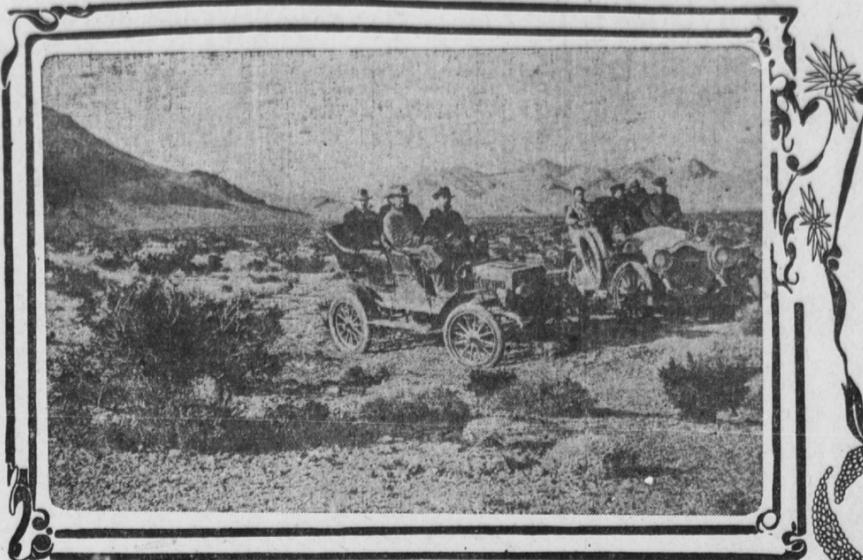
Britisher Wants a "Bawth"

No one is allowed to occupy a room alone and with the privilege of a room, an added "bawth" of single rooms in each of the establishment the night clerk, who is also barkeeper, charged us \$2.50 each for the cots, while an English tourist who arrived hot-foot and hot tempered from the station two minutes later was laughed at when he asked for a "private room and bawth" on the office floor. I learned subsequently that "bawths" are obtainable at the local barber shop at the modest rate of 75 cents each.

A mining camp is at its best at night, or worst, according to the view point, and Rhyolite is no exception to the rule, especially on pay day. In the "99" club, the biggest gambling institution in the southwest, the low room was packed with miners, mechanics, prospectors and millionaires, dressed alike and with no distinguishing mark about them. Around the roulette wheel, the faro bank and the crap

DESERT A NEW LAND OF PROMISE

ON THE DESERT NEAR LEE



ORE STACKED AT LEE, WITH GUARD

TYPICAL PROSPECTORS LEAVING RHYOLITE FOR LEE (Center) NEW TOWN AND INDIAN CAMP

able the men were banked three and four deep, those on the outside leaning over the shoulders of those in the front rank to place their bets.

Sizes Up the Crowd

From behind the roulette wheel an old acquaintance, a "square" gambler from Alaska, greeted me and wished me the luck of Nome, and as I climbed up on his stool in the corner behind the wheel he pointed out to me the men of note in the room.

He told me of Billy Brun and the first Lee strike, of Thomas and Leavitt and the lost burro that led the way to the famous "Burro" mine, and as he talked I could read in the faces of the men in front of me the stories of long years spent on many deserts and in the camps from Kotzebue to Mexico.

It was only by the faces that one could tell the occupation of the men, for only the tenderfoot was complacent in his dress, and that because he alone wears the "typical costume" of the desert.

In the prospector there is the clear eye, marked with little wrinkles in the corner, which comes from looking long upon great distances, the tough, leathery, weather-beaten skin marked with deep set lines around the mouth and nose from long exposure to desert sun and storm, the slow speech of one accustomed to much silence and the springy, tireless step of a man to whom a hundred miles is nothing.

The miner is a different type. Bull-necked, clear eyed, with the pale, clear skin of the underground worker, the great hands and corded arms that can manipulate a drill or swing a sledge through an eight-hour shift, he still has energy enough left after the day's work for a round of the dance halls and gambling saloons.

Boomers, clerks, i. nkers, brokers, all were in the crowded, smoked filled hall, not so much for the love of the game as for the sociability that it afforded, for in your mining camp the evil is a

make believe. There is an absence of the degenerate, the hanger-on and the tout that is refreshing after a visit to similar places in the great cities, for, as my friend, the dealer, whispered to me, the mining country is only a place for men that are men, and the weakling must either stiffen his spinal column or get out.

In the dance halls there is the same esprit de corps of the desert, and the absence of saturated vice that exists in town. The very frankness with which conditions are accepted removes from them much of the odium that must attach.

To Take a Desert Ride

It was almost midnight when we wandered back to the hotel and Whittemore received a message from the Lee district down on the Death valley slope of the Funeral mountains that spelled another stampede.

He came to my room 'just as I was turning in and, sitting on the side of the bed, read to me the now famous note, "We have struck it rich in Lee. Better come."

"Do you want a desert ride in the morning?" he asked, and nothing loath, I accepted, for a little of the fever of the desert air was in my blood, and all night long I rolled and tumbled, dreaming strange dreams of fabulous wealth, and storm, the slow speech of one accustomed to much silence and the springy, tireless step of a man to whom a hundred miles is nothing.

It was scarcely daybreak when the night clerk called me and, leaning me a heavy corduroy coat from the office, reported that the machine already was waiting.

Others on the Same Journey

A cup of scalding coffee swallowed hastily and a sandwich tucked away in a side coat pocket served as breakfast. Then we were out into the clear, gold air of the desert morning, for the coast down the long hill through Bullfrog and out into the Amargosa desert, while the acetylene lamps of the machine threw fantastic shadows on the

road ahead and formed weird guardian figures of the sagbrush along the way. Then it was dawn on the desert with the great machine snorting and rocking, rolling and bumping over the uneven trail, while the eastern sky changed from white to crimson, from crimson to rose-shot yellow, and the sun peeped from over the valley that stretches away to the southeast, from where the fogs from Salton sea drifted in like surf across the rolling sage.

We had hoped that we were far and away in the lead of the race that we knew must follow, but hope was without foundation, for as soon as the sun dissipated the mist dust clouds strung out across the desert as far as the eye could reach marked the position of outfits that had started for the new Golconda while the night was yet young.

Kindness to Lone Prospector

One by one we overtook and passed them. The first man that we reached was a weakened little Irishman with a pack of food and water on his back, and in his eyes a great hope, and because our hopes were high and the day was young we picked him up and for hours he regaled us with stories of the road, of strikes that he had known and booms through which he had lived, fortunes that he had made and lost on the turn of the card, while through it all ran a great faith in the future.

There were many outfits along that road, of strikes that he had known and booms through which he had lived, fortunes that he had made and lost on the turn of the card, while through it all ran a great faith in the future.

The country is a great one. Whittemore characterized it as "a great belt of quartzite twenty-five miles long and two miles wide, lying between line dykes."

In this quartzite are the gold, copper and silver bearing ledges, but because of the leaching of the ores there is little value to be found on the surface.

Prof. Aughey of the United States Geological survey, the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Nebraska reported that in this district a depth of ten feet should give values that constantly increased with depth and it was the publication of this report that set the mining country by the ears, for the Lee district had been prospected for years without showing surface values great enough to warrant mining under the difficulties at-

"a damned shame! That tenderfoot can't take care of himself or her, let alone that baby. Look at the way he has that wagon loaded. All the weight is on one side, and his horses are hitched too short."

It was noon when we topped a gentle rise in the valley and with the steam pouring six inches from the hot water tank of the engine came upon the half dozen tents that mark the town of Lee. Luncheon of ham and refrigerator eggs, from which the ice had long since melted, cost us \$1.50 each, and before the sun was an hour in the afternoon sky we were on the ground where the Hayseed and Stateline strike was made—the first strike in the new country.

Along the side of the canyon wall the guide took us to where a great outcropping of ore marked the ledge, and before night options upon the Tulip group above, the Hayseed strike had been obtained.

There can be no question about the richness of the Lee district. On the Gilt Edge property they took me up to a wall of rock and in a great ledge of quartz told me to knock off samples wherever I chose. The samples were the richest I have ever seen, for the free gold fairly coated the specimens, and in the deeper color of the quartz were little nuggets that ran from the size of a pinhead to that of a lead pencil rubber.

It was the same way on the Tulip group, on the Hayseed and Stateline,

BULLFROG; RHYOLITE

The first location, the Bullfrog claim, was made on August 9, 1904, by "Shorty" Harris and E. L. Cross, the first ore uncovered giving returns of several hundred dollars to the ton in gold and silver, the ore being green and blue stained quartz, showing free gold. The subsequent rush resulted in the making of a territory approximately fifteen miles long by ten miles wide. Numerous rich strikes followed, and today there are twelve producing mines, immense deposits of ore blocked out and many excellent prospects under development.

Geology and Ore

The country rock is diversified, including porphyry, rhyolite, quartzite, lime and granite, porphyry and rhyolite predominating. The ores occur principally in quartz, manganese being especially prominent. Pale deposits are frequent, of which there is no less than phenomenal. The ores are invariably free milling, prospectors depending almost solely upon the pan to determine value, and as a rule silver is associated with the gold. Rich shoots of shipping ore are frequently encountered, yet the strength of the district lies in the many immense deposits of milling ore, the values of which are far above the average of the world over. The country is well marked, dykes and ledges being traceable for miles.

Settlement

Rhyolite, platted in February, 1905, is the metropolis, being larger than the other towns in the district combined. Beatty, four miles east of Rhyolite, is next in importance, with Bullfrog, one mile south, Gold Center, five miles east, and Milton, four miles east, of importance as named. Rhyolite has a population of 3500, with 5000 people in the entire district.

Improvements

Rhyolite has daily mail and auto service from Goldfield, seventy-five miles; daily mail from Beatty, five miles; express, telegraph, telephone exchange, two banks, newspapers, modern hotel, three water works systems, paid fire department, improved streets, large stores, fine residences. It is the natural center of the district, being located "in the center of the golden horseshoe, the heart of the mines." The Las Vegas & Tonopah railway has been completed from Las Vegas on the Salt Lake route to Rhyolite, a distance of 125 miles, and will be extended to Goldfield seventy-eight miles further, as rapidly as possible. The Bullfrog-Goldfield railway has been completed to within fourteen miles of Rhyolite, and is expected to reach Rhyolite by February 15, 1907. The Tonopah & Tidewater railway is being built from Ludlow on the Santa Fe to Tonopah via Rhyolite, and is now completed to Kingston, below the mouth of Amargosa canyon near Death Valley. This road will also be built as fast as possible, giving the Bullfrog district three railroads—a record breaker for Nevada mining camps.

Five mining projects are assured, with private mills by the Shoshone Consolidated, Tramp Consolidated, Mayflower and Starlight, Gold Bar, National Bank, Happy Hooligan, Gold Bullfrog and other districts. The district is also assured of electrical plants for power and lighting purposes; the poles are now being set and our principal places of business are already wired.

With the immense deposits of milling ore, together with rich shoots of shipping ore, no opened, the district will output an enormous tonnage for years, and the opening of the mines is only commenced. With three railroads the transportation problem will be solved, and with the abundance of water now piped into the heart of the mines the water supply is unquestionably adequate. These three factors combine to make the future assured.

Rich Camps to the South

Rhyolite is not dependent on the Bullfrog district alone for her supremacy. Other camps are springing up in Southern Nevada and Eastern California, that are all tributary to Rhyolite's great destiny.

The Lee and Echo districts, located on the Nevada-California line, about twenty-three miles southwest, are tributary to Rhyolite, and a first-class road has been built, at the expense of the citizens and mining companies, so that supplies can be hauled at a minimum of expense.

The same holds true of the Emigrant Springs district, where the famous Skidoo and Granite Contact mines are located. These are also connected by a new road and a large majority of the supplies used in the Greenwater district are bought in Rhyolite.

Small Pointers

Population on January 1, 1907, conservatively estimated at 5000. Situated in a mountainous desert in Nye county, Nevada; eight miles from the California line and twelve from Death valley.

Distant 100 miles south of Tonopah, seventy-two south of Goldfield and 125 miles northwest of Las Vegas. Altitude, 3573 feet.

Climate at this season of the year (January) delightful. June, July and August are warm, but even in mid-summer the evenings and nights in Bullfrog are cool and pleasant.

The tent era has passed. The buildings now going up are costly and substantial stone, brick, adobe and frame. Nine hundred miners employed. Scale of wages—Miners, \$4.50 to \$6.00 a day; laborers \$4.50; waiters, \$5.50 a day; printers, \$5.00; carpenters from \$1.00 to \$1.50 an hour; painters from \$1.00 to \$1.50 an hour; chauffeurs, \$7.00 a day; plumbers get \$1.50 an hour; machinists, \$1.50 an hour. Eight hours constitute a day's work.

Rhyolite is the metropolis. Population about 3500. Accommodation good. Good meals 50c and up. Rooms for 75c and up. Fish, vegetables and other table delicacies, meats, etc., always found in local market.

WOMAN SAVES LODGER FROM BEING ASPHYXIATED

C. H. Hotchkiss, a laborer, living at 208 East Fifth street, was found unconscious in his room yesterday morning by the landlady, Mrs. Anna Hoff. The room was full of gas and the woman was nearly suffocated before she could drag the man to a window in the hall, where she revived him.

Mrs. Hoff was awakened about 4 o'clock by the sound of groans. She hurried into the hall and was attracted to the man's room by the smell of gas. Opening the door, which was unlocked, she was nearly overpowered by the rush of gas which met her holding her way to the bed she caught hold of Hotchkiss and dragged him out to a window.

Hotchkiss was taken to the receiving hospital, but was soon able to go home.

TO KEEP LOOKOUT IN RESTAURANTS

Insure Cleanliness in Public Kitchens

Inspection of restaurants is on the card for this week. Mayor Harper expects to begin the work through the health department at once.

Thousands of men and women eat all three meals regularly in the public eating houses, with tens of thousands partake of at least one meal daily in the city's restaurants. Los Angeles has more restaurants in proportion to its population probably than any city in the United States.

Because of numerous recent cases of ptomaine poisoning growing out of the use of fish, meats and canned goods not in the best of condition, it has been decided to keep a sharp lookout on restaurant kitchens. Regular inspections will be maintained.

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