

In January, 1865, I came to Helena to help pass the idle winter when all was frozen up in Alder Gulch. The Last Chance mines were then attracting much attention for their richness, and the climate was so mild that season that there was scarcely a day's interruption of mining, which was going on lively in Dry Gulch, whence the dirt was hauled in wagons to be washed.

The few masons who found one another soon began to hold occasional meetings which ripened into an organization. We sent to Colorado for a dispensation, which was a long time in coming in those days of stage coaches.

I don't think we had the dispensation more than three months, during the first of which we could do no work, before it was necessary to return it to Colorado if we would get a charter. We were urged to apply for a charter although we had not conferred the three degrees, for we had not held the dispensation long enough. Through the favorable representations of Brothers Frary and William Porter, who had both been W. masters in Colorado, we were enabled to secure a charter.

Reference to Colorado Proceedings shows our dispensation was issued to us July 10, 1865, and that it had been returned with petition for a charter October 25, 1865. In the Grand Lodge of Colorado, November 7, 1865, on motion of Brother Legendry, upon a favorable report of a committee of which Brother, now Senator, Teller was chairman, charters were voted to both Montana and Helena lodges. It was the very last of the month before our charter reached us. We began housekeeping in a hall similar in location, substance, furniture and carpeting to my first recollection of the hall of the Virginia City Lodge.

When work began in Helena lodge there was a boom in time. We met nearly every night and worked until early in the morning, conferring as many as seven degrees in a single session. With such a rush of prosperity we should have been well content, but the brethren in Virginia City were anxious to organize a Grand Lodge, to which we assented with more indifference than reluctance. The invitation which the Helena lodge accepted named the time and place Virginia City, January 24, 1866.

Brothers Sealy and Mathew, wardens, with myself, took the mid-winter ride; it was fine sleighing. In due time we reached the busy metropolis of the Territory. We were warmly received and sumptuously entertained for those times. Brother Hull, W. M., of Virginia City lodge, was keeping hotel and running a grand gambling hall, which did not comport at all with my ideas of Masonic propriety.

We found a good deal more said about who should be Grand Master than about the formation of a Grand Lodge.

It was a hot and stormy time from the moment we reached the hotel in Virginia City until we left one week later. In that little company from the three lodges there were Hull, Frary, Sanders, Langford, Boyce, Starr and myself, who have since borne the honors of Grand Master, besides Brothers Duncan and Potter, who have so long and zealously served Masonry in exalted positions. Dick Kennon was at that time Secretary of the Virginia City lodge, and W. A. Clark, who has since been connected with a lodge in Helena, and afterwards in Deer Lodge, and has borne and passed the highest honors that the jurisdiction of the craft had power to bestow, was then a member of the same lodge.

In the heated strife, at least on the part of Brother Hull, to be Grand Master, there was much time and many words spent on the question whether Brothers Boyce, Connell and Langford, who had been Past Masters before coming to Montana, should be admitted to membership. Before the Committee on Credentials could report on this part of the subject matter that had been committed to it, a resolution offered by Brother Frary had been adopted, transforming the convention that met into a Grand Lodge. Brother Duncan, of that committee, became so disgusted with the wrangling and the unintentional discovery in our proceeding without its report, that he left for his home in Nevada, declaring that he would have nothing further to do with the proceedings. It seemed at the close of the first day that the attempt to form a Grand Lodge would utterly fail. I was appointed with Brothers Sealy and Connell to try to bring back Brother Duncan, that we might go on harmoniously.

There was some pretty free expression of opinion on the evening of the first day, and if I had been as near my home as Brother Duncan, I might have gone as he did. A night's sleep put us all in better humor. We took a morning's ride to Nevada, and Brother Duncan, who, if he is something quick to take offense, cannot carry it long, came back with us. We went diligently to work with a constitution of Colorado, and soon had a copy of our own, almost a literal copy.

The vexed question of Past Masters was settled by admitting them as honorary members. There were only nine votes at the first election, and Brother Hull had one majority for Grand Master, Brother Frary was Deputy, myself Senior Grand Warden, and Brother Sanders Grand Secretary. We had more officers to dispose of than there were members, so that those who went for office had a sure thing of some degree of success. Brother Boyce acted as installing officer, and Brother Robertson, later Grand Master of Utah, and now deceased, as Grand Marshal, not Grand Master, as the minutes read.

We were no sooner organized than we received a petition for a lodge at Nevada, which was granted the day following, and the officers were installed on the evening of the same day.

To illustrate the work, the several degrees were conferred upon Mr. C. M. Davis, without his being elected in any lodge, by virtue of the Grand Master's prerogative, a rather poor precedent.

Brother Dwinsdale gave us a short but very appropriate address, and we closed in more harmony than we had met or acted in. It was the sprouting of the acorn that will some day make a mighty oak.

It seems but a few days since, and yet Hunna, Davis, Dwinsdale, Sedman, Goldberg, Maupin, and Lawrence, of the brethren then affiliated, are gone, and others are scattered far and wide. As I sit to write these things of the founding of the Grand Lodge of Montana, many interesting incidents come back to memory, but I shall be a trespasser if I detain your patient readers longer.

#### THE SILVER CREEK MINES.

The Dead Penobscot and the Live Gloster.

Uncle "Tommy" Cruse and the Drum Lummon.

By RANDALL H. KEMP.

It has been two years since I gave you a report of this district for your Holiday paper. Since that time circumstances compelled me to be away from here the greater part of the time and since my return I have had no opportunity to get any reliable statistics of the production of the prominent mines. Then the owners and managers are more reticent than formerly. Therefore, for the above reasons, my letter will not be so full of information as formerly. If it was not for the far famed reputation of the Drum Lummon and the extensive improvements being made at the Gloster, this section would seldom, I fear, be heard of in the outside world any more.

#### THE PENOBSCOT

mine, that made such a furor a few years ago, as the world well knows, was shut down last spring and the machinery is being sold as fast as purchasers come along. There are a great many different opinions expressed in regard to this mine, and as I am not a champion for either party. I can only give my opinion, and that is that the company ceased working in a lean spot and lack either the funds or grit to go down and get pay ore below. A little over three years ago when John C. F. Randolph, an eminent and reliable mining expert and engineer of New York City, examined and made a report upon this property, he ventured the prediction that when they sunk through the slate and struck into the granite formation that the vein would be far better than ever and more true. To prove his theory he cited the Belmont mine, only three miles distant, which lead already demonstrated this fact. Instead of going on down in the granite the Penobscot company ceased working when that formation was reached, because the quartz was nearly barren, as though the Creator ever formed a mine without

waste as well as pay ground. Such is the melancholy condition of this once heralded Penobscot and here we will leave her until the confiding stockholders rally and strike it again below.

One half mile south of the Penobscot Messrs. Chadwick, Chumassero and Tatem, of Helena, have a number of mining claims, several under U. S. patent. Two developed into paying claims. A number of hundred tons of ore have been crushed at Mt. Pleasant, yielding handsomely. Mr. D. B. McKillican, of one stamp mill fame, has just finished one of his mills on the property. This mill is a great improvement on the one Mr. McKillican had at Basin City, and crushes double the amount of quartz. The mill has not been running long enough for one to form a proper estimate of its value as a cheap method of reducing ores. However, the "pony mill" has the right sort of men interested in its welfare to bring its merits before the public. The Mount Pleasant mines, as far as I can learn, are about the same as two years ago. Cotter & Hickey's 10 stamp mill has been partly employed on ores from Chumassero and Tatem's mines and on quartz from the Blue Bird and Hickey lodes.

#### THE BELMONT

company has added 10 stamps to its mill making 30 in all, which are kept busy on rock from the Belmont mine. This company has been fortunate enough to secure of a competent superintendent, (a very necessary adjunct to a successful mining enterprise, which fact unfortunately has yet to be learned by some eastern investors in Montana mines,) and in Mr. Baldwin the Penobscot company can rely as a man who understands his business and strictly attends to it.

#### THE GLOSTER

is about the only mine in this whole section that has shown signs of a very healthy growth in the past two years. In that time it has come into the possession of the Boston and Montana Co., who have energetically worked and opened up the lode in good shape. I doubt if there is a mine in the world opened up in finer style and better timbered than the Gloster. Everything is done just exactly right, and nothing for the benefit of the mine or its proper and convenient working is left undone.

The mine has been proven up in length along the vein and in depth sufficient to justify the company in putting up 70 additional stamps, making 90 in all. The 5 stamp mill built by the original owners has been increased to 10 stamps and the mill is now undergoing enlargement to hold 10 additional stamps, making 20 in this building. This mill will reduce all the ores above the tunnel level, which pierces the hill quite near the works and taps the vein 100 feet in depth. A large four compartment shaft has now attained a depth of 200 feet. A cross-cut south a few feet penetrates the vein. From this shaft the ore is mined that runs the 60-stamp mill. One half will go down the gulch which is connected with the mine by one of the finest tramways in the west. The new 60-stamp mill of this company is second to none in the world. I have visited the Alice at Butte; the Algonquin at Hasmarek, near Phillipsburg, and many fine wet and dry crushing mills in the Western States and Territories, but must say the new Gloster mill eclipses them all. Everything from the ore house to the lower floor, where stands the magnificent 175 horse-power engine, is about perfection for utility and convenience and could not be improved upon in this day and generation. Like a great many others, your correspondent has had misgivings as to the future of the Gloster mine, and as to the probability of its justifying the outlay. I have made inquiry of both practical and theoretical men and all are sanguine of success for the company. They claim the vein has every indication of permanency and great value, 1st, because it extends for such a long distance along the surface; 2nd, the increase of quantity and uniform quality of the ore as depth is obtained; 3rd, the extraordinary uniformity and evenness of the walls, showing it to be a true fissure vein. This lode can be easily traced on the surface for a distance of over 8,000 feet, to my own knowledge, and carries gold in paying quantities, wherever an opening has been made in that length. The roster of the company is as follows: L. R. Netire, General Superintendent; W. C. Child, Assistant Superintendent; Alex. Swan, mining captain; Theo. W. Fisher, architect and millwright. Near the Gloster are a number of excellent mines some of

which are quite well developed but have made no progress in reducing facilities in the past two years. I will leave the Gloster with its 80 stamps crushing 100 tons of quartz per day and bring the reader out of Pilegan gulch and back on Silver Creek to

#### THE DRUM LUMMON,

the greatest and yet the smallest concern in Lewis and Clarke county. In the past eighteen months everyone has heard of "Tommy." Without the Drum Lummon "Tommy" would probably never have been heard of, and very probably without "Tommy" no one would have heard of the Drum Lummon.

Two years and a half ago I mentioned in the MINER that Mr. Cruse was a reticent and unostentatious Irishman. The former quality has increased, and except he has changed his woolen shirt for an immaculate linen one, with collar and cuffs to match, and a seal skin cap takes the place of the old mud-begrimed slouch hat, "Tommy" is the same as when with hard knocks, perseverance and the hope that leads on the hardy prospector he was opening up that vast treasure vault, the Drum Lummon. One thing must be said about Mr. Cruse before we leave him and attempt a description of his mine, and that is he attends strictly to his own affairs and runs his little 5-stamp mill with all the energy of a money-making honanza king.

The Drum Lummon, as Judge Goodwin of the Salt Lake Tribune expressed it, "is the largest surface showing for a mine in the world." The developments of Mr. Cruse are confined to the centre of the location. A cross-cut tunnel cuts the vein something over 100 feet in depth, and a shaft from the surface connects with it. Drifts have been run along the claim, and a cross-cut shows the ledge to be 80 feet in width. What the quartz averages the entire width ask the howling winds as they sweep down from the snowy range two miles distant, for "Tommy" will never tell you nor allow any of his employees to divulge the secret.

Outside the Drum Lummon location the vein appears to split both east and west and form numerous spurs or feeders, many of which are large veins and carry good ore. The "Marble Heart" company, which, by the way, is a wealthy one, think they have the main westerly extension of the Drum Lummon and intend to prove their faith by their works in early spring by running a tunnel through the western end of Mr. Cruse's location and tap their mine about 200 feet deep. This company means business and is abundantly able to furnish all necessary bonds as required under the right of way act for mines. Ten stamps at the Whippoorwill, which run during the summer and hang up in the winter, complete the number of stamps in this district.

As I have continued this letter to such length I shall not attempt a description of the district, but we have about fifty that will be heard from when the good time comes and the boom is upon us in full force. Mr. Cruse has other good mines outside of the Drum Lummon, which would no doubt make Marysville a second Butte if worked, but it will be three or four centuries before they will have much notoriety, judging from the way they are progressing now.

Another year may work wonders on Silver Creek and to that end we are living in hopes.

Virginia Hotel—C. H. Flske, Proprietor.

A few months ago this gentleman purchased this well known establishment on Main street and since it has been in his hands it has not only maintained the reputation made for it by its former proprietor but has become the best house of the kind in the West. The elegant two-story brick occupied is the newest and most commodious in the city. The upper story is divided into a number of rooms which are nicely and neatly furnished, and let to lodgers at reasonable rates. The greatest trouble is that they have not rooms enough to accommodate the amount of custom that is continually pouring into the house. The bills of fare include everything that can possibly be procured or shipped to this market. Mr. Flske sparing neither pains nor expense in procuring them. Mr. Flske has had years of experience in this business on the western coast and his reputation as a first-class hotel man is second to none in any country. If you want good living go to the Virginia Hotel.