

Man Around Town

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HIDDEN TREASURE MINE

Last month I gave you the history of the Mountain Gate Gravel Mine and the owner's, the Power family. They were a very remarkable family- one who made the best of it under some difficult conditions and hardships....no modern facilities..just miner's cabins, sometimes only one or two rooms.. sometimes the only woman in camp..sometimes they were Wife, Mother, and School Teacher for their children.

This month we will try to give you the history of another mine that belonged to the Power family--the Hidden Treasure Mine, so named by one of the Power's wives.

This mine was situated four miles from the town of Damascus, at an altitude of 3,610 feet. The claim covered about 480 acres and included two miles of channel, which, so far as developed, holds a north and south direction; and up to the time (June 1888) had shown an average width of between 400 and 500 feet. This mine had been worked for about ten years, before this date (1888), and it was then operated through 8,00 feet of tunnel traversing a slate formation. For 50 feet this tunnel had a double tramway. The mine was timbered all through with spruce and pine; an ample supply of water being nearby. The tunnel yielded sufficient water for washing the gravel. Very little blasting was required. Ventilation was secure by means of a special air drift, extending to the end of the working tunnel. The cars, of which there were 4 trains of 16 cars each, was drawn into the mine by horses, and came out of the tunnel by gravity, the grade being such as to make a brake necessary to prevent too high speed. The bed of the channel was slate.

The gravel, which was of a loose character, was drifted to the depth of 6 feet, from 300 to 400 carloads, averaging one ton each, being extracted daily by the labor of 135 men, at \$3.00 per day each for whites and \$1.75 per day for the Chinese, and yielding about \$1.50 per carload. Quartz boulders was abundant in the tunnel. The gravel was dumped into a chute and fell on to the washing floor, whence it was washed into the sluices by a stream of water from a hose and nozzle, under pressure for 20 feet. There were 2 sets of sluices, with an intervening drop of 15 feet, the first set being 300 feet long and the second much longer. These sluices was lined with blocks of spruce and worn-out car wheels, the latter being good riffles for coarse gold ore was used in the upper sluices. A little quicksilver was used near the lower end to retain the fine gold.

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According to the reports, this mine paid dividends over a period of ten years. The mine was near the mining camp of Sunny South. At an altitude of 3,640 feet, the length of the Hidden Treasure Tunnel was around 8,000 feet, the nature of the gravel was free gravel, the bedrock was slate, the depth of the gravel drifted was about 6 feet, length of time it was a paying mine for around 10 years, but was worked several years after. During those ten years an average of 135 men (both whites and Chinese) were employed.

(The above was taken from the Mining Journal dated 1888)

(The following was taken from the Mining Journal dated 1896)

Years since the Hidden Treasure and Mountain Gate were worked extensively, first on the west side (Mountain Gate), and later the Hidden Treasure was worked on the east side. The east side of the Mountain Gate was intact and preparations was being made at that time to reopen and work the east side of that mine too. The Dam tunnel (a part of Hidden Treasure) had progressed several thousand feet, the workings reached a point in front of the north end of the old workings of the Hidden Treasure. It was found that the Dam Channel was swinging more to the eastward than was anticipated. A drift was then run northwesterly in the hope of encountering the Red Point Channel. A 30 ft. raise was made, and the white gravel of the Hidden Treasure a channel was encountered. It was evidently a remnant lying between the north end of the Hidden Treasure and the south end of Mountain Gate. How extensive it would prove at that time cannot be surmised. A new curved drift was then driven, on a uniform gradient, to connect with the new upper level and thus dispense with the chute, which was not all satisfactory. Thus far no trace had been found of the Red Point Channel. That section lying in the gap between the Hidden Treasure and The Mountain Gate mines has long been regarded as most puzzling, and even now it is not entirely clear. The relation of the several channels would not be definitely known until they had been worked out at the time. In 1896 there were 200 men constantly employed by the Hidden Treasure Mining Company, of Michigan Bluff. Its owner at that time, Harold T. Power, of Michigan Bluff was also superintendent.