

Spanish Leave Trail

Did They Fall Prey to Indians?

Were there white men in the Idaho Territory before the great explorers Lewis and Clark? Evidence keeps surfacing which indicates that perhaps a troupe of Spanish soldiers and miners may have been in the Alturas County region mining the rich silver and gold ore around the end of the 18th century.

Miners working in the Rocky Bar area have discovered several traces of previous mining including tools and arrastaras and have pondered over their origin and late last week while travelers in wagons approached the Snake River, several copper helmets, presumably Spanish, were discovered scattered about on a small plateau.

If the Spanish were able to penetrate the rugged western land, they most certainly met a grim end at the hands of the native Indians who then, and even now in 1886, control a

large portion of the area.

It appears that there may be some connection between the mining operation near Rocky Bar and the apparent battle-ground located alongside the mighty Snake River. Trappers have discovered several remnants of White Man's existence between the areas, as though the group fled the area and met their fate on the desert.

Muskets, long since outdated, have been found below the Smith Prairie area and placer miners along the Boise River have located what appear to be personal affects of the voyagers.

We cannot determine why or how the Spanish miners and soldiers entered the rich mining area, as yet undiscovered, or why they beat the quick retreat toward the Snake River. Several speculators have entered the battle-ground area hoping to find the fruits of the miners' labor,

particularly gold and silver but as yet nothing has been discovered.

It appears that no one survived the battle by the river and without a witness' count of the Spanish activity the entire saga may be a riddle for historians to ponder for eons to come.

Coinage Issue Is Subject Of Meeting

There will be a meeting at the Assessor's office, Mountain Home, Saturday evening January 4, 1896, at 7:30 o'clock, for the purpose of organizing a Silver Social and Literary Club. All who favor free and unlimited coinage silver at the ratio of 16 to 1 should not fail to attend. In order of the Committee.

However, not to sensationalize their narcotic habits, the owner said that the Chinese never use the substance while in the mines; that they save their mind drug for relaxing and social events. The Chinese culture has affected the miners of the region and many pieces of Chinese artwork adorn the homes and offices of local residents.

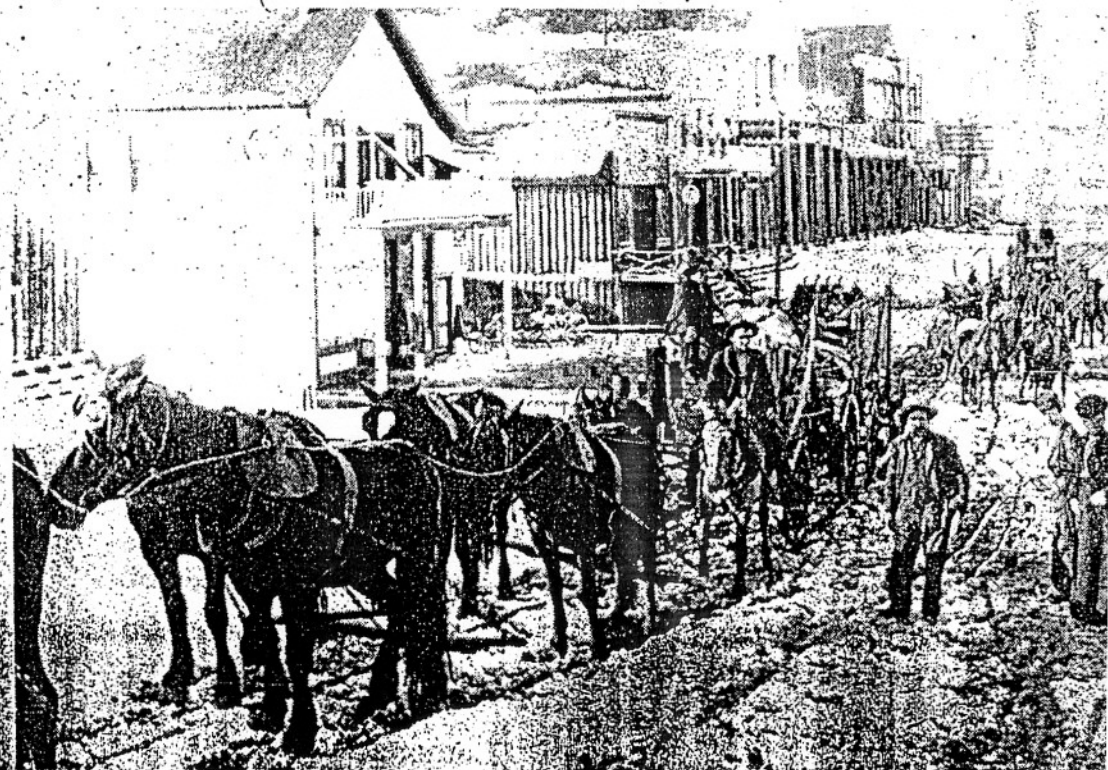
Mine operators are not optimistic about the progress of the mining in Happy Camp, in spite of the hard-working residents. Several miners feel the Chinese lack the business marketing know-how to gain the best dollar for their efforts in the isolated mining community.

"We don't know how long the Chinese can operate in that mountainous region and continue to make a profit, but it appears that they are happy, contented and pleased with their success thus far," a mining official stated.

Beckworth Pushes Mineral Springs

If he is able to purchase the hot springs, Beckworth plans to sell shares of his new company, Mineral Health Springs, to local residents. He says he is traveling throughout the West trying to promote the health of the Human Race and that he has no intention of making any profit in the development. He intends to sell the shares to the local people, develop the miracle of health at the hot springs and continue on his quest of promoting health care in the Western Territories.

Some folks are a bit skeptical about Beckworth's plans and accuse him of being nothing more than a money-grubber for small communities, but Beckworth denies these claims.



Even the winter snows could not stop the freight wagons of the Old West. These freighters prepare to leave Silver City in Owyhee County. Although these horses do not have them, many freight horses wore snowshoes specially adapted for travel in the high country. (Photo courtesy of Lyle Powell)