

# The Prospector

Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.

GPA Portland, Oregon Chapter



January, 2022

## Bear Attack!

by Perry Massie

by Greg Miller

I was reading the news the other day and was surprised to see a story about a gold miner being harassed by a grizzly bear in Alaska. It turns out that I know the miner. His name is Tim Jesse and he was a crew member on the Alaska trip. I know exactly where this occurred, and the area is crawling with bears. It reminded me of an experience I had many years ago in the same area.

It all started sitting around the campfire one evening at Italian Bar. My dad, "The Buzzard," came up with the idea to go dredging in Alaska. Immediately several guys said they would like to go too. That was the genesis of "The Great Alaska Expedition."

Our subsequent 13 years together (he passed away from a heart attack in 1993), prospecting several locations near Nome, Alaska, building a camp and running the trip, produced a great number of wonderful adventures and treasured memories.

Of all the adventures I had with my dad, one comes to mind that I will never forget. On the third year of the trip, my dad decided that it would be fun to offer a raft trip from our camp at Casadepaga downstream to Council, where the highway from Nome ends. It was a two-day trip on four-man rubber rafts. One sunny morning a group of about five rafts loaded up and set off down the river. I was in a raft with my dad and another crew member, Andy Rogers. In a separate smaller raft was my good friend at the time, Stewart McClure (he subsequently became my brother-in-law after I married his sister Sandy).

The Casadepaga River meanders along slowly through some of the most beautiful scenery one could imagine. Occasionally when the river went through shallows, we would all get out of the raft and drag it through. As more and more tributaries dump in, the going gets much easier. Looking down into the water from the raft, I could see the river was teeming with fish. It looked like a freshwater aquarium. It was so fun to fish along the way, hooking up on almost every cast. Once I saw a huge fish breach the water near the raft and I immediately went after it with a lure, except I snagged something behind me when I cast. I turned around and was horrified to see that I snagged Andy's nose! I am so glad he didn't shoot me right there!

Anyway, my dad was the kind of guy who liked to use all the daylight allotted to him. It made for some very long work days when the sun didn't go down. On this trip, it was later in August and it started getting pretty dark at about midnight. We were very far down the Casadepaga, close to where it runs into the Niukluk River. There was good current this far downstream and with the darkness we couldn't see very far ahead. Out of the darkness directly ahead



*Continued on pg. 4*

# Secretary's Report December 19, 2021

Milwaukie Grange Hall  
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The meeting was called to order at 1:30 P.M. by President Mike Lewis who also led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attendance** - 23 attendees and no guests were present.

Treasury Report - Beverly read the Treasury Report for the month of December.

**Meeting Minutes** - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's Report of the previous month as written and published in the December newsletter. The motion was approved by the members present.

**GPAA Membership** - The GPAA is running a membership special right now for \$84 a year which is a good deal because it usually costs around \$130. If anybody wants to take advantage of this deal just let them know that you are a member of the Portland Chapter and we will get points which we can use at a later date to get merchandise from them.

**GPAA Gold Show 2022** - Kevin Hoagland is looking for 10 people to volunteer to work the Puyallup Washington and Portland Oregon Gold shows. It would involve set up, tear down and assist vendors during the shows. They will pay you decent pay, mileage, hotel room and food for the events. The Puyallup show will be on March 25th through the 27th. The Portland show will be April 8th through the 10th. There is a sign up list for anyone interested in doing this.

**Pacific Northwest Sportsmen's Show 2022** - The show is February 16th through the 20th. We will

get free admission for 6 people a day anymore over that will have to pay \$5. Everyone will have to pay \$12 for parking. We will have the quarter drop, gold panning demo and raffling off a gold nugget. Sign up on the list if you are interested in participating in the event.

**Sportsmen's Warehouse** - We will be doing a panning demonstration on March 12th at the Sportsmen's Warehouse in Portland on 82nd. Ave. Everyone is invited to this event if you are interested.

**Gold Show Advertising** - There is a gentleman from Vancouver named Rick B. he is going to do some advertising for the Gold Show. For \$18 we can get 2,000 little flyers that we could hand out at various locations so that we can increase the amount of people coming to the show.

**New Membership Chairperson** - Ken Diddier has volunteered to be our new Membership Chairperson and Mark Kirk will be a back up if needed when Ken is away.

**Equipment Demonstration** - Steve Lewin set up and did a demonstration of his mining magnet. You use dry sand and it moves black sand away from the gold. The guy who makes these will be at the Gold Show if anyone may be interested in buying one. They cost about \$230.

President Mike Lewis presented **Beverly Parker** a Gold Nugget for all her hard work and years of dedication being our club Treasurer. After around 13 years she has stepped down from her position.

# PRESIDENT'S BLOG

January, 2022

I hope everyone enjoyed the Holidays!  
Happy New Year!

We have several things lined up for the first few months of 2022. And, while our prospecting outings are limited to TYROY at this time, we hope to find other locations closer to the Portland area to try our luck!

Here's what's planned over the next few months:

## February, 2022

We will have a booth at the **Northwest Sportsman's Show** at the Portland Expo Center from **February 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>** – It is a great opportunity to let a lot of people know about our club. There will be a sign-up sheet at the January meeting. **If you are interested in helping with the show, please come to the January meeting at noon to meet with Jim Erwin, who is coordinating our participation in the show.**

We will have panning demonstrations, a coin drop bottle, sell "gold" bags, etc.

## March, 2022

In **March**, we have an expert in LIDAR (light detection and ranging) coming to give a demonstration at the meeting.

We have also discussed having our annual potluck at the **March** meeting. There will be a sign-up sheet for the potluck at the January meeting.

> Please note we will need assistance in setting up and taking down the tables, chairs for the potluck.

## April, 2022

The GPAA will be holding **The Gold and Treasure Show**, at the Portland Expo Center, on April 9th and 10th, with setup on the 8th. Jim Erwin, with assistance from Jerry Johns, is also coordinating this effort. Please note we are the lead chapter since the show is in Portland in 2022. The Southwest Washington Gold Prospectors chapter and the Mid-Valley Gold Prospectors chapter are also helping with the show. The next meeting on the 2022 GPAA Gold and Treasure Show will be on **January 23, 2022 at 1PM**, at the Southwest Washington Gold Prospectors meeting location: Minnehaha Grange Hall, 4905 NE St. Johns Road, Vancouver, WA 98661. **This show is one of the main sources of income for our chapter. There will be a sign-up sheet at the January meeting.**

## June, 2022

We have tentatively scheduled the chapter's two week outing at our TYROY claim for the first 2 week of June, 2022.

I look forward to seeing you at the January meeting.

Thank you and Happy Prospecting!

*Mike*

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*Secretary's Report cont. from pg. 2*

**Chinook Winds Resort Raffle Tickets** - We are still selling tickets for the Raffle. They are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. We will be holding the drawing at February's meeting which is just around the corner so get some soon.

**Raffle** - The Raffle was held with \$1 and \$5 tickets. George Parker was the lucky winner of the Gold Bag. Beverly Parker was the lucky winner of the Gold Nugget.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Yolande Kragerud,  
Secretary.

*Photo by Mark Kirk*



## Bear Attack! Continued from pg. 1

of us on a sand bar emerged three brown furry humps. As fate would have it, we beached right next to them. It turns out the three humps were a mamma grizzly and her two cubs. One of the cubs woke up curious and started slinking toward us. I had my 44 Magnum up and out at this point; my dad, unfortunately was struggling with a jammed cylinder.

The mother woke up next and was instantly charging toward us. I could remember the volume of her snarl and the saliva sloshing out of her mouth as her head swung back and forth. I was so close to shooting her my finger was pressing down on the trigger. At the last second, she turned, barked at her cubs and went tearing back upstream ... directly at my buddy Stewart, who was behind us. You can imagine the helpless feeling when you are sitting down in a raft facing a very mad mamma grizzly! Luckily, they all ran right past him, but not before he turned his raft over in the river. I bet he thought his days on Earth were over! Shaken, we decided to make camp right there on the sand bar. We built a big bonfire so Stewart could dry out, but also to ward off any more bears. I don't believe I have had that much adrenalin in my system, ever. There was no way any of us could sleep that night, so we just hung out around the campfire and stayed warm until morning.

At first light, we all jumped into our rafts and made our way down to the pick-up point at Council. We saw six more bears along the way, having to fire our guns to scare them out of the river.

Whenever we made a pit stop along the bank, we could see bear tracks on top of bear tracks everywhere. The last mile of the trip was a difficult slog through rain and a big headwind. We had to row downstream! Wet and exhausted, we finally made it to the trucks and dry land.

I hope you enjoy this issue of "Gold Prospectors." We owe it all to the Buzzard — I sure do miss him! Good luck in your search for gold.

- Perry

Reprinted from GPAA website.

<https://www.goldprospectors.org/News/ArtMID/406/ArticleID/838/Bear-Attack>



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## Messages from Jim Erwin

I can remember my first visit to Portland Gold Prospectors meeting many years ago. Jerry Johns was President and there were many reports from different committee members and membership got involved in discussions of what, why, where and when to do different chapter events.

I thought to myself that this was a better group than what I had witnessed at other gold club meetings, where one crowd member tried to run everything. I decided to join PGPI.

Today as I look at our situation, I see, few people attending meetings, some people doing most of the necessary things that need to be done, with few people wanting to help.

We as a group need to change this attitude of let others do it, and get ourselves involved. A club or chapter survives with involvement. Please do your part.

If I am part of the problem, let me know. I not ashamed to hear that I need to change.

Lastly I do want to thank all those who helped me doing my duties as Vice President and encourage each of you to help Cindy Wright as she becomes Vice President.

As I become Treasurer, I look forward to hearing from everyone if we need to change or improve that position.

Here are a couple of ideas I have on improving our membership.

Find a better meeting facility with better parking and a more findable location.

Get more involved with other chapters and learn what makes them a successful club or chapter.

Attend joint outings with other chapters.

Build our membership.

Be involved with more meetings and events like the Sportsman's Show to broaden our exposure to the public.

We are looking for more people to help with the Sportsman's Show. We currently have 12 people to work the five days of the show. Twelve is not enough. Sign-up or call me to help.

My personal contact information is listed in our newsletter. If you choose to talk or email in private please do so. Let's try to put things back together.

My wife Carol and I wish each and everyone of you Merry Christmas and the most Happy new year.

*Jim Erwin*

PS.: PGPI will have a Gold Panning Demonstration on March 19 at the Sportsman's Warehouse at SE 82 and Johnson Creek.

Details to be worked out. Sign-ups will be at next meeting.

*Jim*

A few years ago the club received a collection of articles related to treasures around the country. In this month's issue I've included one that may be of interest. It isn't a recent article.

# MINING TOWNS HAD CRAZY NAMES

**The careless abandon of prospectors in naming their strikes and towns, gave the old West a crazy and wierd list of town names.**

by Bob Jan

**B**ECAUSE of their chicken-today-feathers-tomorrow life, many early western prospectors named the sites of their diggings with equal abandon. Witness such western mining camp names as Hell-Out-for-Noon City, Delirium Tremens, Pinchmetight, and Growlersburg.

That the tradition is being followed to this day is attested by recent Western mining claim filings: Punkin Head, Three Idiots and Neck Yoke.

Some curious stories lie behind a few of the weird names which still grace the western maps. The two gold camps with the provocative names of Igo and Ono have long since disappeared but the legend that created them still persists.

Among the early day miners were a number of Chi-

nese, who had been imported to perform the menial camp chores. Some later bought their freedom and went gold hunting on their own. One such Chinese located a fine claim in Northern California and immediately began to take out huge quantities of gold. The miners in the area, believing the Chinese didn't deserve such good fortune, decided to do something about it. One man threatened the Chinaman with a large pistol ordering him away from the claim. With scant indecision, the frightened Chinese left muttering, "I go, I go." And in so saying left the name of that camp behind him.

But good fortune followed the Chinese. His next claim, not far away, proved even richer than the first. He shared the wealth with other Chinese friends.

Failure of the auctioneer to sell that pair of boots to hell-raising cowboys caused the town to be named Bootless.

Photo credit: Bancroft Library.



The American heard of this new strike and decided he wanted it too. Next day he again waved his pistol at the Chinaman. But this time the Oriental firmly stood his ground. Smiling at the blustering claim jumper, he pointed to his friends who were aiming their rifles at the American.

"Oh no," the once-tricked owner said. "You go." The claim jumper did, but the diggings were thereafter known as Igo, Ono, and Ugo.

Violence and death frequently had a hand in naming these booming camps which often proved as ephemeral as Mayflies. One small camp had been established when George Haddon, a full blown Englishman, arrived. For some reason, Haddon wasn't liked, perhaps because he was contemptuous of the miners or perhaps because of his persistent habit of using the expression, "silly old ass, silly old ass", employing the long "a" as he did so.

When the miners met to form their mining district they decided to name it in his dishonor. Its Americanized version became Donkeyville.

Haddon stayed in camp despite being the butt of jokes and didn't object when they elected him tax assessor, the most unpopular job in any camp. Actually he seemed to enjoy the job as it gave him a certain sense of authority. But it proved to be his undoing as well.

One of the miners, Jack Fletcher, abandoned his unproductive claim to turn to farming. His few farm animals and produce brought a better income than he had been able to wrest from the ground with pick and pan. Sometime after Fletcher had established his profitable farm, Haddon dropped by to assess the hill-country place.

"What sort of live stock do you have?" Haddon asked.

"A cow and two sows and pigs," Fletcher said. Unfortunately Fletcher had a slight lisp and Haddon was more concerned with his lisp than listening closely.

A few days later, Fletcher opened his mail and found his tax statement. He immediately buckled on a gun and it out for Donkeyville and George Haddon, tax assessor.

"What do you think I run, a hog ranch?" Fletcher yelled at Haddon, waving the tax bill. Haddon allowed as how the assessment was correct and said so. "You told me you had 2,000 pigs," Haddon snarled.

"I thaid two thows and pigth," Fletcher insisted.

Haddon sneered and Fletcher snarled. Both men drew guns and Haddon lost, but his character remains immortalized in the small wayside village of Donkeyville.

Because Bangor Bill, who opened a general store near Jayhawk, was a miserly little Yankee, he had a camp named after him. Bill sold two fingers of forty-rod whiskey for a pinch of gold dust, but since his fingers were small and thin, his measure was less than pleased a miner's heart.

Bill was delighted when Ole Johnson strolled in one day looking for work. Ole was a pudding of a man with thumbs and fore fingers resembling the pinchers of a Maine lobster. Ole didn't know much about bartending but he knew how to drive a bargain, especially when dealing with someone as greedy as Bangor Bill. Ole bargained for and got a partnership in the saloon.

The miners immediately began to grumble when Ole's giant thumb and forefinger dug into their doeskin pouches and lifted a rich haul of gold dust.

"Pinch-'em-tight," the miners waived each time they bought some of the needful in the saloon. But when Ole continued to dig in heavily, the miners called a protest meeting.

Some suggested that hanging might be a satisfactory way to display their anger. Fortunately cooler heads prevailed. One leader made a short speech:

"We want no hanging nor murder here in Jayhawk. Let Bangor Bill and Ole Johnson by living, be an object of scorn to their fellow men. I suggest as a mark of contempt we withdraw our custom from their saloon

**How this New Mexico town got name of Shakespeare is not known, some poet cowboy in his cups may have named it.**

Photo credit: New Mexico State Tourist Bureau, No. 50169.



by starting one of our own, and further by renaming our beloved camp as 'Pinchmetight'."

It is recorded there wasn't a dissenting vote, and Pinchmetight was added to the glowing glossary of western camp names.

**G**OLD seekers headed to or from the Nevada gold-fields occasionally took up ranching in the fertile river loam which bordered the Walker River. The Mason Valley was rich soil and a small settlement sprang up there. There, because of a thatch hut and a cask of booze, another curious name developed.

An itinerant saloon keeper gravitated to the settlement owning little more than a white apron and a full cask of whiskey. Lacking the necessary money, he built himself a small hut of willow switches which served as a saloon. He was a success from the first and as the word spread, the spot became known as Switch, a name which gradually took in all of the spreading settlement.

But with trade as brisk as it was the supply of whiskey ran dangerously low before the slow transportation could bring more for the Switch saloon. The saloon keeper was an enterprising man and he added water as needed. As the color thinned with this device, he would add whatever flavoring was at hand which often included a plug or two of tobacco.

It wasn't long before the patrons realized that they weren't getting whiskey any longer and began calling it simply "pizen". Soon the entire camp became known as Pizen Switch, which is now called Yerington. (It is now dangerous for anyone to refer to its first and more colorful name.)

Old western maps show several camps called "Whiskey Flat", or similar names with a high alcoholic content. But perhaps the most curious was how Whiskey Flat, Nevada, got its name, through the unwitting efforts of Nobe, a Paiute with more than a handful of failings, among them a desire to be rich and act like a white man — preferably in that order.

Nobe was a casual employee of Knapp & Laws' general store which gave the settlement the original name of Knapp's Landing, (and which has now become known

as Hawthorne). The store sold everything from whiskey to wash tubs, with the former getting the most attention. Nobe saw his main chance by supplying the ready made market of the area with whiskey.

Having none of his own at hand, he nipped a lock and stole into the back of the general store one night. With the help of some other understanding Indians he purloined five cases of the best whiskey, along with a plank of enormous size. Nobe was wise enough to leave everything in place, even to replacing the lock. He did his job well. No one suspected anything until someone observed the disappearance of all Indians from town. There wasn't an Indian handyman, cook, washer or baby tender to be found. When the theft was discovered, it didn't take much logic to decide what had happened.

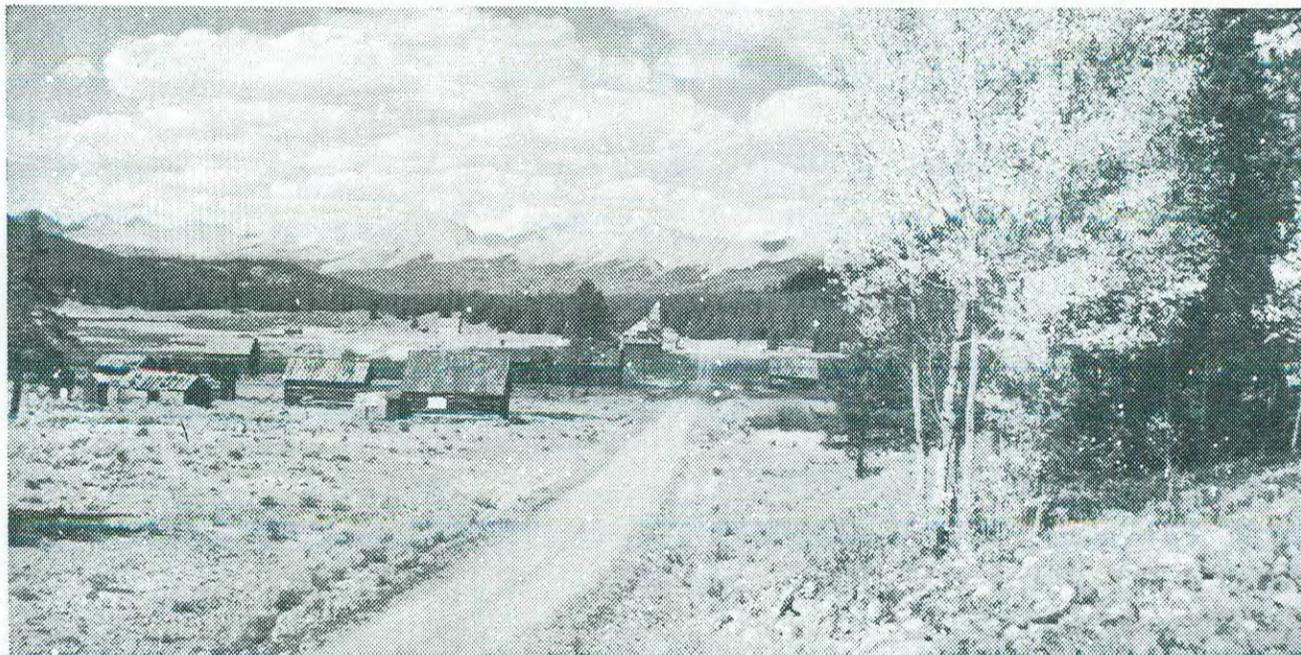
Local merchants took up the trail and found a scene of carnage about 16 miles from town, which has since been called "Whiskey Flat". It was there Nobe had set up business. Scattered about him and his empty wares lay every man, woman and child in varying degrees of intoxication. From the looks of the black eyes, broken teeth, bloody noses and cracked heads, Nobe had done a noble business by getting the whole tribe stoned.

A few days later Nobe reappeared in town asking for his job, even agreeing to repay the entire cost of the stolen whiskey. To Nobe's credit, he repaid every cent and Nevadans still point to a big alkali flat southwest of Hawthorne called Whiskey Flat, founded by Nobe, the Indian who got a whole tribe drunk.

**M**OST of the boom town names had the basis of an event or individual. Not so with Yankee Jim's which had the distinction of being named after a man who wasn't a Yankee and was located where he had never lived.

Yankee Jim was considered an undesirable even in those days when men were mean and whiskey made them meaner. He arrived in California after serving several terms in Australian prisons. In an ill-conceived attempt to identify himself with the others, he claimed to be a Yankee, not realizing that his down-under accent betrayed him. *(Continued on Page 48)*

As more gold strikes were made in Colorado than other states, Colorado takes prize for wierd town names.



## MINING TOWNS HAD CRAZY NAMES

(Continued from Page 40)

With years of experience in getting along without sweating, Yankee Jim had acquired a trait common to many criminals, that of being too smart for his own good. To cover his real activities, Jim mined a small glory hole near Auburn to account for the gold which he always seemed to have. No one bothered to investigate until the miners began to lose their horses. One miner tracked his stolen animal to Jim's place and found not only his horse but several others, all held in a corral high on a ridge overlooking the river.

But Yankee Jim escaped before someone could throw a noose over one of the nearby tree limbs. He was later hanged in one of the southern mining camps for horse stealing.

Yankee Jim's penchant for easy living was responsible for his being too smart. When the gold sands began to wear thin, miners moved to other areas. Fired by the vision of previous finds, one miner wandered as high as the hillside where the old corral still stood. Yankee Jim could have saved himself all of the risks of horse thievery if he had but looked at his feet.

A strike there ultimately provided one miner with a fortune, and others with as much as 5,000 dollars per week.

But he was not present to see his corral bloom into the prosperous mining camp called "Yankee Jims".

Miners' imagination frequently ran wild, not only with the names they gave their mining camps but in the jokes they played on each other to relieve the tedium of bone-wearying daily work. Some of these tricks were called "humbugs" and one such practical joke is still shown on old maps as the mining camp of Humbug.

John Flinch was a perfect picture of the verdant miner and the butt of jokes, and the miners were quick to sense it. Near Sacramento, Flinch was taught the art of "jack pine prospecting" wherein gold is seemingly picked from under the bark of pine trees. It requires nothing more than a miner with deft fingers to perform the trick, coupled with the gullibility of a man new to the diggings. The old-timers had Flinch climb a tree, eagerly picking under the bark at a height of 50 or 60 feet, until their uncontrollable laughter brought him to the ground shamefaced.

**W**HEN their jokes wore thin, the miners then pawned off all of the mining equipment they thought his poke would handle, then sent him to the

## CHIEF GAUL DEAD

*Standing Rock, S.D., December 13, 1894 —*

*The death of Gaul, the noted Sioux chief, is announced. He was next to Sitting Bull in rank.*

## GENERAL GIBBON

*Baltimore, Md., February 7, 1896 —*

*Brigadier General John A. Gibbon, U.S.A., retired, died here Thursday night. He had been in poor health for some time.*

Trinity Alps area where recent strikes would assure him a fortune.

Unknown to Flinch one of the miners sent a note on the same stage to friends in the new area telling them of the fun they could expect with this naive youngster.

John Flinch was gratified with the warm welcome accorded him when he arrived. A committee immediately arranged to escort him to some fine prospecting ground, about 30 miles away. All were exhausted when they arrived but Flinch's friends thought the walk was worth it. Leaving Flinch behind they started back home but not before they uncorked their jugs and drank to the greatest hoax of all.

Out of hearing they solemnly drank a toast to Flinch's find, Humbug. Con-

Ruins of these famous old mining towns, like below, with their crazy names can still be found throughout the West.

Photo credit: New Mexico Development Bureau.



fidant that he had been led to good ground, Flinch worked unceasingly building sluice boxes, dams and ditches to take the greatest advantage of the rains when they came. It was a confident Flinch who returned to the miners' camp a few months later. He invited all of those who had helped him to a fine dinner where he displayed two sacks heavy with ore. Those who had humbugged him felt a trifle sheepish but they had the laugh again next day.

The two sacks of ore Flinch took to the Wells Fargo were not gold. The agent there refused to give a draft against a mint check for the ore. But out of sympathy for the much put upon greenhorn, the agent finally agreed to ship the ore to the San Francisco mint to see if it contained any gold at all.

The miners, seeing how dejected the lad was, and how flat broke, planned a dinner with Flinch as the guest of honor. During the meal they confessed the cruel hoax but Flinch took it in the spirit of the times.

Rounds of toasts had been drunk and a gay time was being had when a mes-



Photo credit: Courtesy J. L. McBride.

**Toothless Jim gave name to one town.**

senger arrived. Flinch returned to the dinner, his face still long and dejected. In a few minutes, he rapped for atten-

tion and made an announcement.

"Just like you boys figgered that ore wasn't gold," Flinch began. "I just got word that the mint confirmed your guess."

Cheers and jeers, mixed with calls of "better luck, John" and "You'll be able to 'humbug' someone yourself," were shouted.

Ignoring the jibes, Flinch continued calmly.

"You named my claim the Humbug after the trick you pulled on me, but I think it would be more appropriate to have called it the Humbugged." Flinch's face was wreathed in smiles. "You see, while that ore wasn't gold, it was platinum worth \$60 per ounce, about three times what you suckers are getting for gold!"

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**RW**

**Hand written note of an Oregon Lost Treasure**

F-T  
 Tell 62  
 Pg 23  
 The West  
 March 64  
 Pg 14

Oregon  
 Lost Crystal Cave in Oregon High  
 desert south of Millacan ranch  
 PILOT BUTTE  
 Secret of souls rest on road 46  
 City of rocks and souls rest 25 mi north  
 of Bliss and Gooding in lava beds  
 4000000 from stage front Atlantic to  
 Bliss

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Download a copy to print here: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licenses/environmental/hpa/types/prospecting>



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