

## "CHAFFEE COUNTY"

(Taken from "In Colorado's gold fields. The world's most famous gold camps, 1899 by W.C. Calhoun, Denver, Colorado. Pub. 1900, The Quarterly sentinel, v.4, No. 1 January 1900 P.63-65.)

Chaffee County last year produced \$351,000 in gold, and is rapidly assuming its old-time distinction as a producer of yellow metal. Encircling the upper Arkansas Valley are hills and mountains, among which may be found beds of mineral of widely varying grades and quantities. At the town of Granite, in the extreme northwest of the County is plainly an extension of the Leadville granite region, and a porphyry formation carrying much gold. Here, also, is one of the largest areas of placer ground in the State, as well as a number of steadily producing lead ~~xxxxx~~ claims. Below Granite is Chalk Creek, or St. Elmo, a district which is fast gaining in reputation as a gold camp. The demands of the new mines in this section have caused the establishment of one of the largest milling plants in the state for the reduction of their ores. Three mills, kept constantly running, are hardly adequate to present requirements of the mines.

In the vicinity of the beautiful city of Buena Vista, below St. Elmo District, is four Mile Camp. The Little Annie, in this section, has become a promising mine, and a recent rich strike has doubled the old time interest in the district. Prospectors in this vicinity are actively searching the gulches and canons, and important finds are of frequent occurrence.. The Shavano district divides with Four Mile the attention of the gold seeker, and is attracting general notice by the frequency of strikes in many new localities. The near future will undoubtedly bring forth great results from the intelligent exploration of these promising fields.

Crooked Creek Camp, on the creek of the same name, is five miles above Buena Vista. Active prospecting has been engaged in for several months, and the new discoveries lead to the belief that numerous rich gold lodes will be discovered. The ore found if free milling, running from \$2.40 to \$125.00 a ton, the bulk bringing between \$10 and \$20.

From the Monarch district along the range of hills east of Mount Curay, separating the Arkansas from the San Luis and Wet Mountain Valleys, are numerous partly developed sections, in which a great deal of work has been done and which, within another year, may lead to the discovery of great producers of gold..

### SALIDA.

Salida is situated in the eastern end of Chaffee County, in the Upper Arkansas Valley, and at the head of Grand Canon. Salida is a picturesque mountain town of about 4000 people, and is located at the principal point of the four great divisions of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad. It is one of the most substantial towns in the Rocky Mountains. The recent new gold discoveries near Salida make it the natural supply point for all its mines and miners.

The district had its first gold excitement 15 or 18 years ago, about the time the town of Salida was settled. By accident several good discoveries were made, and although the ore taken out would seem fabulously rich in these days of improved machinery and excellent railroad facilities for handling it, it was then not sufficiently valuable to warrant being mined on any extensive scale. A few years later, when that great civilizer the locomotive, penetrated

the wilds of that sparsely settled region, the inhabitants engaged in pursuits which seemed more profitable.

The big find that originated the present excitement occurred early in December 1895, when prospectors took out some ore from a ten-foot hole along Cottonwood gulch that ran \$510 in gold to the ton in a mill test. The vein was weak, though, and soon disappeared. Later more substantial prospects were discovered, and this fact, added to the influx of practical miners and mining men, has aroused an interest that has no doubt come to stay.

Following the foregoing finds three claims situated in Round House Gulch were sunk, and at a depth of eight feet assays of vein matter brought returns of \$14.60 and \$9.70. In the veins a sort of soft tellurium was discovered, which assayed \$22.00. There is a large body of this material, from which shipments will soon be made. A good strong lead, thickly touched with oxidized copper and gold bearing quartz, has been struck in the Midnight, situated in Cottonwood Gulch, in sight of Crater mountain, and is being developed now at a rapid rate.

Up at the head of Cottonwood Gulch is the Christmas Present, now being worked. Some exceptionally fine carbonate ore has been struck in the forty-foot incline.

Located one mile north of town, in the direction of Brown's canon, are two prospects that are now attracting considerable interest.

Probably the most important strike of recent date in the district was that reported from Brown's canon, eight miles north of Salida. A group of three claims, one of \$42 ore, was obtained.

Ore on Silver Leade Mountain, in the Sangre De Cristo range, on the opposite side of the town from the properties described above, active operations are in progress. The Silver Leade Mining and Investment Company has driven the main, or work tunnel, into the mountain to a distance of 509 feet.

A well defined lead, showing quartzite on one side and gneiss on the other, has been reached in the Charlie Ross tunnel. The Minnie Bell tunnel is in 625 feet, and veins carrying copper, gold and lead in large quantities are in sight. A mill run of this ore showed returns of \$300 in gold. It is predicted that the Minne Bell will be among the list of important shippers at an early date. ~~IxxHerringx~~  
~~Park, x25x miles north-east~~ A company has been formed for the development of a group of claims in Herring Park, 25 miles north-east from Salida. Considerable prospecting is at present going on in this comparatively new district. A strong vein of Porphyry, carrying copper diorite and lead, has been unearthed in the Eureka at thirty-five feet. This is in Hub Gulch, below Cottonwood creek.

The Twin Lake placers, <sup>3</sup> five miles above Salida, on the Arkansas river, is another important industry that deserves more than passing mention. Last year, it is stated, these properties produced over \$100,000.

Cinibar Camp is the name given to what is now the most promising portion of the Salida gold district. The properties composing the new camp are in the vicinity of the crater, five miles up Cottonwood gulch, extending from that point about two miles toward the city. The ores being taken out are mainly carbonates or quartz, which latter is more and more decomposed as depth is gained, and the carbonate makes its appearance.

Perhaps in no district in the state can mining be carried on so

so successfully 365 days in the year as in Salida. Snow, except in the northern exposures, is, comparatively speaking, unknown, and the numerous roads and trails through the mountains can be kept open all winter.