

## CHAPTER 12

### Turmoil

By late Fall I was registered into a history course at the University in Las Cruces on account of Jim Cain who died shortly after I met him. During our numerous conversations he told me about a set of old leather bound books in the Juarez Catholic Church. According to Jim they contained the dates and maps of where the old Spanish mines could be found in the Caballo Mountains.

Now for the first time I might be able to have credible proof that I so desperately needed to ease my anxieties. However, in order to review these documents I had to have some justifying pretext. Jim said, the Church officials would allow history students to review the ancient manuscripts; but only in the presence of a priest.

The priest was lined up, the class about to start, and at the last moment I chickened out. Why? Because, I didn't know what might happen to me while in Juarez searching through these old documents. What if they got wind that I wasn't a real student, but instead, only a nasty miner trying to get their gold. I certainly couldn't afford for the Federales to put me in a Mexican Jail. So, to this day that information, if real, is patiently waiting for some brave industrious soul.

Constantly working in the same place was starting to drive me mad. I wanted to know why the minerals were in Cable Canyon, and that required scouting the adjacent terrain. Yet, spare time was a luxury, so I would occasionally steal time away from Cable and make trips into the little Caballo's.

These smaller mountains lie just South of Cable Claims, separated by Apache Canyon. According to Bulletin 10, published in the late 1920's by the Bureau of Mines in Socorro, there was a silver mining project in these mountains. The article is a brief one, but it says this mine had long tunnels, and was extracting 14 oz silver in a lead matrix. Search as I did I wasn't able to find an entrance. Nevertheless, I did find stacks of small piles of Galena ore, which could have carried the silver, and the appearance of the Lead crystals looked exactly like Cable galena.

While investigating the paths and old roads that are almost non-recognizable, and while standing next to a small ore pile I could hear rocks falling seemingly near and beneath me. Look and scratch, as I might, it remained obscure. Maybe at another time I'll get luckier.

While running around in the little Caballo's I met Mr. George Taylor while on his way through Apache Canyon with a track loader. He said that he was heading to his placer claims out in the Jorando flats. Being a typical prospector he was essentially working alone trying to develop his claims. I told him that I didn't have much time, but would give him a hand by running his tractor for a couple of days.

His claims were all around Haystack peak, a lone pointed hill. I have to admit I wasn't being altogether altruistic, because this was another chance to gather first hand information without a lot of expensive, time consuming, secretive detective work.

His placer claims seemed to have merit due to the depression days diggings. I successfully panned a little color from a few places he said carried gold. Though the strange thing about the gold is that each small piece is round and flat, almost like someone had salted the area a long time ago with a shotgun.

There are two items that the vicinity of Haystack intrigues me with. The first is, while I examined some of the gravel beds in several of the arroyos, one had what appeared to be abundant black sands. But, they were non-magnetic and under the microscope these crystals appeared to be beryl and truly deserve further investigation. The other is about a grave site where an old prospector dug a 90 foot shaft back in the 1930's. Rumor has it that he found what he was looking for. It's also said that just prior to his death, he hired a drifter to help excavate. It was assumed that this young guy stole the gold and fled after killing and leaving the old man in the bottom of the shaft.

Several months after helping Mr. Taylor, he voluntarily visited Jack and me in Cable Canyon. He said that seeing how we were nice to him he would dowse our claims from the mouth of the canyon. Naturally, I did not want to hurt his feeling by saying what I thought of the dowsing art. Furthermore, I was curious as to what he'd say and how he would do his song and dance. He got out his long metal rods with a bottle of one of the metals attached to the end. After a time it started a peculiar jig of weaving and bobbing. When he was done he said that we didn't have much gold, but we were loaded with silver. As I have said earlier, I put little faith in the art of witching.

To prove to us his abilities, and disregarding my views, George showed me and Jack an out-crop of rocks on his claims and told us that at a certain depth there was a rich vein of gold. Jack and I later conducted a cursory EM-16 grid on that spot, sure enough, ole George was right about having something near the depth he had indicated. Nonetheless, I hesitate to say that it is gold, because I'm not gifted with fourth dimensional abilities, nor do I have X-ray eyes. Of course that's not to say I wouldn't accept that special talent, for I could sure use it. Trouble is, no one would likely believe me either if I truly had such a talent.

While working with George he also showed his oil and water witching craft. Regardless of what I suspect about this art, he had found potable water in the Jorando where none is known to exist. He had drilled 10 water wells, which were steel cased, and water was within 10 feet of the top of the casing. Unfortunately for George, he said that the BLM forced him to abandon this water, because they said he did not have the right to use it. Pure hog wash. The BLM has no legal right to deny a miner/pro prospector the use of any locatable water, but they do carry the big stick. I find it curiously odd that the various environmental NGO's (legal defense fund, etc.) can sue the various state and federal agencies, but let you or me try the same thing. Naturally, we won't get to first base due to their so-called immunity. Obviously, something is way out of kilter. In my way of

looking at the environmental organizations funded by the majority of the major corporations and our own govt these are progeny of the corporate mentality. Thus, these EcoElites are privy to getting what they want because the corporate state wants what the goose stepping environmentalists can publicly do without rising the suspicions of the people.

Searching in Cable Canyon was becoming a doctrine. Often I would take a rope and crawl up sheer cliffs, peering into as many holes as possible. On one such enterprise, I had tied the rope off to a big jutting rock atop the cliff. Then went back to the bottom and started skinning up the rope to a promising hole. About half way up my arms gave out. Talk about a panicking predicament. What to do? So, I did what any self-respecting simpleton would, I froze to the rope for dear life. I stayed that way for a long time then slowly started down. Needless to say, I quit trying to be a monkey, that's for better, stronger and more agile people than me.

One of the strange and peculiar sights to behold on the Cable Claims terrain is an area with big, dead Pinion trees, and an adjoining area with dead junipers resembling a Tree Cemetery. Most of the trees seemed to be of same approximate age and size. So, what could have caused these tree's demise? Could it have been stress brought on by fire or drought or could it be intolerance to the mineralization? Of course my opinion is that the roots penetrated into rich metallic salts. Sounds like an eternal optimistic miner doesn't it? However, I did investigate these trees that were undoubtedly several hundreds of years old. There was no evidence of burnt bark. I sort'a ruled out drought because at least one of the Juniper would have survived. There just doesn't seem to be any logical explanation other than abundant mineralization. The only way I'm ever going to know for sure is to take cores from the trees and retrieve soil samples for analysis. It's on my list of things to do, unfortunately there are hundreds of more consequential items that bear precedence.

The last days of winter found me in Houston talking to a couple of potentially interested investors. The first one was an independent oil man arranged through a personal friend and past employer. This gentleman who after consulting with Mr. Lashley agreed to participate after he finished drilling an oil prospect. Finally, I had met a man of his word, and I could again see a shining light at the end of the tunnel. Sadly though, his oil well turned into a economic disaster, which left me high and dry. But, I wasn't the only one in this precarious position, for the oil bust was in fast forward, and it eventually shook the whole Nation to its knees.

The second man, an attorney who said he was interested, but wanted someone he knew to first inspect the property. Naturally, this was only to be expected and certainly warranted. However, this event was to unleash a brewing rotten mess soon to hit the fan. This mining consultant came to the claims, took samples and later allegedly sent a representative sample to the Bureau of Mines in Socorro for analysis.

Over the next several months I was zipping from Texas to California meeting possible investors, which were long in the tongue, but short in the hand. Then, I heard that a report had been issued to the Houston attorney suggesting that he not get involved with the

Cable Claims. Why? No goodies were found in the assay(s). Fortunately for me, and with the discreet help of a friend I came into possession of that report. Needless to say it confirmed my fears for it was quite damaging to my integrity, and probably libelous on the part of a few personnel at the Bureau of Mines. This incident was destined to become bigger and uglier as time wore on.

To further understand the potential scope of this odorous circumstance and to see if my fears and suspicions were justified I called the School of Mines. I talked to the person in-charge of scholastic grants regarding research funding. As friends listened to the conversation I asked this “gentleman” that if I sent several thousand dollars to the school for specific research would the school be able to keep the research and results proprietary, as well as including who sent the monies? He assured me that no-one would find out where the monies came from. I asked him what about the freedom of information act, and he said that anyone wanting the information under this Act would still have a great deal of difficulty of getting it, because they could keep the knowledge buried in paper-work. I had heard enough to know that probable chicanery was taking place. Furthermore, I knew I would never give this school a dime for any research. If I couldn't trust them due to their secret under-the-table methodologies, how could I trust any of the cooked results?

A few years after this event, I heard that the school was trying to change it's name. But the School Regents were not permitted to do so without losing grants. And obviously, money was worth more than a name change. Evidently, there are people in high places that do not like the fact that New Mexico has a mining history, and do not want to participate in being proud of that heritage.

When not in the mountains I was constantly conducting micro-chem studies every chance I got so as to learn as much as possible about the Cable's mineralization. One of the intriguing sights I often saw while samples were being dissolved with nitric acid were microscopic wires or flakes of gold being ejected from the galena. But these microscopically small wires and flakes were quickly obliterated by the eruption of elemental sulphur as the HNO<sub>3</sub> dissolved the Lead. While this is not a significant discovery, it does prove that elemental gold is somehow combined in the PbS matrix. However, to prove this amazing sight to anyone would require many hours looking through the lens as small pieces of galena crystals are being dissolved, and few if any people have the patience or the interest to conduct such exhaustive tests.

Back in 1983, Jack and I also discovered and claimed a small area in Longbottom Canyon. The mineralization had both copper and lead mixed with purple fluorite. These Claims became known as J&J 1, 2, & 3, which was vernacular for Jack & Joe. The main PbS vein always produced interesting amounts of gold when dissolved with nitric acid or panned with mercury. And while conducting a limited EM-16 grid we discovered a small anomaly. This anomaly is not big enough for a mining company, but could be quite profitable for a little guy. If it is what I suspect, a pegmatite, for all the classic signs are present, then it could indeed be exciting. Pegmatites are known the world over of often

containing dazzling displays of crystals, including gold, which could be sold to collectors.

Years later I was to find out that this canyon was named after a man referred to as “long bottle”, or “long in the neck”, due to his compulsive drinking. Plus, there are rumors of a stash of Wells Fargo loot hidden in a deep, but covered over mine shaft, and of a lost silver mine. In the summer of 1992 I accidentally found out by talking to a local man that he and his wife discovered an old silver mine in the upper reaches of the canyon. He informed me that they found several artifacts, which were given to a museum. However, the silver was not exploitable, because they shipped several tons of ore and it didn't cover their expenses.

The question that haunts me about the value of their shipped ore is - was it really worthless or did they really pick the right rock for shipment? Someday I need to find this ancient mine in Longbottom and check it out for myself. Years before meeting this couple I had met a miner that told me an interesting scenario about his ore, that darn near bankrupted him. He said that he was shipping a siliceous silver and gold ore to the copper smelter near Silver City, but wasn't getting paid for what he knew the rock was worth. In due course, he discreetly pays the smelter a visit while they were processing his rock. He watches as the rock is being transferred from the stock piles to the grinding circuit then onto the pulverizing and blending operations via conveyor. As he's watching, the company's lab technician periodically takes samples from the conveyor so that they will know how much to pay for this stock of rock.

This miner, being around the block a time or two, notices that the conveyor is slightly tilted, causing the heavier rock to gravitate to one side of the belt. No problem, except that the technician was selecting samples from the other side of the conveyor. The novice wouldn't know what's taking place, but this man knew right away how they were picking his pocket.

Anyone who's been around ground rock very long knows that the heavier portions has a strong tendency to separate from the lighter portions. Well the technician was taking samples from the lighter materials which would be carrying less values than the heavies. The smelter wasn't doing anything actually illegal, but the miner was getting a royal screwing. Obviously, a miner has to recognize the tricks of the trade if he intends to survive long in the mining arena.

Before leaving this chapter I have to quote an old saying that Dan Medley kept saying to me: “Mines are Made, Not Found”. Entering the Mineral Kingdom takes a brave lad, and finding that pot of gold is a challenge few can handle. However, that's only half the battle, for the minerals must be harvested to appreciate the sacrifices. Keep in mind that the major mining companies won't even consider a property unless it is worth at least a billion dollars. Plus, it might be wise to keep in mind that the bigger the prize the bigger the dragons.

## CHAPTER 13

### Forgotten Roots

On a beautiful spring afternoon while driving down the West side of the Black Range Mountains, returning home from Silver City I encountered a site to behold, that is seldom, if ever, seen. There in front of me were two mule pack trains, 12 each, completely geared, being lead by a man and a woman. If that wasn't strange enough these two looked like they just stepped out of the 1800's. Naturally, I didn't have a camera, and there wasn't room to stop and find out who these people were, where they were going, or where they lived.

Another time, while eating at the S-Bar-X some well dressed people came in, ordered lunch and while eating, asked us what all those strange green piles were lying on the road in the Mountains? They said they got out of their car (Cadillac), got a stick and poked and stirred these flat piles, but were simply at a loss as to what they could be. One of the persons setting next to me told them that those strange green slurpy piles were cow patties. Obviously, they were humiliated by showing their Eastern ignorance. It just never occurred to them to think that cattle could roam free. I guess to most city dwellers the thought of cattle roaming the highways is just inconceivable.

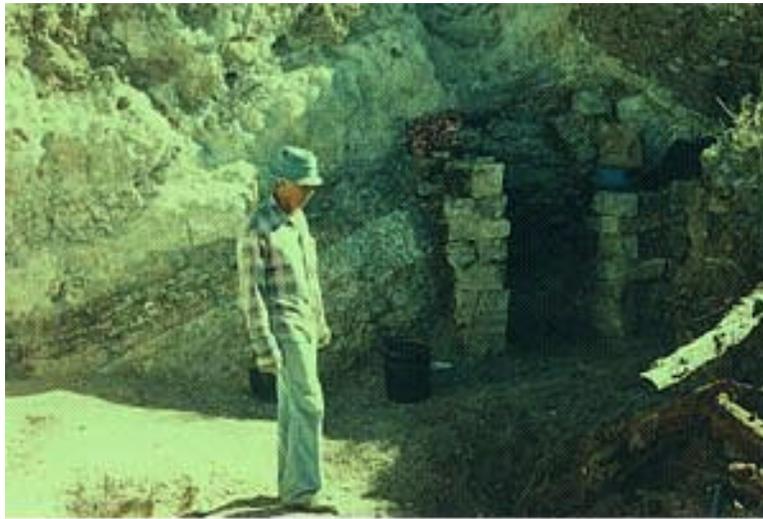
On a similar thought – I wonder if the environmentalists (greenies) are any kin to the green sickness called envy? Or, are they related to green bile and gangrene?

## CHAPTER 14

### Rasmensen

Several people have told me about an old man (Joe Rasmensen) who lived up high on the Mountain. This man supposedly worked a secret lost mine and lived close by in a Log Cabin between Cable and Indian Canyons.

As the fable continues, he would cart out a yellow looking mineral in leather bags on his mules over the crest. The faded trail can still barely be seen, and Jack and I did find a buried and burned cabin, that Jack eventually excavated.



Jack in the huge hole he dug exposing the remains of Rasmensen's burned cabin.

While Jack performed his Herculean digging feats he found several old bottles. The prettiest one a hand-blown champagne bottle dating to the 1860's. Jack also uncovered the remains of a crude stone fireplace. One of the fireplace rock's sent the metal detector just a zinging. But a microscopic study failed to show any metal. We have learned by experience that there are certain rocks on the Caballo's that will make a metal detector howl like coyote, but not have any visible metal in them.

Jack also found in this immediate area a limestone rock that stunk like rotten eggs when broken, in other words sulphur dioxide, which indicates possible petroleum or some kind of heavily laden sulphidic mineral.

During the course of Jack's excavation it became noticeable that this area had been pushed and bent by Mother Nature. The bedded layers went from horizontal to almost ninety degrees forming an arch. Just as obvious was the alteration of these bedded layers. For instance, what was either once limestone, or maybe even percha shale was now kinda

like a white chalk. So, Jack being a curious lad sent samples off to be assayed. Although there was only a trace of goodies it did show significant amounts of chromium. Naturally, this could mean that the PGMs could well be in the area. Why? Because chromium and other elements can be considered as pathfinders or footprints due to historical PGM associations.

The stories go on to say that Rasmensen took sick one day, and landed in the hospital. For some unknown reason, possibly an old grudge, people came to his cabin and burnt it down. This part of the tale seems to have truth, due to the burnt logs. However, I've looked for the remains of the mules that supposedly starved to death while Rasmensen was ill, and couldn't find a trace them.

A few people have said that Mrs. Peron during the 1920's and early 1930's would make monthly excursions into the Mountains bringing the Taggart's and Rasmensen needed supplies. The mystery is where did Rasmensen get cash to pay for the grub? I have often wondered if Rasmensen versus Doc Noss was the real father to all the stories. And, because Doc was a known friend of Mrs. Peron maybe Doc became privy to Rasmensen's secret and did away with the old man.

On one of my numerous coffee breaks in 1993, Mr. Druce told me that while he was up in the area many years earlier that he and associates discovered a wooden door covering a timbered mine entrance. Although they didn't enter it, because they had no lights. Was this Rasmensen's lost mine? Quite naturally, I investigated this incident as thoroughly as practical, but found no evidence of this trap door.

Jack and I have found numerous prospect holes, driven in the Jasperoid Fusselman, near the deserted cabin(s). Our examinations of the rock showed large amounts of very small Iron Pyrites, that are not normal in microscopic appearances to traditional pyrites. A few assays did show minor amounts of gold, but nothing to jump and down about.



Myself holding decaying Windless

We also found an old decomposed windless, next to a very suspicious spot. This 'windless' may, but not necessarily, be next to the entrance to an old mine, although it does fit the area Mr. Druce told me about. As usual, to prove-up any story one has to dig, and there just doesn't seem to be any end of that misery. I guess I'm not too unlike most other people, if I'm going to dig I want some kind of reward. Besides, there are hundreds of places that deserve digging. Consequently, at some point a person has to set his priorities. On the other side of this coin, if you don't dig, there won't be any discoveries. Likewise, could this latter sentence be what the greenies have in mind for all prospectors?

This same area a few years previous to my arrival was prospected by people who reported finding "Angel Eggs" that could be dug-up in random places. I know that men are natural born liars, but this was quite a whopper. I've roamed this area extensively, and as yet have not been able to find any-kind of mineralization that would lead someone to believe in "Angel Eggs" that have a platinum core. Yet, and for what it's worth, I did see this man's many boxes of rock samples, and they did have delivery tags marked from Russia. So, at least part of what he said was true. I have found quite large iron looking sulfide crystals, which were in the process of being decomposed. But, in order for these to become Angel Eggs I sure would have to butter up my imagination.

Yet, and just as odd - I've seen what appeared to be free gold, contained within microscopic double terminated quartz crystals. These microscopic crystals in Cable Canyon lie in what I refer to as the Breccia zone and might be what Rasmensen was getting, but this would mean machine grinding, and I doubt that such existed. Assays on this mile long structure have indicated sometimes as much as a half ounce of gold to the ton. But all the stories say Rasmensen had bags of yellow stuff. Could his mysterious yellow stuff been nothing other than the jarosite clinging to the fusselman cliffs. There is no doubt about this stuff looking like gold when the sun shines on it. But it's only iron sulfate that has leached through the rock and oxidized and dried upon contact with the air. Although it was used to make exceptionally fine gold paint. it doesn't make credible sense that Rasmensen would go to the trouble of collecting this yellow mineral, on account of it would take a lot of this material to make much money. Unless of course he enjoyed poverty, or didn't require many creature comforts which seems to have merit.

On another story gathering day a friend told me that he'd actually seen a Civil War Cannon lying in the grass way up high over-looking Apache Canyon near Rasmensen's cabin. Naturally, while on many of my reconnaissance trips I kept my eyes on the lookout for this relic. Of course I haven't as yet found it. Still and all, it is true that the Confederates were in the immediate area. And being able to control Apache Canyon would be an obvious strategic advantage for who-ever held the high ground. By having this strategic position anyone could keep the opposition from reaching the Rio Grande River and watering their stock. Thus, just a couple of men armed with a cannon could sure raise hell with those down in the valley floor.

I have to point out, that I've not walked the entirety of this questionable cannon area, but time permitting I will. About this same period of time Jack was given a map that was professionally (paid for) dowsed pointing to an exact spot where there's supposed to be a

couple of rich veins. The trouble with these two “rich” veins is that they just happen to be located on the side of a sheer cliff near where the Cannon is reported to be. I wonder, do you suppose that the crafty dowser knew how to read topo maps and could tell where there were vertical cliffs, knowing that the odds of anyone checking the validity of his dowsing would be nil or none?

During a few of my exploratory trips into the area, I’ve found very old and intact bottles still standing in very odd square cut in solid rock prospect holes. So, this suggests that in order to be sure that I haven’t overlooked a promising spot I’ll have to be very thorough on all future prospecting excursions. So far I’ve found only 2 of these peculiar square holes, which are about 20 inches high by 20 inches wide by maybe a foot deep. I’ve heard that these are markers indicating that a mine entrance is near by. Who knows, maybe one day Lady Luck will allow me to stumble upon an entrance just like she allowed me to discover these strange holes?

It is possible that Rasmensen or some other prospector who lived in the other log cabin found a way into the most exciting place that I’ve ever heard of.

This fascinating story was told to me late one night by an Indian lady, and I have no way of proving whether or not she was teasing my obvious hunger. Anyway, she said that there are several ways into the underground caverns, but no white man knows where any of the Indian entrances are. Similarly, no white man has ever found and lived to tell of the wondrous amounts of gold that are free for the taking. Apparently, the Conquistadores worked the underground river for nuggets as big as pinon seeds.

After the Spaniards were driven out of the area the Indians would occasionally work these golden waters. Indians, like white man will not work any harder than he must to acquire his earthly pleasures and desires. Similarly all one has to do is look at the majority of American Indians to realize that their wants and desires are uniquely different than white eyes. Gold to the Indian was a means to buy what they needed when all other endeavors were barren and dry. Apparently, as she indicates - no one Indian alone could do this grueling work, it required many. They would have to haul large quantities of wood, unnoticed, down deep into the bowels of the Great Mother, which took several days alone. Then, they would build large fires and send men down into the fast moving depths. The river bottom was both fine sand and large boulders, and the men would gather what sands they could into leather and wood baskets and return to the surface. These gravel’s were then transferred to big wooden bowels where other men would sift and sort by fire light the larger pieces of gold.

From what this Indian princess told me, few Indians are permitted to journey to this place in this day and age. Of course those that still work the gold do so by modern placer dredges and underground lighting systems. She said that if I ever find this place I will know it by the huge piles of ashes, the large iron bowels of pinon pitch, and ancient stone/clay kilns that are built in the cave walls. As best I can tell, this river has a treacherous current, for the Indian men would not venture into the water without ropes being tied to one of their legs. I wished that I could have gotten more of the story, so as

to better pin point the actual depth inside the mountain. But if you have ever talked to an Indian you'll know that when they're through talking there is nothing more to be discussed, at least at that time.

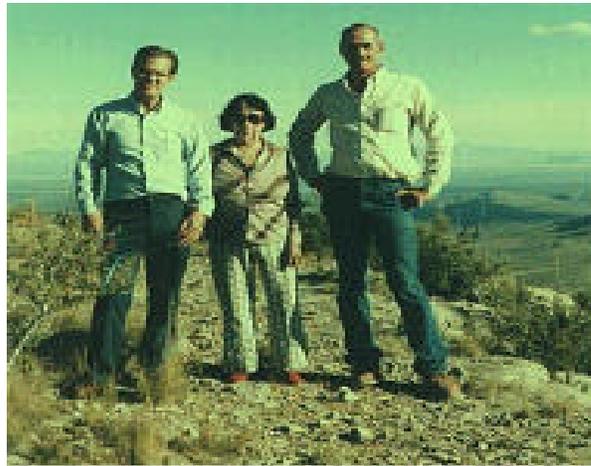
I did try to talk to this woman on several occasions, but she would have nothing more to do with me. I often wondered if I had said something to offend her, which I didn't think I was stupid enough to do. Yet, the fact remained that try as I might, there was no more talk about this awesome place where my dreams live.

## CHAPTER 15

### Taggart's & Burbank

Ever-since my first few days in the Caballo Mts., the name Taggart constantly spun around many a treasure yarn. And just by chance I was about to meet the legendary Mrs. Taggart.

By late Autumn Mrs. Taggart and I arrived at the top of the mountain, overlooking the Cable Claims. Being in her 80's and a bit weak in the legs she couldn't walk far, However, her grip was as strong as an ox. There's no-doubt in my mind that when she was younger and got riled-up, that she could whip a grizzly bear. Hell, I've met men who didn't have the grip she possessed.



Gene Emmerson - Mrs Taggart - Myself

I wanted to know a number of things from her, but my main question was where did she think the gold on the Shandon originated? Naturally she proceeded to tell me in detail about her adventure's when she and her husband (Charles) worked the Shandon in the late 1920's. Eventually, she said that she believed the source of the gold originated from somewhere in Indian Canyon (the canyon directly South and next to Cable Canyon). I too had long suspected such, but couldn't prove it.

I have heard reports that the Denver Mint accepted Gold mined from the Shandon Placer, because it was so pure. A few printed articles that I've read, put the value of total "reported" gold mined to be in the millions of dollars at today's value. There is no doubt in my mind that only a fraction of the gold has ever been reported. Plus, it is my belief that the Spaniards found this same deposit and pillaged all the bigger nuggets long before the arrival of white man. Apparently the Indian Silva who acted as Mrs. Taggart's body guard had a couple of brothers, and one of these brothers actually found the Shandon in 1901.

Another reason that I believe that the gold originated from Indian Canyon, is, because the reported recovered gold not only came from the arroyo floors, but also from the tops of the arroyos. Therefore, coming from the top of these arroyos can only mean that it was washed down during torrential rains from somewhere inside this Canyon. The downside to this hypothesis is that the total amount of gold in Indian Canyon was washed out of the canyon eons ago, leaving behind a barren gorge.

Another one of my plausible hypothesis is that the gold actually originated from volcanic necks when the Rift was quite active and when it was deep under the ocean. If this was the case this would explain, at least to me, why the gold is also located atop the arroyos.

During the course of time I've met several people who had prospected Indian Canyon for a lost gold mine. An elderly gentleman (Joe Eberling) who lives in Williamsburg told me that he watched as his Indian friend (Indian Joe, not the Indian Crazy Joe or Locomo Joe), blasted shut a deep pocket of placer gold. This really nice, but kinda odd gentleman, has been after Jack and I to find it. He'd always say that it wouldn't take much work, and it's only covered over by a foot or two. I have to admit that there is some credibility to Mr. Eberling's tale. Why? Prior to me ever knowing Mr. Eberling - Jack and I found an old bottle on the South Side of Indian Canyon, under a rock, that had several old dynamite caps in it, and a piece of paper with Joe's name on it. People just don't cart around dynamite caps for the heck of it, so, maybe, dynamite was indeed used to blast shut a rich pocket of placer gold as he insists happened.

I've panned small amounts of free gold from the dry steam beds of both Cable and Indian Canyons, but nothing to suggest that much gold is or has been present. At least in the limited areas I looked for this evasive metal. Supposedly, somewhere at the western mouth of Cable Canyon, and I know the place, several Mexican people during late 1800's and early 1900's would work the gravel bars for placer and actually got large nuggets.

Gold does amazing things to people, some of which aren't particularly nice. Whenever I watch people placering, I'm constantly amazed at the goggle-eyed expressions they'd get when they'd capture some of the dazzling metal. Apparently, this group of Mexican men got in a squabble over the gold and settled the dispute with forty fours. Thus, no more placering.

While doing research (abstracting) in the Sierra County Courthouse I noticed that Charles Taggart and the Indian Silva had claimed many mineralized areas all over the Caballo's. Suggesting to me that Mr. Taggart was shown numerous outcrops of minerals that might become profitable to mine. Furthermore, I suspect that the Taggart's, by being so secretive started many of the speculative stories and yarns that permeate the bars, as well as fireside chats. Although, there can be little doubt that at least some of the folklore is true. Surely, where there's a lot of dense smoke there's got to be a little fire.

Some of the stories about the Taggart's are not mentioned in her book, but she elaborated to me while on the mountain. The 1<sup>st</sup> one was - that a couple of her workers

removed large gold spheres from a cavern without her knowing about their nefarious adventure. And, that she and her husband found a burial cave with hundreds of skeletons, but covered it back up because she believed that it was a sacred place. The tale that grabbed my attention most was that Mr. Taggart had Mexican workers crushing the limestone rocks from the cliff's edge for the wire gold. It is commonly believed that somewhere near Noah's Ark wire gold could be had for the work. Is there an ant's bit of truth to this? I don't know, but there is a multiple mile long fault paralleling where the gold reportedly was recovered. This same fault runs through Cable, through the Taggart's claims, crosses Burbank Canyon and plunges into Sardine Canyon then splits. And one these branches cuts back to and intersects with the fault that cuts through Granite Peak and heads into the exact place where Jack and I had our J&J Claims.

According to her book, Mrs. Taggart was born Rebecca Diaz, the daughter of a wealthy Mexican family. She apparently met Charles Taggart by translating an old document, which was a confession of Pedro Navarez. This document according to her accounts was originally written in Latin and partially re-written in old Spanish. Apparently, just before Pedro Navarez was to be put to death for being a murdering bandit, who had looted several Spanish caravans with native Indians, he decided to mend his ways by confessing to a Franciscan Priest where the booty was buried in the Caballo's. Somehow, Charles Taggart got the document from a priest, who probably desperately needed dinero, and was willing to compromise his position with the Church a little bit.

Evidently, even the Church has sought this location on several occasions, because there are reports that robed Priests seen entering the West side of Burbank Canyon. They'd travel towards the crest, near the Taggarts Claims and disappear around a bend and never be seen again. Naturally, this kind of spell binding fireside jawboning would cause any serious, or rank amateur treasure hunter to speculate as to where these priests could have gone. Most of the yarns suggest that these priests, who were last seen in the 1970's, now journey underground to curtail the possibility of being discovered. Or, as a few people would have you believe that these priests were killed by the Apaches who still hold a grudge.

Of course, there are probably as many tales about the spirits that guard the treasure as there are treasure hoards. Most of them always indicate that no white man will ever find any of these secret stashes. Why? Because the strongest, meanest Apache braves were sealed in the caves to forever guard them. I would suppose this would be similar to King Tut's Curse.

I've even heard that Pima and Apache Indians used to work old gold mines in both Cable and Indian Canyons. And if a person was careful in his observations that the entrances of these old mines could be seen when there was a thick blanket of snow. Apparently, the snow would show the tell-tale outlines of the cross-timbered shafts. I gravely doubt that this is true, but I cannot discount this tale completely. Because, as anyone knows, surprises are constant in these mountains. Plus, the Indians have long lived in these mountains and there can be little doubt that if anyone knows the

whereabouts of lost mines or caves it would be them. However, I wonder if the Apaches would have ever let the Pima's onto their sacred mountains?

To add a tad more flavor to the many dishes of brain food yet to come, while in the Turtleback restaurant, in the wee hours after midnight, a waitress told me a captivating narrative. After she knew I was a miner and not a treasure hunter she said she belonged to the Gray or White Wolf Indian Society, can't rightly remember which. Anyway, she warned me in no uncertain terms that if I ever got into the cavernous system, the Indians that were using these corridors would kill me as an intruder. She stated that these Indians travel undetected for hundreds of miles from North of Albuquerque to as far South as old Mexico, and have been doing so for a couple hundred years. Also, that only certain members of the tribe are allowed underground, so as to assure that their secret will remain safe.

There are reports of people accidentally stumbling onto an entrance, going in without adequate supplies, getting lost for days, and emerging many miles from where they entered. And, even more amazingly are never able to find the entrance again, even though they may search for years. One of the first things Charles Taggart found in Burbank Canyon, embedded high on a cliff, was a piece of hammered Copper with letters "I M T O". What do the letters mean? As far as I know, no one has ever figured it out.

Burbank Canyon got its name from an old shepherd, who mysteriously disappeared. Leaving many local inhabitants to believe that he found some of the treasure, and quietly moved away. Yet, others believe that after he found the treasure he was murdered by the Apaches. Then there's the story that Mr. Burbank, during the very early 1900's, and on the East side of the Caballo's accidentally found an entrance. According to what I've been told and seen, Mr. Burbank, near the dried-up and lost "Aqua Escondido" springs, while gathering up cows or horses was sitting on a rock that slightly moved. Burbank, being a curious man investigated the movable rock and found that it was sealing a hole. Naturally he goes in, but is not prepared, having only a few matches. As he uses up his matches he discovers that the room was full of old guns, pots, and piles of blankets, plus a wall that looked as though it was constructed by man. When he emerged, he covered it so good that he was never able to find it again, even though he searched in vain for several more years.

Late in, 1996 while eating at the Rio Cafe in TorC I was told by an old timer that an old prospector found a spring covered over with logs. By the time this prospector got back to this site apparently the rancher had also found the site which could be the currently lost "Aqua Escondido". This rancher uncovered the spring and piped water down to his stock tank in the East end of Apache Gap. By the way, this earth tank is still there, but I never noticed any pipe. Needless to say, it would behoove me or anyone else to follow up on this story, for it could prove to be quite valuable.

The area where the Taggart's dug so many tunnels is really quite gorgeous. It is probably the only oasis type setting anywhere in the mountains. It has carpet like grass

and a virtual forest in a sunken area, as though somewhere deep within the mountain a huge cave partially collapsed eons ago.

There is of course scuttlebutt of springs atop the Mountain that was sufficient for the Indians who lived there. Some say this is where large accumulations of Indian booty is buried, others believe that it was covered to prevent it from being used by their enemies. Which side is correct? I don't know, maybe both. Furthermore, I rather doubt that a spring ever existed on top of the mountain, because the pressure required to reach the top would be enormous. However, my Uncle told me that at the tip top of a mountain in the Silverado Canyon in Southern California he saw water gushing out of an abandoned silver mine. So these springs are possible. But, it would mean that the water would have to be under enormous pressure to rise to the top of this mountain. Then again, it be that the trapped rain water is merely following the fault. And because the sunken area is lower than much of the surrounding terrain a limited quantity of spring water could very well be true. So, and based upon my many travels in this sunken area I have a strong suspicion as to where it most likely would be. Of course, some digging would naturally be required.

Quite near the Taggart's camp site is the remains of an old (ancient) stone ruin, which could have been an old Spanish Fort, but to find it you'll have to have a keen eye and then and only then does it stand out like a sore thumb. Obviously the area deserves considerable prospecting to better understand why this ancient building was built.

The 1929 stock market crash apparently ruined Charles Taggart's great family wealth. And not too long afterwards, while excavating a promising area, he was hit in the head by a falling boulder. This tragedy caused a blood clot on the brain, and eventually lead to his death. Before he died, according to Mrs. Taggart's book, he made her promise to find the hidden treasure. Of course by the 1990's she died and was unable to complete her husbands dream.

Near the end of WWII, Mrs. Taggart met Bob McAuliffe, who became her partner. And he's the one who constructed the horrible and exceeding rough road on the crest of the Mountain. I personally believe that they found many interesting and encouraging artifacts, that would keep inspiring them to keep digging just a little further. Like during the summer of 1970 Mrs. Taggart and Mr. McAuliffe found burnt timbers in one of their excavations. However it led to nothing of substance, just more mystery.

According to her chronicles and my personal interviews, she said that there were times that she and her men could hear digging activities going on inside the mountain. But, try as she might they could never pinpoint the source. If there was someone mining inside the mountain, they sure managed to keep it a secret. Furthermore, if this is true, it would suggest that the only treasure is the mineral veins, and not treasure by the wagon loads laying around just waiting to be easily scooped up. Or, it could also mean that whomever was mining believed that the treasure was best left alone and the rich veins of metals was all that they needed. Thus, gold ore would not raise as many eyebrows when it came time to sell it like gold coins would.

It's amazing how a few flakes or a small bar of gold will make people react. I've read and heard how people will commit unmentionable acts of violence to get their hands on some of that magic yellow substance. And, that through out recorded history humans have committed every conceivable act just to possess this supernatural metal. Maybe, why people behave so strange when they hold this tantalizing and mysteriously soothing metal is due to the saying "he who owns the gold also makes the rules". One thing for sure, no Govt has ever won a war without it or the promise of it.

In Rebecca's book she states that glowing balls of light would occasionally roam the camp spooking animal and man alike. Naturally this kind of activity would create unrest or cause some of her superstitious hired help abandon the mountain or wanting higher wages to put up with the spooks.

As Mrs. Taggart and I were about to leave the crest of the Mountain I noticed a couple new claim markers, that were staking over a few of the Cable Claims, and I wondered as to who was jumping our claims. I'd have to look into this new problem after I got back to town. While heading back and on account of we were driving through her claims she said that she wanted to stop at her old workings. Naturally, I eagerly agreed, because this may well be my one and only chance to have some first hand knowledge.

She started by showing me the main tunnel where she often lived in primitive conditions. We went to the back of the tunnel and looked down the shaft that was supposedly a couple hundred feet deep. She asked if I wanted to go down and inspect the bottom. As I looked at the decaying and obviously dangerous wooden ladder I decided that I'd be a complete fool to attempt such a reckless journey; but I didn't tell her that. I simply said, perhaps another time.

There were stacks and stacks of boxes filled with dirt in the tunnel, which she explained to me was for raising mushrooms. Apparently the mushrooms were grown to raise badly needed cash to assist her in the digging expenses. She did not say if these were behaviour modifying mushrooms, nor did I ask her to explain how normal mushrooms could possibly make her enough money to pay hired help.

Before we left the mine entrance she proceeded to tell me a couple of spook stories. The most interesting one took place about 60 years ago while she had a Priest at the site. As she began to reminisce I could see that far-away look in her eyes. She said that rocks started to rain from the sky, and when they ran and hid behind some of the trees the rocks came at them from all directions. When the rocks stopped for awhile they ran to the main tunnel entrance, and just barely made it before the rocks started falling like hail. Look as they could, there did not seem to be any source from where the rocks could be coming from. As she kept going on and on about this strange episode, she said that the Priest said it was the spirits who were protecting the mountain and its secrets.

Years later, Wells Horvereid took me to an area, not far from Rebecca's tunnel that a famous dowser said held a small cache of jewelry and gold. According to the dowser the goodies were a mere 20 or so feet down in a small cavern. Not being able to resist the

temptation to see how much credibility that this dowser had I went down the rat hole. I soon discovered that the area could contain a small cavern for there were voids and cracks. But it was just too dangerous to stay in, and there was the distinct possibility of getting snake bit. Plus, as I've stated earlier I do not put much stock in dowsers. I've always heard it said that diviners are liars and I suspect this is at least partially true. Oh, sure there's many a allegation that state flat-out that dowser's have found water, oil, buried gold and lost mines. All of which tend to fire up the lust of the week-end warriors. But, I'd suggest that anyone who is serious about searching for hidden fortunes invest in the latest technological instruments before beginning any serious digging.

To illustrate my point, several years later, Jack was on the rough, but navigable dirt road, in Apache Gap. Where he met a man who was digging on his own dowsed area for placer gold. He told Jack that he found a Cross chiseled into a rock and that his dowsing indicated a huge cache of gold in the immediate area. He flat-out informed Jack that if Jack did any digging that he'd have to split what he found. Little did this man know that I had chiseled that cross into the big boulder a year earlier. I did so as a prank to drive treasure hunters further down that trail they're traveling. Heavens, any serious treasure hunter knows old markings from the more modern graffiti. I can only presume that this guy thought Jack was some kind of boob. Because, as anyone knows, babes in the woods, are duck soup to sly artists who dabble in the so-called paranormal.

When Mrs. Taggart and I got back to town, to show her appreciation, she gave me a signed copy of her book. And I immediately set about making inquiries as to who was jumping our mining claims. When I met up with him he said that he was in the right, because he had gone to BLM and checked to see if the property was open. What he failed to do was go to Santa Fe for a thorough abstracting. Plus, he should have looked the area over, because the Cable Claim corner monuments are clearly visible and duly reported. In the course of our heated discussions, I felt as though I had no alternatives, but to simply state to him that we had three choices to resolve this dispute. As he listened I stated - he could abandon his claims and write me a notarized letter saying such, which is the reputable way, or we could go to court and we'd all loose, or we could shoot it out and the winner take all. Fortunately, after he saw our paper-work he decided to do the equitable thing. This person had made an honest error and it happens all the time on Public Lands. As time kept moving this gentleman and me have come to what I call mountain friends. We respect one another, but don't go out of our way to be city slicker friendly. In other words – live and let live.

When visiting the top of the Mountain, there will be found what is commonly called charcoal pits. These shallow pits do have pieces of burnt wood that could be rudimentary forms of charcoal. Some people believe that these "pits" were for roasting sulfide ores, or making charcoal for the underground cavern smelters. Many others believe that they were for making charcoal for the late 1800's lead/silver smelters a few miles to the North, or for heating tools to be sharpened. I however suspect that these were merely Mescalero Apache Indian constructed pits for roasting Century Plant (Agave) roots and leaves. To Apache's agave roasts is similar to our outdoor barbeques, which are often celebrated as a great feasts or sacred rituals. These plants not only fed the Apache, but provided the

needle and fibers for making sandals and bags. Perhaps one of the reasons these plants were considered as sacred is because they do contain hallucinogenic alkaloids, and are capable of making a darn right intoxicating brew. Furthermore, it is well known that American Indians have long enjoyed marihuana and peyote. I wonder why the Apaches never formed goon squads to police their fellow Indians who used drugs? I would suspect that they treasured the right to be free to do with their bodies whatever they felt best. Plus, because they could grow as much of the stuff as they wanted there was no need to control the crops to make money.

There's probably no better time than now to introduce some of more famous treasure seekers, that led very colorful lives seeking the Caballo treasures. I'll start with Willie Doughit. According to Mrs. Taggart's book, Willie was a young drifter, residing in Hot Springs (TorC), that made a nuisance of himself around the Taggart's camp. As she reports, Willie tells local townspeople that he knows where the goodies are on the Taggart's place. This stirs the blood of many, and they, including the sheriff arrive at the top of mountain. But poor Willie cannot seem to find the right spot, and was led away by an angry crowd. If what Mrs. Taggart says is true about Willie, I'm struck by the boldness of his schemes to appear as a dim witted fool or liar. I've found that when people set out to deceive, they often will go to elaborate lengths, and I doubt that Willie was the fool Mrs. Taggart made him out to be. If I was in Willies' shoes and had found the treasure I suppose that it would be just fine to have the town convinced that I was merely a babbling idiot, to be left alone.

The stories about Willie Doughit are as many as there are people who talk about him. Some reports say Willie and Buster Ward found at least one entrance near Granite Peak (the old Gordon Homestead, now belonging to the Grantham's). And, from which they would bring gold bars out and sell them on the QT. This same locality sports the description about Willie and Buster disappearing into a small hole, that has only a flat rock covering the entrance near Granite Peak. Thousands have looked for this rock intensely and extensively till this day.

Wells Horvereid has for many years looked high and low in this area without success, but always feeling as though he's getting closer. I guess this logic is rationalized by the simple process of elimination. Wells has even met with Willie many times in Southern California. I presume that he was trying to obtain better clues as to the exact whereabouts of this elusive doorway to riches beyond imagination. Wells being a tenacious man, has spent many an hour using instruments, dowsing rods, psychics and core drilling to try and locate the tunnel that Willie and Buster used. All I can say is that Wells is one of the most tenacious men I have ever met. And who knows, perhaps he will be allowed to find his prize.

Willie, being a prankster, and supposedly driving the local treasure hunters bonkers, would, once inside the old Spanish mine tunnel that constantly ran in ankle deep water, put food coloring in it so that it would color the surface spring water blood red. Naturally, this added much fuel to an already over heated ravenousness fire, that now appears to be non-extinguishable.

It has been gossiped and written that Willie was captured on a few occasions. Plus, tortured extensively to get him to tell the whereabouts of the entrance. But, each time Willie managed to escape with limb intact, without blabbing and supposedly getting revenge by killing the parties that tortured him. And, as the stories go, he killed anyone else that found the entrance. Most everyone seems to agree that Willie after killing his victims would leave the bodies inside the tunnels, so that they would never be found. It is also widely rumored that Willie for years would not come back to the area in fear for his life. The natural question is - who would want to do Willie bodily harm? Maybe crazy, greedy treasure hunters, or those who held old grudges, or the Feds that are supposedly secretly monitoring his movements.

There are many credible reports that Willie has been back several times, to the general area, after it was legal to own gold. And, even as recently as early 1990's and stayed at the Rio Grande Motel in Williamsburg.

Many times I've listened to people's long distance conversations with Willie. These same people would say that Willie was trying to help them and had just given them valuable clues as to where the entrance was. I would often counter by saying to them that Willie is the best and biggest liar I've ever heard of. I would often ask these people, why do you believe that Willie would tell you where the goodies are? What's in it for him? To this day, I personally believe that Willie could very well know where an entrance is to the underground caverns and possibly the Cathedral Room. But I doubt that he's going to tell anyone till maybe on his dying breath. Even then I doubt that he'll divulge anything, except more lies. I've had his assumed name, address and telephone number for years and have never bothered to call or stop by and see him. Some may ask why not? I'd respond by saying: I've never seen any tangible results with the people who were supposedly his buddies that have known him for years, so why should I be any different?

The people that personally know Willie indicate that he's quite well-off financially, yet there does not seem to be any history as to how Willie obtained his wealth. Except possible gold bars which were sold to a variety of black marketers. I've always suspected that many of the people who allegedly discovered one of the treasures, really found someone else's valuables. And this type of behavior is normally referred to as burglary or common thievery. Heck, if I had lived back then, I too, probably would have been a bandit of sorts. Furthermore, to cover my trail, I'd let people believe that I found some of the treasure and was just a bit loony.

There are magazines, books and newspaper accounts of Buster Ward getting his legs cut off by failing to hop on a fast moving train with a couple of gold bars while trying to elude profiteers. You'd think the story would have stopped there. Well, you'd be wrong. Because, some say that he's been seen riding a horse, and could get around in the mountains by walking on his hands. Others have said he's been seen carting out more gold bars, and lives comfortably in South central California.

There are many people who earnestly believe that they have or know someone who has an authentic map of lost Spanish mines or treasure hordes. Many of these maps that I've

seen look like a bunch of chickens scratched around. Or, are old pieces of frayed paper showing an entrance with the "X" marks the spot near a few known landmarks. Other such old documents are called weigh bills or confessions. But, a discerning person would do well to remember that there were many phony maps printed in the 1800's in Silver City, as well as Paso del Norte (Juarez). No doubt many of these maps have survived to this day, and are considered authentic merely because they are obviously old.

The one thing all the maps that I've seen have in common is that they are vague. The only map that I've ever seen which really indicated that someone went to a little trouble of making is the one that Jimmy Smith showed me that was found in a wooden box and made of cast lead. It was about the size of a dollar bill, maybe a little bigger and had a caste relief outline of the Caballo Mts. This casting about 1 inch thick had several tiny holes, apparently denoting the entrances. Woefully, this hunk of lead was destroyed in a fire that burned his house to the ground. The biggest problem with maps are, assuming that they are accurate and legitimate, is that the Caballo's are big and trying to find a hole, that's three to ten feet in diameter, or smaller, that's been covered is really like trying to find a needle in the haystack the size of the Atlantic Ocean. Furthermore, to even consider lifting a rock and getting into a cavern is just plain crazy. There are so many rocks that it would require thousands of life times to turn each one.

Another common spell binding myth is that of the strange marks on the trees of the area. These slashes, gashes, or odd shapes are often thought to be of Spanish origins and mark the whereabouts to an entrance, or a trail to a particular mine. During my early adventures in the Caballo's, I had to admit that these markings were intriguing. However, I believe Rex and I have finally put to rest what most of these features on trees really mean. One day we were investigating many areas that had strange stories connected to trees, and as we traveled mile after mile we began to notice that the marks were only on the Pinons. There's no-doubt that the marks were done by humans. However, as we became more observant, we noticed that every Pinion of a certain age and older had from one to several bizarre marks that resembled daggers, or blazes, usually near the ground or up high.

At first we surmised that they were trail markers, but then, we came to the conclusion that the Indians marked these Pinions as personal property. Why would an Indian want to claim a tree? The answer is so obvious that it has been simply over-looked. The Indians gathered these tree produced nuts for their food, and what better way to claim it than to mark it in a certain way. Of course this does not explain the markings on a few Hackberry trees in several canyons, including Burbank.

Other than the Taggart's area, Burbank Canyon is exceeding rich in folklore. Mr. Hov Reid told me, due to my sincere interest in minerals, that he found a rock in Burbank that when assayed produced several ounces of gold to the ton.

Unfortunately, Wells wasn't able to find the source, even though his friend and psychic said that the vein was close at hand. The area that Wells described to me suggests that the golden rock was intimately associated with the major North South Fault system that cuts

through Cable Canyon all the way to Longbottom. This fault zone as far as I'm concerned, is most likely associated with all the mineralization in the entire mountain range. In addition, this same fault system is in my opinion responsible for the vast underground cavern system reported to exist.

If a person was seeking a real physical clue as to where these subterranean channels are they might do well to seek out all the red stained rock formations containing visible cracks. I've been inside at least one rather large chamber and at the ceiling was this crack. And when examining this crack from the outside there is this jasperoid (red) coloration on either side. Therefore, any person who has the state of the art geophysical instruments would most likely do well in discovering the whereabouts of the underground channels by simply going about halfway up into Burbank Canyon on the North side, where this physical phenomenon occurs over a long distance.

On the Northwest side of Burbank is a protrusion that is referred to as Needles Eye, and many rumors circulate that Indians would sit in the eye and watch for intruders. Likewise, a Doctor from Las Cruces is said to have had a map designating a spot next to Needle's eye of another entrance to the caverns and the bars of gold. Apparently, this doctor rented a helicopter, just before I arrived in the area and miraculously managed to get to Needles Eye and remove golden artifacts, then just simply flew away. Naturally, I cannot attest to the accuracy of this. All I can say is that of all the people I've talked to who have actually gone to Needles Eye say it's a very dangerous and a grueling ordeal. So, to have landed a helicopter must have been a hair raising experience.

I have accompanied Jack a couple of times to the Radio Towers, which are at the top of the mountain about due East of Needles eye. After parking near these towers we traveled down the steep side several hundred feet, for the simple reason that Jack wanted to show me a very curious place. When we got to this God forsaken hideaway he showed me a large boulder, with a deeply carved, and very unusual drawing which looked like a box with a funny looking "K" and an Indian's Head.

I later found out that this area was part of Mexican Land Grant and these marks could have been boundary markers. I also have to say, that I've always got unusual feelings when I been in this area, as though I shouldn't be there and to get the hell out or suffer the consequences. Whether, or not this feeling is valid I do heed it and only infrequently walk around in the area. If you haven't experienced what I'm trying to say, then no-matter what I write it will not begin to make sense. I guess it just has to be experienced to be partially understood. The closest way of making anyone comprehend the feeling is would be like walking in the woods on a pitch black night after someone just told you that a grizzly was seen a few hours earlier.

While Rex was helping Doc Perrick (1970's) excavate a cave just inside and on the North side of Burbank he found a bound parcel of Apache arrows shafts. Rex at the time just thought they were an odd bundle of sticks. He later found out what they were after he gave them to a person who's an expert on artifacts. Plus, Mr. Franklin has an old flintlock

that supposedly came from a cave in this general area. Of course whether it did or not is speculative, and I doubt that I'll ever know for sure where it came from, but I did see it.

Near Needles Eye, but a little lower and to the North is Wildhorse Canyon, and many people have, over the years, searched this area. I've heard many accounts of a peculiar stone wall that looks like dwelling sites or possible fortifications. Jimmy Smith told me once, that while he was sitting on a pile of rocks resembling a small slide and eating a can of sardines, that he laid his spoon down on the rocks, and the spoon promptly fell into the rocks and kept falling. Obviously, this suggests that these rocks were covering something that was meant to be hidden. Why didn't he find out where the spoon went? Probably for the same reason that the stories continue. That being because it requires a lot of work digging.

There are also a few old news clippings which indicate that the Chinese had camps in the Mountains. Although, to my knowledge, no-one has ever found their old workings or homesteads.

Quite near Wildhorse is Soldier Springs. I've investigated the old soldier's ramshackled building and the concreted spring fairly well. And as usual came away empty handed. I sure couldn't find the supposed buried loot belonging to the Old Soldier, that some say was nothing more than a scroungy old thieving deserter.

Once barely inside the mouth of Burbank is Sardine Canyon. This area has had it's day of heated treasure hunts. This is the area where Jack Palmer is supposed to have been able to get into another cave lined with stacks of gold, as well as an old Spanish Mine.

Jack Palmer, allegedly killed at least three people and put them in the entrance before blasting it shut. There's an incredibly long story connected to these three unfortunate people, and a book could probably be written on it alone.

In the early 1980's a group of people came to Sardine Canyon, some of which I met, to find the opening that Palmer blasted shut. And, in order to get equipment there they built one darn nice road. In the process of constructing this road, Gene Miller found a silver vein that was just barely visible. Hearing about this discovery and seeing some of the vein samples at Brack Callahan's chiropractic office, I decided that I needed to observe where this occurred.

I told Jack about the silver vein and up the canyon we go. We drove as far as we dared, although we stopped and parked still way down low. Construction equipment was being used on the road and we didn't want to get in anyone's way, so we set out on foot. As we got part-way up the road a man stopped us and said that we could go no further. I told him that this area was all Public land and everyone has a legal right to walk where they chose. But this self-righteous Baptist preacher, pointed a semi-automatic rifle at Jack's stomach and said that if he took one more step he'd shoot.

I've never seen Jack get mad, for he's probably the most peaceful man walking on two feet. But, if he ever did get mad I sure wouldn't that wrath directed towards me. I never met the man that I was truly scared of, but I know that Jack could eat my lunch, even though I'm 15 years his junior. Anyway, Jack, starts to continue walking, and the preacher says that he means it, he'll shoot. This got Jack's dander up, and he told this character that he'd better shoot, because if he didn't he was going to tear his face off unless he lowered the rifle. I suggested to Jack that it was not worth it, and for us to leave, which we did, fortunately for everyone. Needless to say, their attempt to find the cave opening failed and they all left bag and baggage. Jack and I encouraged Mr. Miller to stay, but he ended up leaving, because he too had the terrible habit of liking to eat.

To my way of thinking, the heart of Burbank is Granite Peak. It lies in the Western foothills, has the spring that the cattle depend upon, and is rumored to contain the treasure entrance. East of the spring is an old Hackberry tree that has Doc Noss's initials and date cut deeply into one of the gnarled limbs. What this is supposed to mean is anybody's guess, and no-doubt there will be a treasure story connected to it someday.

As one actually gets deep into the Canyon the old horse trail used by the Taggart's can be followed. And, at certain times of the afternoon, with the Sun just right, a person can trace most of the remaining trail from the crest to the valley floor. Many people have wanted to find this trail and have searched in vain. Fortunately, I and a few others have been permitted to be at the right spot at the right time of day to actually be able to see the entire trail. As the fable goes, supposedly, Willy would be inside the mountain and could hear the Taggart's horses, indicating that he was in a cave that was very close to the surface. Although some people believe that this story is more closely fitted to Bee Franklin's or Granite peak area than the Burbank Mountain side.

There is another myth that along this same horse trail was a shallow overhand where Indians (Chief Yellow Horse) gathered and many believe has been blasted closed to hide whatever was stored in it.

On another excursion to Burbank a group of us went into this canyon to find and look at a natural, straight down cave found by a friend who wanted someone to go down it and see what was at the bottom. The curious thing about this spot was that it could not have been seen from any vantage point unless standing at the exact site. To make this spot even more intriguing was that it had an old rusted steel bar over the hole with a partially decomposed rope hanging from it. Obviously this suggested that someone a long time ago descended into this deep dark hole. Several of my friends went down this exciting discovery, after tying a new rope to the bar. To their dismay they found only a very muddy bottom with coatimundi foot prints everywhere. Due to structure of this precarious hole I haven't been able to figure out how these critters get up and down without a rope. Could there be another opening we missed? Could there be buried loot in the mud? Or, and possibly more likely is the mud hiding another passage way into the mountain? Also, why leave the iron bar over the hole, unless it was intended to be used again. Again another tantalizing mystery that deserves further investigation. But, this

mean work, and who in their right mind wants to work, especially when all one has to do is find the right place and walk into all the piles of loot.

Humans aren't the only one's frequenting this rugged Burbank Canyon. Mountain lions like its thick underbrush, precipitous cliffs, and scraggly Junipers in which to hide in or pounce from. Years ago, a local treasure hunter was poking around in the canyon when he saw a cave and started to stick his head in it, but was confronted with two glaring yellow eyes, and a deep thunderous growl. The eyes and growl spooked him so bad that it caused him to trip over backwards and fall down the bank into a cactus patch. Needless to say that spot probably hasn't been looked at and deserves further scrutiny.

On the way back out of Burbank, after looking at the coatimundi hole I noticed an overhand in the limestone cliffs that looked as though it could turn into a cave. So I got a flash light and crawled in. A dangerous thing to do, due to rattlesnakes and lions. After getting in a few feet - out I came like greased lightning. I was covered from head to toe with flees. I've been in more rat holes and caves than most people, but never have I encountered such an infestation of varmints. I stripped as soon as I could, and after a careful inspection put my clothes back on. However I kept a constant lookout to make sure I gave the critters no time to bite me, because New Mexico is known to harbor the Black Plague.

On another expedition into Burbank, this time on the northern crest, Jack, I, Richard Carter, and James Smith, located 4 holes filled with prickly pear, cholla cactus needles, and abundant loose rocks. The air that emanated suggested that these rat infested holes could lead to bigger tunnels. James was elected to go down these darn right dangerous cavities. But, as is normal they each turned out to be worthy of serious excavation. But, for now they were just too small, even though according to the radar work Jack was simultaneously doing suggested that the holes had interconnecting passages.

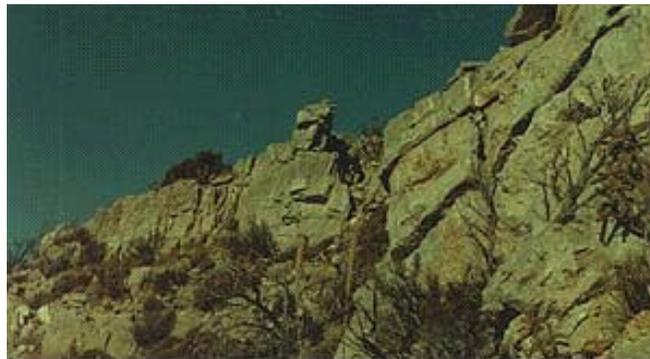
During 1985 I had met a man who had conducted a computerized profiling radar scan of an area near Granite Peak. His instrument indicated the presence of a metallic object in a hollow spot about 10 feet beneath the surface. This area was so contested as to who actually held the mineral rights that I decided to dig. I dug all night, only the sand kept collapsing, which forced me to quit and cover the hole back-up before sunrise. However, in my haste it was still noticeable that someone had worked there. And I'm told that Drolte discovered what I had done and came in with big equipment. Thus, within a couple of days he'd excavated the whole area down to bed rock. Did he find anything, I have never found out. Was the radar instrument accurate, I've never been able to know that either, but I certainly had my doubts.

When Mr. Rex West first arrived in the area of Granite Peak, on Easter Sunday 1973, his first experience was a rather bizarre one, that probably still haunts him today. As he was casually looking over the area, trying to see if he could get lucky and stumble upon the famed entrance, he noticed a woman in black, that appeared to be a three foot tall Nun. She had no shoes, and a black veil was blowing in the wind, yet there was no wind. She was looking directly at him from several feet away, but Rex knew that she was either

a figment of his imagination or an apparition. She was too far away to immediately shake hands and before he could say anything or even think about moving she left as she had come. Another interesting thing was that she was standing in an area that was enclosed in a circle of half buried, and barely visible rocks. Unfortunately, Doc Perrick removed these rocks before any further study of what they meant could be resolved.

This same general area, is where it's reported to have been an ancient Catholic Church. I've never seen the old foundation of this Church, but several long time residents swear that they've seen it. Supposedly, there was another older Church ruin on "Wooded Hill" several hundred feet to East North East of Granite Peak. Again, I've never seen what was supposed to be an old foundation of such, but I have seen an old map that suggested this Church was real.

During Jack's and my many hundreds of excursions on the Cable Claims terrain, we've come across a few interesting phenomenon's. Take for example the large boulder at the crest in Cable Canyon that looks like a chiseled face.



Rock Face at crest & along side major Fault

To me it's ironic or exceedingly coincidental that it just happens to be immediately intimate with a major N-S trending fault zone, a large geophysical anomaly, and where a spectrographic assay yielded about 4 ounces of Osmium to the ton. When I first saw this face it reminded me of what numerous waitresses over the past several years called me "old Stone Face" because I seldom smiled.

Another interesting sight we discovered before putting in the last of the 27 mining claims was a cave like opening in the shear cliff of the fusselman, that appears to be about 10-12 feet in diameter and looks like a turtle. The outline has 4 legs, a head and a tail, and from a distance there is no mistaking it for a turtle. Could this be a treasure spot? Perhaps one day I'll be able to climb the cliff and find out. Well, about 1996 Stan Sanders, Rex West and I finally put this to bed too. The cave is completely bare.

The only other legitimate turtle I've ever seen was in the the Little Caballo's. It is approximately 40 feet in diameter, with four obvious legs, a head and a crooked tail carved in a shear 100 foot cliff. Before this turtle can even be seen, you have to pass

through a particular arroyo. Adding to this turtles mystery is and while on the way there's 40 to 50 feet tall granitic hill that has a big white quartz boulder on either side of it.



Myself standing between 2 white quartz rocks

I've never seen this pure milky looking quartz anywhere in Sierra County, so where did these come from, and why are they there? They had to be carted into this arroyo, and just as obvious they say something important to those who speaks sign language. Several years later Rex And I hiked into the area. We found the granitic peak with white quartz boulders but never found the turtle. However, we did locate where the quartz boulders probably came from way up the same canyon. So the same question remains – why did someone go to so much work to haul these two quartz boulders to this particular location?

## CHAPTER 16

### Polomas Gap

Over the years, I and several friends have made several explorations into the Polomas Gap area, both from the East and West sides of Mountain. When entering from the West, and if a careful eye is applied while navigating the narrow road, that has a cliff on one side and a several hundred foot shear drop-off on the other side, there can be seen several pictographs. Some of these drawings and carvings may have originated from the Spanish Conquistadores. Although some are obviously of Indian origin. The others are probably very old graffiti or bogus signs pointing the way to treasures.



A few of ancient Polomas's markings



Indian marking in Polomas Canyon near the water holes

There are many legends concerning this area, a few of which are: 1) a monkey child buried somewhere close. Apparently an Indian or old Spanish lady had a baby that was born with a tail that died shortly after birth, and one of the pictorials tells of the Mothers' sorrow. 2) lost mines, and caves filled with Indian and bandit loot. 3) rock stained Indian drawings, as well as what appears to be ancient Ogam writings.

Once on the canyon floor there are usually 3 holes that contain year round water. Where this water comes from is a mystery. When the torrential rains occur in the Jorando part of that water drains through the Gap on its way to the Rio Grande. So, and because these small ponds stay wet year around I suspect that these holes are actually springs.

With the help of others we dredged one of the smaller ponds and found startling amounts of flour gold without hitting bedrock. Someday, if I'm able I will look into this matter much deeper. The question is where does the gold originate? Does it come from the canyon walls, hidden veins, or from the Jorando?

Bulletin 10 published by the NMBM indicates that the whole area of the western mouth of the Gap is placer ground. Also, on the western side of the Gap are large sand dunes, which may contain small centers, or pockets of windblown gold. To my knowledge no one has ever investigated these dunes for gold, which really needs to be done. In these same sand dunes it was reported that a tremendous quantity of large smelted copper bars were found. The question has been asked, who put them there and why? Ask as much as possible, there doesn't seem to be any forthright answers.

The largest pool of water in the Gap is about fifty by one hundred feet in over-all dimensions. Being a prospector, I just had try a little panning. I began by scooping away a bunch of top sand, and when getting ready to get a pan full of gravel something big, maybe 6 feet long, that looked silvery-white, kind'a resembling an eel looking beast with jagged back-bone fins raced up towards me, causing me to instinctively jump back in astonishment. Fortunately for my sanity Rex was also standing there and saw the creature. We didn't see it again after it turned and dove into the murky depths. Neither of us said anything for a moment, we just stood there frozen like, wondering what in the world it could have been. When I did speak, I said what did you see, and what is something that big doing trying to live in this small pool? There's no visible food, what could sustain it, and where in the world, or which world did it come from?

A few years later Rex was scouting in the same area. As he approached the patch of small water worn pocket like holes in the limestone canyon floor, which were at the time filled with rain water, he noticed brilliant multi-colored baby snakes.

He'd never seen such creatures before, even though he has spent countless hours in this Gap. When Rex approached with his hand outstretched these darling little babies would rise up and try to bite him. What could these critters be? I've been back to the canyon a couple times since, about the same time of year and have not seen any of these cuties. Obviously, this Gap holds many mysteries just begging for discovery.

While having lunch in early 1993, I met a waitress who told me some of her adventures in Polomas gap when she'd take her children swimming in the big pool. She said that her husband had tried to touch the bottom, but couldn't. Consequently, he convinced some of his friends with scuba gear to see how deep the hole actually was. Apparently, the scuba divers couldn't find bottom either, and said that there was a crack running deep at the

bottom. Her story goes on to say that this deep crack would occasional close. Probably what really happened was the sand and gravel filled the crack. She said that her family would occasionally camp-out near the water and at night strange lights and noises were seen and heard. Her final comment was that she thought everybody knew about the noises and lights. Someone with a lot of guts needs to follow-up on this phenomenon. Who knows, maybe there's placer gold by the sack load waiting for the ambitious guy.

The road through the Gap was made essentially for the miners, and stage coaches. Yet, it was used by anyone wanting to go through the easy way for a nominal 10 to 25 cents each way. To make sure no-one snuck through there was a stone guard shack built to monitor all traffic, which is still standing.

When I panned for gold in the small ponds I also would inspect the natural crevices which act as riffles and always found Galena in them. Apparently, these small crystals washed in from the lead mines at the Gap's East mouth. The curious thing about these Lead mines are that verifiable Vanadium in percentage amounts occurs with the galena, something very rare indeed.



Upon finding these small abundant galena crystals, it dawned upon me that Lead does not pollute the water as ecologists and their like minded cousins would have the ignorant masses believe. Maybe, in other areas Lead may cause toxic accumulations; but the water in the Gap is not acidic due to the pacifying nature of the limestone. I even took a handful home to view under the microscope and could see no discernable evidence that these small crystals were being dissolved. The more I see, the more I'm convinced that the claims of environmentalists are pure boulder dash, spiced with hogwash and green malarkey.

Several treasure hunters and explorers have told me about seeing flying saucers and hearing Bigfoot like creatures in the general vicinity of the Gap. Based upon what I've seen, and my bizarre experiences I don't dispute the experiences of others, I just file it away for possible future reference. As an example: Just before leaving Austin to start this quest I was outside my home, about midnight, and for some dern and unexplainable reason I was looking straight up into the piercing black night. The brisk night was completely filled with a dazzling display of brilliant gems. When, all of a sudden a star

actually moved. This speck of light the same size as the other stars began moving rapidly from the South and stopped dead center overhead. Then a few moments later another star raced from the West to the same spot where the previous star stopped and vanished. Naturally, I became convinced that I was watching some kind of space travel. Absurd I said to myself, why should I be selected to see this alien happen-stance? By this time my neck felt like it was maxxed out in discomfort, but I couldn't stop looking now, maybe another point of light would move. Sure enough out of the maze of stars another speck of bright light moved from the East. Did it continue going to some unfathomable destination? No, it also stopped where the other two had vanished. When these strange lights stopped, I could no-longer distinguish them from any other star. Now my neck was really about to break, but I continued looking for several more minutes waiting expectantly to see the fourth quadrant star rendezvous. No such luck.

What were these strange lights? And how could they just vanish overhead? The only logical conclusion was that they were some kind of space craft, and docked within something bigger. Occasionally, I reflect upon this occurrence when people tell me of strange sightings. Even though I may not totally believe these people's strange stories, I cannot dismiss their experiences. Likewise, who am I to question the validity of others, especially when I too might well be a bit cracked?

About a mile before entering the Gap from the East side is an old prospect hole or shallow cave that is partially filled with long-time dead goats. Why someone would put them there is a mystery. Heck, even the local rancher did know of this mass grave. Even though the skeletal remains have obviously been there for 50 to 100 years, and look mummified, the stench will nevertheless still knock you down. I suspect that a disease rampaged the area and the owner threw the dead, dying and sick into this hole so as to try and save what remained of the herd. Now, if I was to let my imagination run wild - perhaps these goats belonged to old man Burbank. And, maybe Burbank himself is under these stinking carcasses? On a later trip and showing this cave to another person I noticed that all the goat heads were gone. I can only marvel at the bravado of whoever was willing to risk disease and breathe the foul stench.

According to Bob Hoffer there is a deep vertical crack on the North side of Polomas Canyon, just as you enter from the West, that he discovered on one of his outings. Plus, when he shined a light down this slit there appeared to be metallic objects at the bottom. As anxious as he was to see what these metallic objects were he would not try to descend the narrow straight up and down, smooth walled crack for fear that he couldn't get back up. I've been interested in the site he's talking about from the mineral perspective, because anyone with an eye for faults can sure see this one. I doubt that Bob has told many folks about this place because it coincides perfectly to another known treasure story of the Gap.

Somewhere on the Northwest side of Polomas Gap mouth, in one of the washes is Leno Cardiego's cave. Apparently discovered in 1910, and used to be covered with goat skins and carved steps leading down into a rather large chamber. Nevertheless, as usual ole Doc Perrick found this cave and destroyed the steps. I've never been in this cave, but by

all accounts of those that have, they say that many a person has been in it excavating trying to locate adjoining rooms, and has become very dangerous.

Over the years traveling I-25 to and from TorC, and approaching the old townsite of Polomas, now mostly covered over by the Caballo Lake I would often smell rotten eggs. At first, I thought that the stench was from a catalytic car converter trying to scrub bad or high sulfur content gas. Still, as the years ticked by I would only smell this obnoxious perfume in this immediate area. I've asked several people that have lived close by about the odor, but they didn't seem to know what I was talking about. Therefore, the only logical conclusion that I've come up with is that methane gas tainted with sulphur is emanating from the ground. Why someone doesn't capitalize on this obvious natural gas signature (footprint) is beyond me.

In 1992, I was told by a lady whom I respect a great deal and is not prone to exaggeration that there's seemingly credible evidence that from the Silver City area to the White Sands Missile Range lies the biggest untapped natural gas pocket in the USA. A few years later I even sent letters to various Houston oil and gas companies about this area. I never asked for a dime. Guess what, I never received so much as card asking for more information. As nasty as the rotten egg smell is the smell of non-interest is even worse, and suggests that this lady who told me about the maps she saw is true and can only mean that one day the big boys are coming.

On a cold winter night in 1992, I asked Bob Holden, most or all of his life in the area, and who's family has been a focal point of many a treasure hunt, if he knew anything about this Polomas odor. He said no. Though, he went on to tell me that it was common knowledge that odd and spectacular lights were sometimes seen in the Polomas valley West of I-25. He expanded the story by saying that there used to be ghoulish tales of the headless horseman riding at night.

When he was younger and dating he and his lady friend went there hoping to see just such an occurrence. As it turned out, he got what he went there for, because they saw big luminous balls of light. And, one big ball of light went right through their car, and scared the be-gezzes out of them, causing them to flee the area. What were these abnormal balls of light? I suspect, as does Bob, that they were electrostatically charged gases (plasma) being emitted from the ground. I should point out again that there are numerous written articles relating to strange occurrences where ever there are large fault systems, and the Rio Grande Rift is truly a lulu.

Just a little South of Polomas Gap on the western face, up high is Geronimo's cave or sometimes called Crystal cave. Hundreds of people have been going to this cave for over a century. I've never been inside it, but, Norman Chatfield said he's spent many an hour looking for the rumored chambers that connect to it. He said that it is too dangerous to do much digging in because of the efforts of many others. It has been said that an Indian Chief's head is painted on one of the walls inside an adjoining room. Also, that the floor is gravel, suggesting that it was at one time a subterranean river channel. There are also many rumors that several people have spent multiple days inside the tunnels that lead to

other rooms, including the discovery of a major stash of Geronimo's stolen loot and Indian artifacts.

There was an old story connected to and circulating far and wide about Geronimo's Cave. As the story goes -- several people, who obviously were privy to some kind of information found adjoining rooms and tunnels. As the plot gets deeper they wandered for days, and apparently ended up beneath the Radio Towers area, which is a few miles to the South of this cave, where they stopped and found every conceivable stash of loot that has driven more than one treasure mad with envy.

At this place there was supposedly an old, perfectly preserved stage coach filled with bags of smelted gold and silver bullion. From what I have gathered over the years, this group of people retrieved quite a haul and have never been heard of again. A word of warning, as I'm led to believe there are large suspended boulders in the roof that are ready to fall upon anyone who first enters the main chamber. Some people say that Charles Taggart found Indian paintings and carvings on one of these huge rocks, which he blasted down, and lies inside the main entrance.

To show how dangerous this cave actually is for the unwary or unlucky, in January 1994 I heard that a man was killed by a falling boulder. And, in May of 1994 the BLM in their infinite wisdom closed entry to this cave. Now, according to newspaper accounts no one will be allowed to search for the hidden passages without acquiring a permit from our wonderful friends at the BLM. Are the wise BLM bureaucrats really interested in human safety or is this just another one of their sneak attacks to grab land while bolstering their own credibility? What would life be worth if we had to ask someone at the BLM if we could risk our lives in order to have a little adventure on our public lands? I don't know how you feel about it, but for myself and all the people I know we are sick and tired of the tactics of Uncle Sam and Aunt Nannie.

## CHAPTER 17

### Noah's Ark

To the South of Burbank rests Noahs Ark, although it is sometimes called Hat Rock. The myths surrounding this prominent and jutting structure nestled between two narrow canyons are rampant. Most likely the abundant fables started with Willie Doughtit and Buster Ward removing Gold Bars from deep within its bowels. Of all the people I've met that know of more tales and internal secrets than anyone else about this place, it would have to be Wells Hovereid, and Rex West.

Willie and Buster supposedly would hoist gold bars up from inside Noah's Ark by using baling wire. If my memory is correct, which is always suspect - Wells found a coiled wire lying concealed in brush right next to one of the many holes. Wells and his wife (Florence) spent many months excavating a cavern tunnel they felt would lead them to the fulfillment of their dreams.

They often toiled in total darkness as they hoisted bucket after bucket of muck, only to find a tin can and chicken bones at a solid bottom. Even though this was disappointing Wells now had proof that Buster (or someone) had been there. It seems that Buster would always take a whole cooked chicken into the mountains, as he and Willie made their secret rendezvous. But, I have to ask - why all the work of filling up this tunnel that went no-where? Could there have been a rock filling an entrance that Wells overlooked?

One time Rex went deep inside Noah's Ark and could hear Jack running his geophysical instruments on the outside. It sounded to Rex, as though he could reach out in the blackness and touch Jack as though he standing right next to him. Yet, at least a few feet of solid rock were separating these two prospectors.

Those who have spent time in these mountains know that sound plays strange tricks. For instance, while way up in Cable Canyon, and the wind blowing I can sometimes hear fishermen on the lake 3 miles away just a jabbering, yet, often couldn't hear Jack a hundred feet away.

On top of Noah's Ark are numerous small voids and small passage ways. One of which is rumored to be an entrance into the main cavernous structure. One beautiful late 1980's afternoon Rex on another of his Noah's Ark excursions, always by a different route, was nearing the top. This time someone was watching him through a rifle scope. Oblivious to the threat Rex kept plodding on-ward and up-ward. The guy with the gun was none other than Cayo, who rightly or wrongly believed that he and his friends were about to get into the illusive opening. Fortuitously for Rex, he decided that he had gone far enough for the day, and went back down the mountain. After a few days, the story was out all over town that Cayo would have shot Rex if he had come any closer.

Cayo, is said to have bragged all over TorC about killing priests in Old Mexico for maps showing the secret locations to the mine entrances. This Cayo character finally got

himself killed, in what some say was under pretty mysterious circumstances. The people I've talked to say he spun out of control and crashed on the 35 mile an hour bend in front of the Carrie Tingley hospital. There is also a lot of local conjecture that he was killed by some powerful people connected to the Feds.

I don't know if the following is true, but, Cayo was supposedly associated with Colonel Jarvis and Dave McCravey. These two men in 1982 after leaving the S-Bar-X, heading home, were killed in their car as it went out of control on a bend in the highway. Numerous people have told me that Mr. McCravey owned the arrowhead placer claims near the old ghost town of Gold Dust. And that he was using this gold placer claim as a front to launder gold bars that both he and the Colonel had discovered by using a certain cryptic map.

In the middle 1980's David Fingado, while heading home, after work was killed when his front tire blew out, causing his vehicle to roll several times as the car went out of control on an I-25 curve. Again, people who were intimate with David have said it was no accident.

According to those that should know - say the front tire had a bullet hole in it, yet when the car was held in storage the front tire came up mysteriously missing. To compound the scenario David also knew about the Map and was connected with Cayo, the Colonel and Dave McCravey.

To add a bit more mystification to these already odd circumstantial events young Fingado was also working for Dyna Pak as an assayer, the same property that Ron Hammond had staked-out on the Ladder Ranch. I've not broadcasted it loudly, but as far as I was concerned Ron's old placer claims didn't have near enough placer gold to warrant all the promotions that took place. This secretive Dyna Pak mining operation was hinted at as being a sham by many local folks. However, and regardless of my suspicions, I really wanted this new owner to actually make money mining. Mining has received such a bad rap that I always hoped that no matter who it is that they would at least be a little successful.

I happened to be in Tyler, Texas at the time, when on CNN News (Aug. 21, 1986) there's David talking about a scam going on where he was working. And a few days later he get's dead. Then the Feds are after Mr. Barberra for a 15 million dollar stock swindle. To my knowledge, Mr. Barberra has managed to elude the authorities. Yet, the epic doesn't end here. There's the Hunter's (father and son), that also knew about this map and they both managed to take a ride off a steep cliff into Elephant Butte Lake and drown. I'd heard that their brakes had failed, and their pick-up was in terrible need of major repair. Could all of these people's untimely deaths be simple coincidence? Or, are these accidents part of a heinous plot to eliminate or shut-up those who know too much about the treasure?

You'd think that these strange accumulating events would have ended, not so. There's young Chad Mimms who worked on top of the mountain, who had a claim stretching

over part of Noah's Ark. And as I'm led to understand was also a close friend of Cayo. Apparently Chad and Cayo built a small hut on top of Noah's Ark, and they both lived and worked there periodically. Now its Chad's turn to manage to get himself killed (1993), by the police after threatening to shoot a cop in a bar. And, just a couple of days prior to getting shot Chad told Mr. Remington that he had found the entrance. Maybe this is all mere coincidence, then again, maybe not.

On a brisk spring day in the middle 1980's, while on one of the numerous rock collecting visits to Cable # 1 I noticed a man near the northern rim of Cable Canyon. Normally, I don't pay a lot of attention to people in the mountains. But this time was unquestionably different, because he was just standing there with a rifle. I continued collecting rocks for several hours, and this guy also stayed there watching me. Naturally, I tried to keep an eye on him, because he had a rifle and I only had a 22 pistol. Obviously, nothing happened and I doubt that he could have shot me on the first shot because he was a thousand feet higher and about 2000 feet away from me. Nevertheless, the situation was spooky, and I have always suspected that this was Cayo. Then again it could have been anyone. The question remains why did this person stay there all day just watching?

The small canyon on the South side of Noah's Ark is referred to as Dark Canyon, probably because the sun seldom shines in it due to its configuration. On a brisk day, not much different than any other a bunch of us were in this canyon. I was running a small track loader helping Wells excavate an area he felt would lead to an opening. We all had worked our butts off, and there remained just one stubborn obstinate boulder. I dug and dug, tugged, pushed and swore a lot, but it would not budge. No matter what I did it simply wouldn't give an inch. So Wells said that he'd pop it with a stick of dynamite. I took the tractor around a corner to avoid flying debris, and Wells heads up to the rock with live dynamite in one hand, and matches in the other. When all of a sudden, the rock that would not budge, turned loose, rolled down the steep road-way and hit Wells, sending him high in the sky. The dynamite going one way and Wells landing with a sickening 'splat' flat on his back. Wells, was taken to the hospital for a possible broken back, and after a few days was able to walk again. The question that plagues us all is why did the rock do that? The common conjecture is that the spirits were warning him to stop. I am still baffled by this unbelievable happen-chance event. Furthermore, up to this time I had managed to not dent my pick-up in these rugged mountains, but that day Dark Canyon gave it the first nasty scar. In retrospect, it could have been worse, Wells could have been ruined for life and the dynamite could have detonated, sending some of us to god knows where.

## CHAPTER 18

### Assays & Geophysics

By May 1985 Jack had sent me hundreds of books, some that were very old or rare to modern chemical methodologies utilized to examine and exploit the various metals.

Although these books emphasized primarily the PGMs I devoured them with haste. Most of the time I was in another State, being housed and fed by the adorable Ms. Conner. No matter where I was residing I constantly wrote and called mining companies that might be interested in the Cable Claims. Not a single mining company ever said no up front. They always said send the data you've accumulated, so that determinations can be made about the potential. Untold thousands of dollars was spent in just writing and sending data. Almost always the answers came back, when you get more information let us know, which I continued to do. I always thought I had sufficient information that would make mining companies come a running, which of course never happened. This left me with only one option, which was, gather more reliable information.

The books that were accumulating provided me with a great deal understanding as to the complexities that I had unwittingly entered into. Mining was supposed to be simple, or so I thought. No one had more abundance of naivete than myself. I thought all I had to do was just go make a discovery and sell it. Needless to say the early years of this adventure were only a frustrating learning curve. Jack and I knew we had a discovery of fantastic potential, but proving it to mining companies is something else again.

By the late 1980's Jack had accumulated well over a thousand books, all of which I read, although much of the information was way over my ability to comprehend. Still, as time wore on a lot of what I had previously read began to make sense. Plus, they proved to be invaluable in being able to spot the silver tongued rogues posing as halloed good guys. There's an old saying, that is practiced in the mining game by charlatans: "if you can't dazzle them with brilliance, baffle them with bull shit".

As the years dragged on and with a lot more of the fundamentals under my belt I could see the pseudo-scientific, razzel-dazzle, motor-mouth cheats and promoters coming a mile away. Perhaps it's appropriate here to say that a promoter is not necessarily a crook. Actually, this word in mining means a person who tries to sell mining claims. Unfortunately, this word has for well over a hundred years been subjected to every distasteful adjective imaginable, due to the scoundrels that set out to mine the miner.

I would say that without the books that took Jack years to round-up I could not have proven in the labs to my complete satisfaction that our mineralized claims were of substantial merit, in spite of the disappointing results from commercial labs. While all the books were and are immensely valuable I found one especially intriguing. This book, written in the late 1700's explained in reasonable detail how to make silver look exactly like gold. Never have I ever read anything so scientifically bizarre. There was no fancy chemistry, in fact it was only one acid and pure silver. Once the silver was dissolved in

the acid it was slowly brought to a thick paste and then let dry at ambient temperature. As soon as it became dry, always out of any rays of light it was massaged into a thick goo which became the exact color of gold. The only problem was that it had to be kept in a semi-vacuum, then it could be exposed to the light of the Sun. While in and of itself, is no big deal, because it's still not gold, however, because it looks exactly like gold it could be used for special mirrors, at least that's what the article alluded to. Today, however, it could be used for coating the hermetically sealed glass windows on high rise buildings, instead of expensive gold. The other fascinating item was how simple pure potash (potassium carbonate), pure sulphur and water could dissolved fine gold. I haven't tried either of these two experiments, but the potential ramifications are astounding.

Laboratory events were beginning to culminate into constructive data. For instance - I finally received Kurt Gaenzel's Masters Thesis on the galena from Cable Claims. Kurt had developed a method of being able to prove to anyone who would follow his formulations using Amborne resins in an acidic medium that impressive amounts of gold, rhodium, iridium and platinum could be extracted. When I finished reading this data I was again convinced that it wouldn't be long before I could relax on my new yacht while sailing the seven seas. As usual, no one would acknowledge this data. And my yacht became marooned somewhere off the coast of never-never land, but at least it wasn't dashed against the rocks or sank. Occasionally, I communicated with Rohm and Haas who was marketing these 345 amborene resin beads. I asked one of the engineers why mining companies were not paying attention to my results using their expensive resins. He said that they were getting ready to pull out of the world wide marketing of this product because mining companies were not ready for this technology. Naturally, this did nothing to inspire me. Here I was trying to use the latest scientific methodologies to prove something important to man and mining, as Rohm & Haas was, but the attic lights weren't on.

While Mr. Gaenzel was conducting his lab procedures I was usually in Silver City, at ASAT. Even though I was paying out the nose running varied types of assays, including the laboriously long Shoelar Powell fire assays, which were followed meticulously from A.R. Powell's rare book. I was however gaining knowledge I could get no other way.

Mr. Powell was the chief chemist for Johnson Matthey the world's leader in Platinum metallurgy and sales. Just one of these assays would take as long as 40 hours of lab time, and as I participated my confidence grew proportionately. Over time I became darn good at assaying the galena from Cable Claims. Did I produce goodies all the time, heavens no, but often enough to keep my hopes nourished.

Commercial Labs were still giving me troubling results, which was like a sore that wouldn't heal. However I wasn't the only one having this trouble. For instance, the guys that owned the Carlin gold deposit in Nevada had been saying for years that they had gobs of gold, yet no one would believe them. They made wild claims that their land held riches beyond imagination, yet the traditional "trials by fire" assays produced next to nothing. To make their multiple years of misery short they finally were able to demonstrate that they did indeed have profound quantities of gleaming yellow metal.

Because it defied traditional wisdom, due to being micro-fine particles, a multi-million dollar electrostatic precipitator was employed. Now this is the richest gold belt in America.

Most people don't realize that if one ounce of pure gold was ground up and homogeneously mixed with one ton of pulverized rock that the particles of gold would be microscopic to submicroscopic in size. Therefore, even though the ton of rock was rich nary a particle could or would be seen. Likewise, did you know that over fifty percent of the gold mined in the world cannot be seen with the naked eye?

I'm constantly saying to myself, if the creeks don't rise, the Lord willing, Lady Luck a smiling and with Mother Nature's approval I'm going to turn the garbage pile upside down and get on top where there's fresh air because it stinks down here.

Every-time Jack made it back to TorC from California, he'd head to the mountains and conduct a barrage of time consuming radar investigations. He spent hundreds of hours with his Ground Penetrating and Profiling Radar units, trying to locate voids, fissures, faults, and metallic subsurface veins.

Over the years he produced hundreds of sheets of paper visualizing the data of his inch by inch and foot by foot efforts. Several times he found sub-surface metallic veins and later proved their existence by excavating. And, over the years he produced a detailed VLF EM-16 grid of the Cable Claims.



Jack showing a friend the Em-16 at Adit

Conducting the geophysical survey was truly a remarkable feat, especially when one considers the amount of walking on 30 to 60 degree slopes, as well as climbing near vertical cliffs with the instrument in one hand and pencil and paper in the other. Plus, when the wind blows, and walking along a cliffs edge, if your not real careful, a person could take a crash course in flying.

The major EM-16 Grid produced readings that showed a HUGE Anomaly running about one mile in essentially a North-South direction, not far under the surface and maybe 50 to 100 feet wide. Later when more grids were completed Jack determined that this anomaly must be of a high metallic content, and certainly not a simple Lead sulfide deposit.

Based upon my geological studies and historical reconnaissance, I've concluded that it could very well be a Silver Chloride deposit, but much bigger than the Bridal Chamber. The EM-16 produced readings in excess of a gestimated OFF-SCALE readings of +200%. Even more spectacular was the fact that the In-phase to Quadrature ratios are as high as 15 to 1, suggesting almost pure metal.

Finally, I was truly loaded with conclusive data, that no one could deny or refute. I proceeded to let as many mining companies know about this as possible, but it was like shouting into the wind, because no-one seemed to be listening. It was like they were saying indirectly, go away kid you bother me. Or, you're just a rank amateur, what could you possibly know that we don't already know? Besides, everyone knows there's nothing in those mountains or it would have been found eons ago.

Even as I write this, the problem is still plaguing me. The big boys won't pay us serious attention. Yet, I have no recourse except to continue gathering information. Sometimes, I feel like I'm that falling tree in the forest, and there's no-one there to hear the suspense. I guess that I shouldn't be surprised with corporate management mentality, because, I've been told over and over that the cartel won't let little guys into the PGMs market. And I'm just about convinced that whoever the cartels are they have shut all the doors to potential competitors.

When Jack and I first started running the grid lines, the lines were only 50 feet apart and with a reading taken every 50 foot along the particular line. Jack being the meticulous person he is made sure that they were conducted at exact right angles to each of the Federal Sending Stations (Seattle, WA., Annapolis, MD., & Cuttler, MA.).

It was becoming quite evident that these lines were going to take forever to complete, and I didn't know if I could physically hold-up to the grueling physical stress that my bum knees would require. On one blistering hot summer day and similar to many previous weeks, while conducting a set of lines, Jack would use the instrument in front of me. Then he'd stop and yell out the numbers generated at each spot. My job was to keep behind him about 200 feet, so as to be able to keep him on the right heading, with the Brunton Compass. But this time we didn't end up at the right place. I was off about 300 feet. I became confused, then angry and sat down mumbling obscenities, while Jack just laughed at me. He knew I was often short tempered when my knees were bothering me, and the thoughts of re-running this line was downright frustrating, mainly because I didn't know if I would do it right and be faced with the same dilemma again. To make a long aggravating story short, we eventually concluded that we had encountered a significant magnetic anomaly that was distorting the compass. We finished making several more lines over several days, without another incident except my usual

grumbling. Years later this particular aggravating area is where Jack started sinking the exploratory shaft.

Jack deserves the credit for these geophysical lines, because many of them I didn't complete. He always reminded me of Godzilla because he could do anything physical on the mountains, without ever complaining. Once he set his sights on something he'd just kept chugging till it got done. He not only put me to shame, but he's put everyone I know to physical disgrace while in the Caballo's. Absolutely no one could keep up with his pace. His pace wasn't so terribly fast, but it was relentless, kind'a like an old steam engine that as long as it had water and wood nothing could stop it.

The only thing I could do physically faster, was coming down the mountain. From where we would park in the mouth of the Cable Canyon and start to walk to the Fusselman and Percha contact formations would take us about 60 minutes. He however wouldn't stop to rest like I would. Now coming back down, that's a different story for it would only take me about 15 minutes, which gave me time to have a couple of cigarettes before Jack got to the pick-up.

I'm sure that there are many idiosyncrasies that I have that Jack doesn't particularly cotton-to, but my smoking he absolutely despised. When puffing on these cancer sticks I'd have to be a long ways away and down wind so as not to ruffle his feathers. However, he paid me back many fold with his horrendous garlic breath, that I could smell ten miles away. Somehow, he reasoned that garlic breath was OK, because it was supposedly good for the body.

In the early days of this quest I killed every rattlesnake I saw. There was one, however, that always hid-out on the old mule trail that we were forced to take while climbing. I'd be making a fairly fast clip, when I'd instinctively jump backwards, because this small rattler would strike at me on practically every trip. I always tried to kill it, but after striking it headed into the rocks, as if it knew it had only one chance to get me. I sometimes suspected that it was merely warning me to be careful, and pay attention to what I was doing. It seemed reasonable to me that if the snake had really wanted to get me it would have, because the opportunity was certainly there.

I finally quit killing the rattlers and decided to make a contract with them. I'd leave them alone if they would stop bothering me. This may sound like I was one card short of having a full deck, but I never had any more trouble with them.

There were several instances that I could have been bit without any effort on the snakes part, such as having my face within inches of fangs or stepping next to one of these coiled springs. On another day, while searching for mineralized zones, I discovered a fascinating area. As I sat down and started digging with my hand pick, out of a hole about two feet away came a fat green rattler about 3 foot long. It never coiled, instead it just laid there watching me as I worked. I merely said Hi, not to worry, I'm not going to hurt you. And when I eventually finished digging, the snake went back into the same hole. Although I've been back to the same spot, the snake never showed itself again. As crazy

as it sounds, I've often speculated that these snakes may be embodied spirits and/or the real guardians of the mountains.

Sometimes, I'd tease'm by grabbing their rattlers as they would slither through the rocks, and I'd ask people to not shoot them if possible when on the Cable Claims. It wasn't that I was a snake fan, but that, if I knew where they were I could avoid that particular place. That arrangement for the most part seems to have worked out well for me and snake. Jack and most of my friends, don't share my philosophy, and kill everyone they see, no-matter what, often saying "the only good rattler is a dead one".

Although I made this pact, I've had some doubts. Especially one time when coming down from the crest and wading in tall dry grass. While in the mountains I usually made it a habit of always stopping every few feet and looking around to make sure that I wasn't overlooking something, or stumble over a hidden rock. Generally, when in the mountains it is wise to keep a constant eye on the ground to be sure your not going to step on a century plant who's needles will penetrate the thickest soled boots. This time after stopping I heard what sounded like dozens of rattlers all around me. I stood there frozen for what seemed like an eternity, not knowing which way to turn. I sure didn't want to step on one, for that's an open invitation to getting bit. The rattling noise would stop, and I'd take a few steps and the noise would start again. So after the noise began to die down I made several large jumps, after surveying the expected landing sites. I don't know if I was in a bed of rattlers or it was just a bunch of cicadas. Whatever it was, the noise sure captivated my attention for a few anxious moments.



Jack using portable gas drill along crest

The chilly winds of late October found Jack and I using a gasoline hammer-drill and collecting the drill cuttings all along the crest. Most people make the common mistake, while prospecting, of saying, there ain't nothing in those rocks. A serious prospector will at least look, because the goodies are often found where not expected. Plus, it's wise to conduct geo-chemical grids, just to see if any goodies might be contained within what looks like barren limestone. As an example: cerussite (Lead Carbonate) looks exactly like normal limestone, and certain types of barite mimics limestone, but both weigh considerably more. After carefully logging each drill hole and packaging the rock chips

from each drill hole, they were then submitted to ASAT for analysis on the Research Grade Spectrograph. None of the samples gave any indications of goodies, except one, which was unbeknownst to ASAT that it was intimate with the Fault in Cable Canyon and quite close to the mysterious Rock Face.

This instrument indicated that over four ounces to the ton of Osmium was present. A truly remarkable discovery, and if this drilling grid had not been done we'd have never known about the Osmium. As rare as osmium is, it was a credible discovery, because the fault would be a natural pathway for ascending Osmium vapors. Naturally, this served to continue fortifying all of our past efforts. But at one hundred dollars or more per pop to spectrographically assay it gets terribly expensive. Even regular fire assays, for only gold or silver, that are properly conducted will run at least fifty to one hundred dollars each.

I've talked to many people who think that they can get commercial Labs to conduct standard fusions for around twenty five dollars. I often ask these same people do they know what is involved in conducting a so-called fire assay? Naturally, they don't. And because a few assayers advertise assays at \$15-\$25 each -- most prospectors make the erroneous assumption that "quality" is also part of the price. The real expensive assays are those that require acid digestions and selective precipitation's. These can easily run two to five thousand dollars and take a week each of lab time. Most people don't realize the amount of systematic work that goes into a reliable assay. The standard methods are: 1) the systematic and logged collection from a particular site, including a mark on a topo map where the sample originated; 2) the grinding or pulverizing of the rock(s); 3) the blending and splitting to create homogeneous samples; 4) then and only then have the samples reached the stage for what-ever type of assay desired.

What are the various types of standard assays? If the prospector doesn't know he had better get smart real fast, or be prepared for the consequences. There is the normal or most commonly employed "Fire" assay technique. Which is merely the charging of a #30 or #40 crucible with a properly prepared sample weighing one assay ton (29.16 grams), which is the equivalent of one ton of the same rock. Naturally, one ton of rock would be frightfully prohibitive for preliminary tests, so the old timers devised a scheme that was and is quite convenient, as well as practical. This 1 A/T sample is then blended with various fluxes, and placed into a furnace (reducing atmosphere) to obtain a lead button that is hopefully contaminated with one or more of the precious metals.

Then if all went according to plan there's a resultant lead button, weighing somewhere between 25 and 35 grams. This button is then cleaned and should be carefully examined microscopically to determine as much about the physical characteristics as possible for future reference. The button is then placed into a bone ash cupel that is then placed in a cupellation (electric) oven. Usually after about an hour all the lead is oxidized leaving behind only a precious metal prill. This prill can be and usually is contaminated to some extent with one or more base and precious metals. This prill, after being carefully cleaned and weighed is or can be subjected to a battery of further tests to determine the contents, such as spectrographic analysis or chemical digestions. I've made it sound simple and

easy. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are many intermediate steps I've failed to deal with, because a book could be written on this subject alone.

I have a fondness for fire assays because of the quick results. In contrast, if I am willing to spend the bucks then the following procedure is my preference: A properly pulverized and screened sample to at least -100 mesh, and preferably to -200 mesh is then rolled and blended. This sample should be at least 1000 grams and is split homogeneously into 5-10 equal portions and subjected to: 1) fire assay(s); 2) chemical digestion(s); 3) micro-chem tests; 4) petrographic study; 5) instrumentation analysis (Atomic Absorption and/or Emission, Direct Current Plasma, Induction Coupled Plasma, X-ray Diffraction, and Spectrographic). The results (generated data) are then combined to give a reasonable conclusion as to what I'm dealing with. Then and only then will I be able to better determine the probable course of action that could or should be initiated.

It should be noted and stressed that a fire assay cannot intelligently be initiated before the contents of the rock are known. For instance - what is the amount of silica, probable metals and type of chemical combination or what the matrix make-up is. Furthermore, it is imperative that anyone who is going to have assays conducted to be at least a little bit informed on the subject of assaying and carefully check-out the Labs to be used. Better yet, do the work yourself. Plus, assays should only be a guide for the prospector as he seeks his fame and fortune in any one of the numerous holes he'll dig. Likewise, please keep in mind that what I just outlined about assaying is extremely generalized. And, considerable tedious effort goes into each phase and stage of every step before an assay is ready to be preformed.

The mountain weather has extremes that for the most part are well suited to my appetite. I've been on the mountain on first of January and able to peel off my clothes and take a quick sun bath. Yet, frigid winds will reign on the next day. Generally, the summers are hot, and the winters are mild, and what snow does fall doesn't stay long. That's probably why the area sees the migrating "snow birds" who are northern tourists settling in for the winter months.

Because the snow only lasts a few days on the Caballo's year around working conditions are practical. This is not true for the Black Range, where the blizzards make driving treacherous and quite hazardous to one's health.

A possible side benefit for astute treasure hunters is to get on the Caballo's right after a snow to try and find the melted spots on solid rock. Why? Well, where the snow melts first could provide clues to the warmer, near surface caverns, or hidden Spanish mines.

Most prospectors take the summer months to prospect, especially the people who like digging placer gold. But, the summer produces the most rain and it makes dry washing for placer gold all but impossible. There are very few live creeks and because the area is desert, water is a rare commodity, making wet washers cost prohibitive. I would suggest that the serious vacation or weekend placer prospector get themselves equipped with the best metal detectors they can find. And when an area is discovered that spot should be

logged onto a topo and samples taken, which will be examined later where water is available.

It is my opinion that systematic searches will provide the wise prospector with the best possible rewards, and save a great deal of time, trial and error. I make this last statement because I think I'm qualified to do so. Why? Because I have made just about all the dumb or foolish mistakes a wanna-be prospector can and still be alive.

## CHAPTER 19

### Mistakes

1986 was essentially a repeat of the past, except I seemed to be more adept at screwing-up. I occasionally met with a few mining companies, but it always seemed to turn out the same. Sort'a like the song "she got the gold and I got the shaft", because they always wanted all the goodies and would give me nothing, except the problems.

Due to the wind always blowing dust and having a severe lack of financial resources I was always mixing chemicals and digested the pulverized rocks indoors. Naturally, trying to handle chemicals with no ventilation is insane, however, my choices were either do nothing or try.

Not only were the corrosive chemicals causing me problems, but our ore seems to be quite toxic when mixed with certain acids that form metallic salts that can become contact poisons. As far as I'm concerned our Galena carries significant amounts of Thallium, which is noted for it's toxicity. Just 3 mg of the metal in the human body creates all the classic signs of a heart attack, as well as, sometimes actually killing its victim by lining the heart with the reduced metal.

A few times while working with the various acids I would become extremely ill, and a couple of times I just knew, as Red Fox often said, that the big one was paying me a visit. The knocking on my chest would get so loud I was worried that I'd upset the neighbors.

Agatha Cristy's first novels were based upon wives or mistresses giving their men thallium chloride in their dinner or drink. The tell-tale signs of slow poisoning are loss of stamina, loss of breath, loss of hair, gastric annoyances, ending in a heart attack. And I had all the classic symptoms. It's entirely likely that some would say, why would anyone want a mine that contained such a toxic metal. All I can say is that if the ore is handled properly, the dangers are not of any consequence. Besides this element is used more and more in new industries. For example, some of you hunters might be aware of night vision scopes, well the glass is fused with thallium making night vision possible.

Conforming to my ongoing demented behavior, I didn't stop playing mad scientist. I knew that the more I learned the better the chances of winning this game were going to be -- someday. Not only is thallium great for croaking people off, it used to be this Nation's best known rat killer, till it was pulled from the stores during the late 1960's.

A few times the acid fumes would be so bad, that I had to open a bottle of Ammonium Hydroxide to neutralize the vapors that were actually condensing and dripping from the ceiling. As crazy as my experiments were I often did witness strange chemical behavior with our ores. For instance – I'd be digesting a concentrate of galena from the main vein using Nitric Acid. Then, when this chemical dismantling stage was done I'd use Aqua Regia (concentrated Hydrochloric and Nitric acids) to further digest the remaining insolubles. Often, as I continued to drive the hydrochloric off the solution would become

so concentrated that I'd get beautiful crystals precipitating. Some of which resembled the magnificent rainbow of colors iridium displays.

One of the more interesting and duplicable chemical reactions was when I would dissolve the pulverized rocks in concentrated hydrochloric acid, which was then filtered and the pregnant solution subjected to the addition of water. Then when the solution became apparently sufficiently diluted with triple distilled water it instantly turned to a black coloration. Next the black coloration turned to a milky white then back to clear, leaving no trace of the peculiar events. Obviously, some kind of catalyzation and precipitation (redox) was taking place simultaneously. Even though this is a repeatable event I've not yet learned why, or what elements are causing these strange occurrences. I am convinced that antimony is a major player in the milky white coloration. But, as yet I have not been able to completely isolate the black particles because they go back into solution before I can make a clean separation. However, it is something I every once in a while continue to work on.

Just as summer was approaching, I had contracted with a core driller, to sink a few holes in an attempt to contact the huge geophysical anomaly. I checked these people out to see if there were any complaints about their work, and everyone I met had only praise for them. Upon being reasonably convinced they could do the job I took them to the area, so they could examine for themselves what they were up against. They assured me that it was going to be a piece of cake.

Thus, after they hauled all the equipment up the mountain, on their backs, drilling started soon afterwards. From that moment on it was chaos. They were lucky to make five feet the first few days, and it steadily just kept getting worse. Finally, after a month and only 23 feet deep, they said that they'd had enough, and were packing it in. I couldn't blame them, but that left me high, dry and dirt poor.

Occasionally, I would hire a plane and pilot so that I could take video and 35 mm shots of the whole mountain range. Someday these video's may well be worth their weight in gold for my memory. Not only will I have history recorded, but will have the ground covered in such a way as to be able to look back and see what differences may have occurred through the years. I even tried black & white infra-red, which became a nightmare and not worth the effort.

In the Fall of the year I met with Mr. Park of Brain Bank Ltd., of England, at the Dallas airport. We spent the afternoon hours discussing the Cable Claims, and before, we parted company, he agreed to become involved with the Claims. But, the catch was, only if I would tie the Cable Claims in with a Australian Diamond deal he was putting together. I had heard of a possible diamond prospect there, but I also new that DeBeer's controlled the diamond market and that DeBeer's was having trouble marketing diamonds. Also, DeBeer's had considerable debt and 5 billion dollars worth of unsold diamonds in their vaults, which at the time could have meant wholesale dumping on the world market. Under all the circumstances that I could see, this lent me to suspect, that this British Company was a good fraud suspect. As a good friend and associate had previously told

me after the first couple of deals fell through, “it’s easier to sell a scam than the truth”. However, Mr. Park didn’t portray or have any of the familiar signs of a scam artist, but I still said no to the deal.

It’s too bad that 20/20 hindsight can’t be applied to foresight, because Mr. Park’s Diamond Mine became a success, and I’m still scratching around in the dirt. I guess this time it was me playing the part of Bogart in the 1930’s movie “Treasure of the Sierra Madre”. If you will remember “Bogey” was the bumbling prospector who couldn’t see gold if he was standing on it. Likewise, there I was standing upon success and I was too stupid to see it.

## CHAPTER 20

### Revisiting Disbelief

I had heard that old aerial photos were available from the Government. And, finally, after tracking down the right agency, I ordered the entire Caballo mountain range, and spent many a hour scrutinizing them. Some of these photo's were taken in the 1930's that produced a wealth of information, such as fault zones that can't be seen in any other manner. I also ordered and received a high altitude color infra-red USDA photo, and it is just priceless.

In early 1992 I was shown several satellite photos that I'd sure like to have, but my wish list is so long now, that these photos will just have to wait. One of these photos showed evidence of what looked like a huge meteor impact crater on the East side of Cable Canyon. Needless to say I walked the entire area, but found no evidence of such. The trouble with being on the ground is that signatures are almost impossible to spot, and yet, no photo takes the place of ground reconnaissance. Yet and on other the other hand, this photo I was privileged to see proved at least to my satisfaction that what I previously found and photographed from a plane could very well be real. As of now, I am not going to say more on this subject cause it would alert too many people to what I prefer to keep quite for awhile.

Wanting to know how much these special satellite photos would cost I contacted NASA in Texas, and was told that each one is in the neighborhood of eight hundred dollars and up, up, up and away. Plus, several thousands of dollars is generally spent trying to determine what the images indicate. So, these too will just have to be added to an already endless wish book.

When not trying to communicate with brokers and mining companies, or conduct assays and microscopic examinations, I was making VHS Videos. The aim was to better promote the claims. No matter how I tried to format the tapes they were crude by the worst of standards. I found that it is really difficult to show on tape with good resolution for presentation without proper equipment. But, at least I tried and learned a lot in the process.

From out of left field, on a cold February 1987 day came the nastiest shock I had received to date. I was helping Brack Callahan dig a tailings pit near his home on Animas Creek, when I received a telephone call from Jack in California. He was at his book dealer's friends' business establishment, and he put Mr. Jack Garvin on the telephone. He proceeded to tell me a terrible story that really shook me to my toes.

Mr. Garvin was attending a mining symposium where high level mining executives gathered. We had given Mr. Garvin a collection of our Mining Claims data and he was going to present the information to these executives. As he was about to present this information a person from the Bureau of Mines in Socorro, NM told Mr. Garvin that I

was under investigation by the FBI. Naturally, this made Mr. Garvin look like a fool, thus effectively stopping any further discussions about the Cable Claims.

I apologized to Mr. Garvin for his ordeal, and would start looking into the matter immediately. No time was wasted. I started by contacting the local police department and asked them if they knew anything about whether or not I was being investigated for anything. The TorC chief of police told me they he didn't know anything, but suggested that I get in touch with the State's Attorney General, or better yet contact the FBI. This made sense, so I called the FBI, and asked if I was under any kind of investigation. The agent I spoke to said to put my request in writing and be sure to indicate the Freedom of Information Act. After a couple of days, I completed the drafting of a letter of all events, places and names, and sent the request to the Albuquerque FBI Regional Office.

A few weeks later I received a reply from the FBI stating that I was not under any kind of Investigation in New Mexico and that they didn't know anything about the references I had made. So, now the logical question arises, why would the Bureau of Mines personnel make such outlandish statements? Why hasn't this Bureau that is charged with Public Trust come to me and ask questions, or asked to visit the Cable Claims. Or, act credibly by asking to collect samples, and run tests before casting dark clouds upon my integrity, or the credibility of the Cable Claims?

In an attempt to be as fair as possible, I can understand why some people working for the State, may seem to be wary of those who claim to have goodies; if for no other reason than the abundant amount of charlatans associated with mining. However, if this Bureau was really interested in promoting the State's mineral resources it would seem prudent to conduct a reasonable amount of testing to legitimize their statements/opinions, regardless of who's mineral properties are in question.

Rascals, Charlatans, Scam Artists, or just plain Con-men have without doubt caused a great deal of passion and wrath regarding mining. But this is nothing new, for predators have always been in any profession that reeks of unknowns and the Arts. They seem to be just waiting for some ripe morsel to come stumbling along the path of ignorance to be devoured.

With maturity has come a little wisdom. And, I'm totally convinced that 50% of all people are on one side or the other of the imaginary line that separates the so-called bad from the so-called good. The real question is and apparently always has been, which side is the Right side? From my perspective I think I'm on the right side. Yet, the beasts think they are on the right side. So who's right? Is the battle just destined to be waged in an all consuming chaotic rage?

To rely upon the State or laws for protection is like asking the fox to guard the chickens. After all, who are the real predators or parasites? Who's dressed up as little Red Riding-Hood as your last dollar is picked from your pocket?

From my perspective the scoundrel, thug or hoodlum is the least of our worries, the entity to keep a wary eye upon is the State, or the people in the agencies that are charged with the public trust. When was the last time you witnessed any State or Federal agency doing anything good for the people without first stealing from someone?

For some unexplainable reason, Americans have managed to fool themselves into believing that the Govt is someone or something other than themselves. I've talked to hundreds of people that are normally rational individuals, yet they are convinced that rules and laws will somehow stop the ugly aspects of life. If these people would just look back into history they'd see that crime is an intimate and proportional function of law. The more rules and laws, the more crime, thus the more people in jail. If laws worked so well we would not have to keep building jails. Hopefully, and soon, the American public will awaken and see that the only people that gain from Laws and Rules are the Politicians, Lawyers, Judges and Policing agencies.

Why people can't see that every-time a law or rule is enacted that a corresponding Right just disappeared down a rat hole is beyond me. It would seem clear that Congress cannot legislate morality. Christ, we've been making laws for thousands of years and what has it got us? I wonder when people are going to stop wanting to be victims, and stop pointing their fingers? America used to be called the land of the Free, now it is called a land of Law.

Anyone in Govt is quick to point out that Anarchy is terrible and not to be tolerated. I suggest just the opposite, that anarchy is correct and Govt is the ultimate horror. How can I justify this position? It is relatively simple, and because it is so simple it is invisible. What does the dictionary say anarchy is: "a state of society without Govt or law" or "a theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct or coercive Govt as the political ideal." In my opinion when people are really free their actions represent moral and ethical responsibilities, which is in reality - Anarchy or self-rule. But when the people want or allow someone else to manage their responsibilities they get Law and Govt that eventually stifles freedom and always produces slavery.

No Govt throughout history has been the friend of the people. In fact, just the opposite, it has always been the tool of the elite ruling class. Ask yourself these questions: Who is the ruling class? Who is granted special privileges that are denied the people? And who is supposed to be the servants, but are in reality the rulers? Therefore, I contend, that when greedy, power hungry legislators and regulating (socialistic) agencies do the bidding of multi-national corporations it is in reality only the ugly form of lawful anarchy. Would it not seem prudent to become what we once were - freedom loving individuals minding our own business?

Why do you suppose the Govt always use the word "anarchist's or right winger's" to destroy or discredit upstarts or grassroots organizations? As you quite likely know, all pointed and accusing fingers, simply try to get attention diverted from what's really going on. I submit that we in 1995 are living under an immoral form of legal anarchy that claims to be a representative Govt of liberty and justice. I propose that there is no justice

in America today unless you have deep pockets. Therefore there is no real liberty. Consequently, the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution is no longer valid, because no elected representative practices their oath of office.

The United States Govt was set-up to be by and for the people. In contrast, it has become subverted, as all forms of Govt eventually do. Ask yourself: Who's constantly changing the rules of the game as they see fit, and to who's benefit?

I can think of no rule that all mankind can live by and understand better than "treat others as I would have them treat me." Unfortunately, those that say or subscribe to the need of Govt and its myriad of acts, codes, laws, rules and regulations do so because they do not believe in treating others the same as themselves. Why? Because any law other than the golden rule has to first take, actually steal before it can be given. So those un-elected, non-accountable BureauRats who practice their art of control, without responsibility are in my opinion the very same humanoids pointing crooked fingers to avert attention from the ugly realities of their camouflaged rules. To clarify or illustrate the foregoing: When I wrote to those GangGreens who were drafting the rules for the horrid HB 556 I asked for accountability, and protection from a possible and probable dictatorial commission that was going to enforce their own rules. What kind of reply did I receive from my numerous cries, absolutely nothing. In other words, these Elitists were going to do what they wanted no matter what kind of dissent or contradictory practical logic was hurled their way. Consequently, is this not anarchy being practiced in its most revolting style? Oh, I know, it's always said that if anarchy was to rein, eventually some power hungry monster would rule. Well, what I'm yelling as loud as I can is that America has been divided into regional turfs just like any gang does. And these gangs are "special interest groups" who are on a feeding frenzy, devouring the free, while protected and preserved by their own laws.

What's the first thing an infant hears after all the gaga's, ou's and ah's are completed? A barrage of life long set of abundant No's. From childhood all the way through life all people hear is No, you can't do that, stop that, quit, no, no no. Yet, the very one's who say those No's are doing what is being denied. It starts in the family and is transferred to the highest levels of government.

It's constantly heard, that those who are saying the No's are doing so to protect the young or the innocent and ignorant. That's pure horse pucky. Why do parents tell their children one lie after another, such as: the Fairy God Mother, the Tooth Fairy, Santa Clause, and the most absurd of all, that Mr. Bunny and Mrs. Bunny lay Easter Eggs? Parents say that it's all in fun, but these fundamental concepts teach the young that adults are liars, and it's OK to say one thing, yet do another. Take for example, ex-President Bush said—to use political pressure on Hussein by invoking sanctions, but when the pen didn't create the desired circumstances fast enough our wise leader resorted to the gun.

Our Nation's jails are brimming with people who act out the mythologies taught by our so-called leaders. Therefore, those in jail are merely the reflection of who we as a Nation really are. Another example which seems to happen all too frequently as of late is about

the cop who beats up a citizen, and gets sent home on involuntary leave of absence as punishment for a week or month, with pay. In other words the cop is rewarded with a paid vacation for the misbehavior(s). What kind of message does this send to society or the young?

Jails are nothing more than warehouses to house the unemployed. Every time we declare war on some kind of supposed criminal (politically incorrect) activity, such as drugs we spend ourselves into debt and poverty. Look at California's penal system that is a multi-billion dollar industry. To add insult to injury California pays jail guards more than teachers. All States are now spending more on jails than educating the young. I'd be willing to bet that our entire criminal justice system costs the taxpayer far more than the criminals take.

We know that the police cannot protect the citizen, and never has. So what is being gained by perpetrating and perpetuating a system that hasn't worked since put in place? A better question would be: who's really gaining? As with any crime, ask who has a motive, and generally the question is answered. The answer should be obvious - all the various forms of regulators.

To those of us living in 1995, what do we see that should remind us of what life was 10,000 years ago? The ecologists, environmentalists are turning the landscape back over to the animals and our cities into zoos of savage Neanderthals.

I wonder how this Country survived the first hundred and fifty years without all the laws and regulations? One fact should stand out pretty clear, which is, if we don't stop making laws, and start repealing most of which are on the books, the sheer weight of these terrors to freedom will bankrupt us all, as well as put big brother in all of our bedrooms.

Most people who break the law have more to gain than they have to lose. So it would seem prudent to have Americans working, and being proud of what they have to be thankful for. Obviously, when a little research is done it will be quickly noticed that most of those in our jails have lost hope to be recognized as important members of society. Similarly, I personally believe that the socialist monsters want the chaos to continue in order to accomplish their divide and conquer plans of a One World Govt (dictatorship).

If there is such a thing as evil I am forced to suspect that its earthly manifestation is sustained ignorance.

## CHAPTER 21

### Goofing Around

Whenever, the chance arose that someone was willing and able to show me where caves or placer gold have been found I was ready. A couple of times, due to financial constraints I was forced to stay at the Travel Lodge motel owned by Mr. Deal. After getting to know him, he said let's go examine some ground near the Shandon, where he had found gold many years prior. Jim, has always been a prospector, and because he grew up in the TorC area, and has consistently chased the elusive yellow substance in Alaska I felt that I was indeed privileged.

As we made our way into a few of the obscure arroyos he showed me many sites that I did not know existed. Someday, these areas should be investigated to see if commercial operations are feasible. In the same general area, Bill Gray showed me where he had hauled the best paydirt to a concentrating plant on the Shandon, several years earlier. To my surprise some of the best gold resided in the white volcanic ash laying in patches at the East end of the Shandon, as well as the tops of the arroyos in the reddish hard clay.

Many people have tried to speculate as to where and why the gold shows up in the Shandon. The most probable scenario I can logically arrive at is that when the Caballo's were being up-lifted and the area broke apart small to large ore bodies were exposed and the gold content being the heaviest stayed the furthest behind (closest to the current mountain structure) and atop the arroyos. The gold that lies in the arroyo bottoms has evidently washed in, and I suspect that if a person were to scrape the arroyos to bed rock that glory holes would be the order of the day. To my knowledge, real bedrock excavation has not been done due to the probable extreme depths of the gravel.

Mr. Deal also showed Rex, Jack and myself a cave near Rincon, but in-order to get there we had to use his boat to cross the Rio Grande. While investigating the landscape we found old abandoned hard rock and placer mining operations. There is no-doubt in my mind that these mountain sides warrant additional exploration. Still, getting to that side of the Rio Grande could pose a real problem that I'm not sure could be overcome. In addition the infinitely wise BLM has made this area off limits. I wonder why?

Jack and I often went to the mountains by ourselves, and many people would frequently say that we should tell someone of where we were going and when we'd be back. Regardless of the potential risks, Jack and I treasure our independence, and I suspect that freedom is a major form of risk, nor would I have it any other way. Besides, I could spend the rest of my life in Cable Canyon alone and still not really know about all the secrets that are there. So, again and without telling anyone I take off to the fusselman ledge to snoop around, as well as enjoy the peace and quite of being alone with the mountain. A truly delicious occasion, and until you have experienced it no amount of words would ever suffice to explain.

While making the exhausting climb I notice a couple of constantly squawking crows. At first I didn't pay them much attention, although found them interesting, because they were forever circling me and giving me the eyeball.

Normally the indigenous birds look us over and go on about their business. But this time as I started back down the mountain these two birds followed me closely and squawked more and more. I got the feeling that they were trying to tell me something. Not understanding crow language I remained amused by their nutty antics. By the time I had reached the truck one of the birds continued flying due West till out of sight, and the other one kept squawking and circling me. Naturally, I suspected something was up, but dense me, I didn't know what to do about the situation. Then the crow flew over to small opening in the upper part of the Sierrite Limestone cliff.

While perched in the opening it looked at me and squawked several times, then went inside the 2 or 3 foot diameter hole and squawked several times. Then, amazingly, it came out and flew due West without so much as a peep. What was the bird doing and saying? Was it trying to tell me to look in this hole? I would have looked, but it is about 20 feet below the top edge of the overhanging cliff and is about 60 feet straight up from where I stood. There's no way that I'm going to break my neck climbing to this spot. Still, maybe one day, I'll get some climbing gear and take a peek.

A few years after the crow incident and while snooping around the area with Norman Chatfield I asked him if he'd examine the crow hole. Reluctantly he agreed to do so. And after getting up there and tying himself off so as not kill himself if he slipped he examined the hole. Well, needless to say, he discovered nothing of interest. I guess I will never know what the birds were squawking about. Still, I can't shake the feeling that I was being told something really important.

Another bizarre situation is when you're on the mountain, usually up high, everything calm and still, there comes a strange wind. When it happens it makes me feel as though something has just passed me by, but I can't see it. The hair on the back of my neck stands up, although it's not frightening, it is certainly eerie and bone chilling.

On a different slant- at certain times of the year Cable Canyon plays host to 100's of humming birds, of all sizes and color that are prospecting for the golden nectar contained within the moring glory flowers. As they congregate they are a lot more noisy than you would expect. They seem to do a lot of fussing with one another over which flower each thinks is his. Then when the flowers wilt they vanish. How they know when the blooms will occur, is another of those mountain mysteries. But they do remind me of us humans who also squabble over pieces of territory or the yellow stuff of dreams.

Occasionally, fox can be seen playing or hunting for rodents and grubs in the cactus patches. How they can dig and root around in a patch of prickly pear without getting stuck is beyond me. I have approached to within 30 feet of them, and I guess they know that I'm only curious and not out to harm or molest them, so they tolerate my presence.

During the summer there's a couple of critters I give a wide berth to, one being the huge red winged wasps that attack the native tarantulas. These two creatures are locked into a millennia old struggle of life and death. Then there's the centipede, this nasty varmint gets quite large and is not only aggressive, but darn right malevolent. If it gets on you, and manages to find bare skin you can end up with some really nasty bites. Next in line are the scorpions and vinegaroons. I haven't had a problem with the scorpions, but I know that some of them are lethal. The vinegaroons, look like scorpions, but don't have the traditional stinging tail. Instead it's a long and thin like a hair, that emits a vinegar smell that does something to its prey. Some people say these critters are poisonous, but I've picked them up by the tail without any ill effects, although I generally leave'm be.

When in the mountains and taking a lunch break I normally share pieces of bread with the squirrels and ants. It's amazing how fast the ants find the food and gather around to cart it off. For some reason I enjoy teasing these tiny beasts. But, by feeding them I make up for my mis-behavior.

Although I'm convinced that all critters of the mountains have just as much right to be there as I do, I do not believe they have more rights, as many a rabid animal or radical environmental rights advocates would have us believe.

## CHAPTER 22

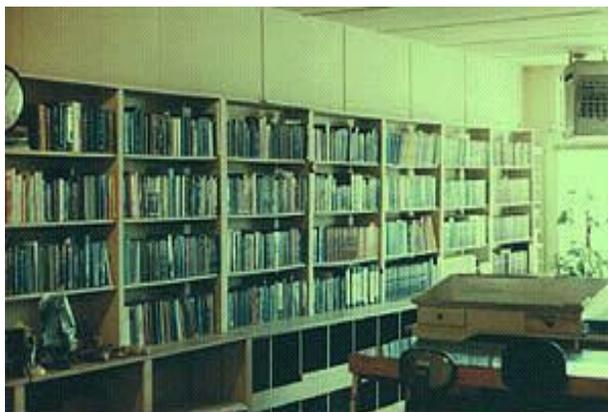
### More Lessons

On an August evening, while reading a chemistry book in North Georgia, Jimmy Smith called to advise me that he darn near had a shoot-out with several people who were randomly blasting on the Cable Claims.

Jimmy's mining claims butt up against the Cable's and we have always tried to look out for one another's interests. After several phone calls back and forth, getting the Sheriff, and the BLM Ranger involved, the people eventually sent me an apology for incorrectly staking over the Cable Claims.

When dealing with the Federal Govt, be prepared for bureaucratic nightmares. Year after year I have to be in contact with the BLM (Bureau of Land Management) recordation office in Santa Fe. It seems that I am forced to call to their attention their mistakes, and the lack of adequate responses. They want us claim owners to get our paper-work in on time, but do they care about getting it back in a reasonable amount of time? Not hardly! Most often they are saying they are over-worked and understaffed. But all I have ever seen is more and more people and bigger newer buildings. You ought to try and imagine how much of your taxes they spend each year. While visiting one of their web pages [www.blm.gov/nhp/news/legislative/pages/2000/te000316NH.htm](http://www.blm.gov/nhp/news/legislative/pages/2000/te000316NH.htm) they say they need \$1,358,955,000 for fiscal year 2001.

1988 was a less stressful year, but neither did we get funding to develop the claims. Jack spent a lot of time in California buying books for his personal library regarding anything about the metals. Of course these books continued to be like gifts from heaven, especially when I couldn't afford to do very much else, except read.



Part of Jack's old, rare & new collection of books

I did meet a lot of interesting people this year, like the Texas catalytic converter scrap man. This gentleman, over time informed me about the lock big business has over the industry. And that the Nation was essentially divided into four parts, and all converter

scrap is handled by these four, no matter what. Oh, little guys tried from time to time to muscle in, but were forced-out due to the big four's buying strategies. As I'm told they would price the contents of the converters so high that the competitors simply could not afford to buy them, then when the independents were gone down came the price.

Speaking of Cartels, there is without any doubt Platinum Group Metal Cartels controlling the World's flow of ore, scrap and metal, including the metallic salts. I was even warned a couple of times that if I kept on saying that the Cable Claims had the PGMs I would get into deep manure. A couple years previously, there were two events that I paid close attention to. The first was of a chemist who was working on the PGMs in Albuquerque was shot in the head while driving down the interstate, at least that is what I was told. The second was that a Professor discovered a good show of the PGMs near the Organ Mountains, but was told if he wanted to keep his job to drop the matter. By the way I have this Professor's name for future reference.

The year also taught me many valuable lessons about negotiating with potential promoters, brokers and investment bankers. I met with Japanese personalities, and found that words are not the main method of communicating, and smiles don't necessarily mean pleasure. I had spent considerable time with a Los Angeles Broker who ran a "Boiler Room" Sales organization. We eventually cut a deal to raise 7 million dollars. However, before it was concluded the man died of pneumonia. Like many deals in the past I would get right next to success, only to watch it vanish before my eyes, without knowing why. In-addition to this individual's untimely death, there were others, like the Canadian who was wrapping up his mining venture and was going to get involved with us when he managed to get himself dead in a mine cave-in. Jack and I also met a geologist who took interest in what we presented and quite possibly could have finished making the right connections, when he managed to kill himself in a snow avalanche.

While in Longbeach, and visiting my Uncle I met with a young chemist Alan Aeichleman. Over the course of many hours we discussed the potential ramifications of what Jack and I were trying to accomplish. He expressed a lot of interest in assisting us in the chemistry side of the dismantling and extracting the goodies. After several days I became convinced that Alan was indeed brilliant, and would be a great asset. The only problem was, I didn't have the money to hire him, even though we desperately needed his expertise.

Over time I became convinced that in order to not make similar mistakes that I've seen other's make, I needed an in-house lab to stop relying on commercial houses. You can send the exact same sample, split homogeneously into 10 equal parts, to 10 different Labs and you'll get 10 different results back. A miner should keep in mind that assayers are in the business of making money, and often the only way to make a profit is to not take the necessary time of doing a thorough quantitative and qualitative analysis. The trouble with this form of expedience is that haste makes waste. Also, there are many assayers that as far as I'm concerned are wolves in sheep's clothing. It is not uncommon to receive an assay report, with a disclaimer on the bottom, which essentially nullifies the report. When dealing with these people just remember the adage "buyer beware".

Regardless of what kind of numbers the assays generate, there is only one form of proof that is really satisfying. That is—metal in hand. And the only way I know how to generate a small bar is to build a mini-pilot plant that will get beyond assaying and into the next stage of pre-development which will consistently give metal in hand. However, keep in mind that this phase is only to justify further work and expense, or stop.

A few tools that should be a part of any serious prospectors repertoire is a microscope, small spectroscope, small furnaces, and chemically pure (reagent grade) standards. Without such, you will not be able to cross reference and check the results of any lab work. Furthermore, even though this is time consuming and hideously expensive you'll save handsomely by not wasting time/money, being fooled by unverifiable reports.



This potentially hostile environment of assaying is not limited to rocks. For I've read numerous accounts of untrustworthy blood analysis: such as—where 10 identical hair samples were submitted to 10 different leading laboratories across this Nation and there were 10 different and conflicting results obtained.

In Arizona the assayers are so-called “certified” and can put that State certification Seal on an assay report. The trouble is, do the State inspectors know anything about assaying? To my knowledge, being certified by the State sure doesn't preclude unscrupulous activities. Furthermore, assay numbers on a sheet of paper, don't really mean a whole lot. For instance, the methodology(s) utilized to generate the assay numbers are seldom, if ever known, and are therefore non reproducible in another lab, or by another assayer. Therefore, if you can't prove up the work it is of no practical value to anyone.

I've learned that if I'm going to pay several hundreds to thousands of dollars for assays, that all methodologies are known prior to analysis. And, that those exact methodologies are also written into the report. Additionally, I send no rock sample to be analyzed without first keeping a representative split, so that I can verify what ever the results may be.

Most prospectors prefer the summer months to seek their fortunes, however, right after the summer rains the gnats come out, which are, to say the least, quite obnoxious wee-beasties. To me, these gnats are like Texas chiggers, or miniature desert dwelling Great White Sharks. Consequently, I stay out of the mountains for a few days after a good rain, because of the terrible itching whelps these savages produce. The worst one is the “no see-um” a tiny black gnat that creates bumps you won’t believe. I’ve heard it said that the no-see-um’s deposit their eggs under the skin and that’s why these particular fiends are so hideous. When they attack they do so by the thousands, and insect repellent is like frosting to these horrid creatures. I’ve been bitten so bad that my ears bleed, and their toxic bites leave me going crazy for days.

I’ve heard many people new to the area, especially women, say: “how can anyone stand all this, desolate drab brown desert”? My only comment, recognizing that these types of people prefer lush green lawns etc., is that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I’ve traveled to practically every locality in the United States, and I have found no place lovelier than Sierra County, New Mexico. The only thing this area is lacking in is the Pacific Ocean, but it is enough for me to know that the ocean was here and I’m now privileged to see the Creator’s past handiwork.

A lot of people seem to turn up their noses at treasure hunting. But there is nothing immoral or wrong with prospecting for treasure, even though it seems to carry a stigma of illegitimacy. Because of this blemish I try not to get any of that smell on me, so as to not cast doubt on my sincere efforts of mineral prospecting and wanna-be mining. Oh, don’t get me wrong - I would and do listen to stories concerning any-kind of treasure. When I become worn-out or tired of the work on the Cable Claims I would roam the mountains, keeping my eyes open for a possible exposed entrance into the mountain caverns. And if, by chance, I found a pot of gold bars just begging to be picked up, you can bet that I’d call the friendly archaeologists for assistance before proceeding further.

Finding treasure is of course romantic, but just as romantic to me is finding an entrance into the caverns that could well rival Carlsbad. The exploration of such would be a thrilling adventure, and quite likely worth all the gold I could ever find. Plus, historical evidence strongly indicates that caverns sometimes contain vast mineral wealth.