

#26 Several Northern Mines Oct 15-1981

2010.25.26

Casa Dieblo
Spray Kinney & Jarvis
Spent Plug Men
one, Wagons

Captian--Several Northern Mines

1. The Casa Diablo Mine produced solid gold bars. Weight $14\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. value \$2813.77.

Ray McMurry collection

2. Spray Kinney and helper Torrez at the pack camp that served the Spark Plug Mine high in the White Mountains. Note the pack trail at right.

Ernest Kinney collection

3. The ore and supply wagons from Casa Diablo Mine left their mark in the Tufa rock road to and from the Laws Depot.

Adele Reed photo

4. Spray would saddle his horse and leading three mules would ride up the Mountain to gather wood for both camps.

Ernest Kinney collection

General Northern Mines

1. The Case Diablo Mine produced solid gold bars, Weight $14\frac{1}{2}$ lbs, Value #2813.77

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2. Spray Kinney and Garvey at the pack camp that served the Spark Plug Mine high in the White Mts. Note pack trail at right.

Ernest Kinney Coll.

3. The ore and supply wagons from Case Diablo Mine left their mark in the Tufa rock road to and from the Laws Desert.

A R Photo

4. Spray would saddle his horse and leading 3 mules would ride up the mts ~~to timber~~ ^{to wood} for both camps ^{gather}

do at top Kinney days by A.R.

do at top Pioneer
Days
by A. F.

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Pioneer Days

Several Northern Mines

by Adele Reed

The White Mountain Range east of the upper Owens River Valley has deep and hidden canyons, some with small streams of water. Mining was carried on in several. The short-lived mining of the 1930's and '40's is discussed with an analytic chemist, geologist, assayer, miner and millwright by name of Archie Beauregard. He and his wife Elva (Olds) live in Bishop. Now retired, Archie tells of an interesting life, when as a youth he lived in and around many of the early mining camps of the west with his family. He learned to be a man of all trades in mineral work through his own effort.

Beginning with Redding, Poleta and Gunter Canyons that were reached by rough roads, the mining of gold lasted several years. In Piute Canyon there was a trail only which lead to the Eva Bell Mine. It was over the



THE CASA DIABLO Mine produced solid gold bars. Weight 14½ lbs. value \$2813.77. Ray McMurry collection

summit at an elevation of 10,000 feet and the silver and copper ore was packed out by mule train.

The Sacramento Mine, out of Chalfant Valley was up the Sacramento Canyon. It produced some gold and was reached by team and wagon until four wheel drive vehicles came in. The remains of an old arrastra indicates early use.

Farther north the Spark Plug Mine was high up the sides of the Whites. It was several miles easterly of the one splendid White Mountain Ranch, usually called the Spark Plug Ranch. A Pack Camp was located at the foot of the mine canyon. Lennie Leidy was in charge of the mule pack trains that provided the only transportation in and out. In fact, there never has been a road built to the mine.

In the 1940's Spray Kinney and son Ernest took over the Pack Camp. Working with them was a man named Torres, a long known packer and mule man. Visiting with

'Our mules packed heavy equipment six to twelve miles up very steep trails.'

Ernest and his wife, Yan, residents of Bishop, we were interested in hearing about the mine. "Our mules packed heavy equipment six to twelve miles up very steep trails" recalls Kinney, "and there were two locations for mining. . . Heavy timbers, everything needed went up on the backs of mules. One time we even packed a heavy ice-box up trail, those mules could move most anything. Using the heavy aparejo packs each mule carried 400 pounds of ore down the mountain.

My father would saddle his horse and leading several mules would ride farther up the mountain into timber to gather wood for both camps". The mining was closed down in later years but it made history. The andalucite, salmanite and aluminum silicates found in that out-of-the-way place made the porcelain for the Champion Spark Plug, as noted by Archie Beauregard.

There was a mine up and over the mountains south of Montgomery Summit in Nevada. It was named the Tip Top Mine and was important for gold for about twenty years. "I built the Mill there" Archie tells, "and I remember so well the twenty mule teams snaking those heavy ore wagons around the short curves. The skinner was Clyde Wines."

We asked the mineral expert about mines along the mountains west of the Owens River Valley. "In 1916 I

located the Blizzard Group of claims and my associates C. C. Beauregard, O. E. Vaughn, James Sproul and I named them Blizzard One, Two, Three and Four. The location was high above Pine Creek, west of Round Valley in the Sierra. I designed a water wheel for power and a concentrate table, all material was brought up by mule train to our Pine Creek Mine. We mined Molybdenum and it had to be shipped out by mule back."

Eventually other interests took over the mine that has since been enlarged, and improved to what is now one of three such Tungsten mines in the world today. The huge operation on high in the Sierra Range was known as the U.S. Vanadium and now is Union Carbide.

In the 1916-17 era there was activity directly west of Bishop in the lower hills. Tungsten was mined there and it is said that mules were used to pull the ore cars in the tunnels. A small settlement in the canyon below the mine was named Sheelite, or called Tungsten City. Another Tungsten location was the Black Rock Tungsten Mine. Located in 1928 by the Beauregard family it was three and a half miles southwest of Yellowjacket in Mono county. "It produced twenty-six million in Tungsten and had to be closed out after about twenty years due to many troubles" as told by Beauregard.

In the 1890's mining at Casa Diablo Mountain was active. It was reached by wagon road north from Five Bridges on the Owens River. A Mill was built and power was supplied by water wheel at the upper Owens River. Water for the little camp was brought from above the first bridge over Rock Creek near the Ranger Station in Rock Creek Canyon, above Yerby's. It was quite an undertaking as the line had to cross the Gorge.

There were only small ore bodies containing gold but

**The loads of
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Casa Diablo had many different owners or operators during its life. Jim Jeffries, prize fighter, was one. The ore was hauled by wagon and team down the rough road to Laws Depot and from there it was shipped by rail to the Murray Smelters near Salt Lake, Utah. The loads of bullion produced precious golden ingots.

After the Black Rock Mine became active some of the buildings at Casa Diablo were moved to Black Rock, so Casa Diablo joined a long list of ghost towns or camps. One can wander over the hills north of Five Bridges and follow the deep worn tracks of the heavy wagons. On the inclines of the roadway wagon brakes were used, thus the deeper wearing of the rocks.



THE ORE AND SUPPLY wagons from Casa Diablo Mine left their mark in the Tufa rock road to and from the Laws Depot. Adele Reed photo

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60 YEARS TOGETHER—Arch and Elva Beauregard of Bishop will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary Sunday, Nov. 15. This also marks the date of Arch's 90th birthday. The couple was married in Independence in 1921 and Arch was one of the original founders of Union Carbide and Black Rock Mining. He is now affiliated with the Mammoth Mountain Mining Company. To honor this couple, a reception will be held Sunday at the Woman's Improvement Club in Bishop from 2-4 p.m. All friends and relatives are invited.