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CHLORIDE'S RICH ORE.

GROWTH OF THE NEW MINING CAMP IN THE SOUTHWEST.

A Sun-Baked Desert With Incalculable Wealth Almost on the Surface—Ores Long Neglected—Men who Have Gotten Sudden Wealth.

The name Chloride is in the mouth of nearly every gold and silver miner in the southwest nowadays, and a rush which promises to exceed that to Randsburg in 1896 and even that to Tombstone twenty years ago, has set in toward Chloride. The veteran gold and silver mine seekers in the West, who have an abiding faith that every year with the figure 9 at the end will be a famous one in the finding of new fields for mining precious ores in the West, are convinced that Chloride is to be the scene of the great gold and silver rush for 1899. They argue that the great rush of gold-hungry men to California was in 1849; the Fraser River and the first Comstock rushes occurred in 1859; the Montana gold field was discovered and the stampede thereto began in 1869; the Tombstone and Leadville silver excitement started in 1879; the San Juan and Utah gold rushes were in 1889, and that now the Chloride field is going to furnish the richest diggings found in the West in 1899.

Notwithstanding the boom in copper mining throughout Arizona and the unprecedented energy in every copper camp in the Southwest this season, one cannot go anywhere in the Territory without hearing of Chloride. The latest strike of silver ore in Chloride is discussed in this region before any other topic. Sample chunks of ore from the Chloride mining district are exhibited in store windows, behind saloon bars and in hotel offices. Stories of how Jack-So-and-So has struck base ore at Chloride that sells to the El Paso smelters for \$2,200 a carload; how Bill Somebody has sold a half interest in his prospect at Chloride for \$10,000 or more and how old Jim What's His Name has a ledge twenty feet wide with enough gold in it to pay the working expenses of ore that runs 120 ounces of silver to the ton, are heard on every side. The brakeman on the train has a bit of silver and gold ore from Chloride in his pocket; the conductor years to get away from his job for a few days to go over to Chloride and try his luck. The waiters in the hotel asks while she awaits your order whether you have been to Chloride yet, and the porter lingers after he has set your luggage in your room to ask what's the latest news from the rush to Chloride. The dullest schoolboy in Arizona can locate Chloride, near Kingman, in Mojave county.

The new mining camp of Chloride, like Randsburg on the Mojave desert in California, is another town that has grown wonderfully amid a frightful climate and on a sandy waste, simply because of the precious minerals stored there. It is twenty-seven miles northeast from Kingman, which is a station on the main line of the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe system through northern Arizona, on the way to Los Angeles, Cal. The county is Mojave and Kingman is the county seat. Until a dozen years ago the Hualapai Indians, a fierce branch of the lazy Diggers, were masters of this arid region, and murders of miners and prospectors by them retarded the natural mineral development of the locality. The White Hills silver mines, which have been so rich that, in spite of the decrease in value of the white metal during the last half dozen years, they have paid good dividends right along, are some forty miles away to the east. A more bald, desolate, parched and blistered region could scarcely be imagined. No thing grows there during ten months in the year but dry sagebrush, a peculiar desert species of cactus and greasewood chaparral. It is a region of the bloated rattlesnake and the deadly chanewalla. The coyote is not common in that arid waste and under that burning sun, for even it cannot find enough to eat there. Standing on any of the ranges of low mountains, in which outcroppings of mineralized rocks may be seen on every hand, one may look away off to the north across the shimmering hot valleys, where not a living thing may be seen, to the purple mountains in southern Utah and to the west in California. The Grand Canon of the Colorado River is forty miles to the north. In winter there are patches of green in the Sacramento Valley, where Chloride is leaping into cityhood, but in summer everything there in nature is dry and brown and

yellow. It is a region of mirages, and at times the winds and blowing sand come into one's face as if from a hot blast. The mountains are known among miners as calico formations, that is, the stains of cinabar, iron, galena copper and other metals give the rocks variegated hues similar to calico prints.

While agriculture might be as profitably conducted on the Desert of Sahara as round about Chloride, and while the Sacramento Valley will never be a popular resort at any season of the year, the mineral wealth there is almost incalculable. It is indeed strange that the gold and silver in the mountain sides to the north and south of the Sacramento Valley were not found by prospectors long ago. Several of the larger mines, such as the Tennessee, the Merrimac, the Elkhart, the Diana and the Wisconsin, are on a ledge of base ore (composed of silver, gold and some copper) which varies from eight to thirty feet in width and extends more than two miles along the mountain side. The mineralized markings of this ledge are very perceptible. Here and there are outcroppings of oxidized ore that assay at even \$40 a ton. Hundreds of mining claims have been posted in and about Chloride on every piece of ground where there is the least evidence of ore beneath, and in thirty days hundreds more will be made.

'I have known for years,' said Col. Lewis Rogers, who has prospected far and wide for fourteen years, and at last has found a ledge where he is taking out ore running as high as seventy one ounces to the ton, 'that there was some mineral in this Chloride ore, but I never had an idea it was so easily had and so nicely smelted. Here I've been living a terribly hard life on the deserts and among the mountains for years while these ledges have been lying here for some one like me to come along and dig the riches out of them. Yes, sir, I've been in every mining camp stampede from Pike's Peak to Chloride. I was in Leadville before there were 300 men there, and I was in Cripple Creek before there were forty tents up, but I tell you that this here Chloride is the best of all of them. Why, there's no other silver camp I ever heard of where they get ore ten feet down that runs fifty ounces of silver to the ton. There's that Merrimac mine, which is owned by a Philadelphia man. It is the pioneer at Chloride. It is down 122 feet now, and lately it has been shipping ore to the smelters that has run up to \$97 a ton in gold and silver. We've got seven big paying mines here at Chloride now, and there will be seven more before September, sure pop.'

No mining town in the Southwest ever grew faster than Chloride is growing now. There are many old-time miners and prospectors who say that they see in Chloride's growth a closer likeness to the early days of the famous Fraser River stampede of 1859 than to anything else. Last January Chloride consisted of a little store a saloon a blacksmith shop and a huddle of tents and canvas covered houses, strung along a winding road among rocks and sage brush. There was not even enough of a thoroughfare there to be called a street. To-day the population of Chloride is about 2,200, and it will no doubt exceed 4,000 by September. The town is growing at the rate of 150 fixed residents a week, while twice as many come and go week after week. In four months Chloride has progressed from a dreary, remorseless desert waste to a lively and humming mining town as there is anywhere. It has thus far grown faster than even Tombstone in 1879 for in those days there was no railroad communication to aid the rapid growth of the mining towns. Whether Chloride will grow to the importance of Tombstone, Cripple Creek, Leadville or any famous Western mining town depends upon the continued success of the newly found prospects.

Up to this writing Chloride has four rude buildings of canvas walls and shake roofs that answer for hotels, four stores that carry large stocks of provisions and miners' clothing and utensils; fourteen saloons and seven restaurants where meals costing 50 and 75 cents each are served on tall pine counters, while customers stand up and feed themselves like men stoking furnaces. The population of the town lives largely in tents and canvas houses scattered on the brown, sandy waste amid the sage brush. The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Company is building a branch from its Kingman station to Chloride, and the contract calls

for the completion of the work by Aug. 1. Kingman itself has grown from a population of 600 last winter to 2,500 at this time. The miners who have poured through that town on their way to the new silver and gold camp, the forwarding of freight from there to Chloride and the making of Kingman a general depot for supplies at Chloride have built up a thriving railroad community from a struggling hamlet within a few months.

The seeker after the picturesque in mining camp life may find it in plenty in Chloride. White-haired, tattered soldiers of fortune who have followed the delusive beckonings of luck over mountain and across desert, from the tropics of Guatemala to the snowbanks of British Columbia are in Chloride. Men who have been millionaires in other boom mining towns, and men who were once princes in Cripple Creek, Creede, Virginia City and Leadville, are here—broken down, discouraged, hoping against hope that in Chloride they may find something that will somehow lead them on to another fortune. There are clerks, railroad men, salesmen, lawyers, clergymen, mining kings and all the depraved characters that one sees in camp life. All the institutions that accompany a rush to a new gold or silver field are already in Chloride. For two weeks men hammered and sawed and nailed by day and night until the 'Imperial,' the finest dance hall in northwestern Arizona, was ready for the opening. Every night, no matter if the mercury is up among the nineties, the rough wooden floor of the dance hall is thronged with miners, old and young, and with women and girls from every city in Colorado, Arizona and California. The bartenders behind a great pine bar stretching across the rear of the barn like apartment do a land office business at the end of each dance, while the master of ceremonies, known in the mining camp phraseology as the herder, shouts in ear-splitting accents, 'Form on for the next dance! Git yer pardners! Git yer pardners! and let's make a night of it boys!' Gamblers and sharpers of all degrees of proficiency have flocked to Chloride. A few months ago the only gaming there was card playing by the Indians. Now hundreds of dollars are staked every night on the roulette tables, craps is played in several places, and stud and round table poker is going on in the back rooms of nearly every saloon in town, while continuous games of faro are dealt in eight-hour shifts. One night last week there was a fare game in which \$3,000 charged hands within a few hours. Some of the most expert gamblers from San Francisco and Denver are now operating in Chloride.

Seven nights a week the saloons are crowded with men. If one wants to see any one in Chloride he makes the rounds of the saloons and gambling places, for every one visits at least one of the resorts every evening. In some there is the music of an accordion, a music box or a piano to please the patron. In two saloons women from the Denver and Los Angeles concert halls are hired to sing. Beneath the yellow light of huge kerosene lamps and a cloud of tobacco smoke men gamble, sink shafts in imaginary mines, talk over the money they are making or are going to make in the new camp. Occasionally, when someone in the camp makes a few thousand dollars on a mining deal or from the sale of real estate, every one is expected to come and drink his fill at the expense of the lucky man. A fortnight ago, when George Hamilton sold the Chicago for \$9,000 cash, \$2,200 was spent in drinks, and the camp rang with song and cheers for Hamilton from early evening until daybreak. The celebration over the sale would probably have continued a day or two longer, but for the fact that Mrs. Hamilton hired a conveyance and drove out like mad to Chloride, where Hamilton was seized bodily with his remaining money and carried back to his family at Kingman.

The rise in the value of real estate in Chloride is an interesting chapter in the story of the springing up of this town in the arid plain. A year ago the site of the business and residence part of Chloride might have been bought from a Mexican sheep herder for \$150 or \$200, possibly less. The owner tried to trade it in 1896 for several steers. Last February one might have bought an acre here and there among the rocks for \$50 or \$75. To-day single lots cut from these same rock acres and bought for \$600 and \$800 each. A dozen lots, on what is now the main street

of Chloride, have sold for \$1,200, and two corner business lots sold last week for \$1,600.

'If the mines continue as profitable as they are now,' said John Swiggart, who has made and lost three fortunes in town lots in other mining camp booms, 'we'll be selling sixty-foot front business lots in Chloride at \$3,000 before September, and no one knows how high they may get by January. It makes me sick to think that with \$2,000 here four months ago I might now own real estate here that rents for \$6,000 a month and sells for \$40,000.'

It is very hard to get from the restless, anxious men, who rush to a new mining camp with heads full of schemes for financial self-betterment and visions of suddenly made wealth, a correct history of the camp. Where gold and silver are at stake and fortunes beyond the dreams of avarice seem near, one pays little attention to the histories of camps. It appears, however, that the first demonstration of the riches of the base ore at Chloride was made by a company of Scotchmen, who two years ago opened a mine that they called the Elkhart. Old Chief Sursum of the Hualapai told the white men of the location of the ore, and said his tribe had known for a generation that lead and silver could be had there in great quantities. The Scotchmen found pay ore two feet below the surface of the earth, and in a few weeks they found they had an immense body of ore which yielded for every ounce of silver, 26 per cent of lead and \$12 worth of gold to every ton. The secret was well kept, but it leaked out when the returns from the Pueblo smelter began to come back. Then Edward T. Loy of Colorado, who had obtained an intimation at the smelter of what the new mine at Chloride was doing, moved down to Kingman and began looking about for the vein upon which the Elkhart mine was operating. Mr. Loy saw at a glance that there were wonderful possibilities in Chloride for many more mines. He had about \$1,200, and with that he bought three claims on the Elkhart ledge and next south. Then he went about organizing and capitalizing the Hualapai Mining Company in Los Angeles. One million shares of stock were issued at two cents a share, and after months of work and argument the whole issue was floated. That was last November. In February the Hualapai Company began shipping ore, and had a little reduction mill in running order. In two weeks the value of the stock rose from three cents to fifteen cents a share, and it has since been advancing. Then the Merrimac Company, which had begun work over to the north on an extension of the same vein, ran into the richest silver ore ever known in Northern Arizona, and the profit in mining at Chloride was so large that the facts could be kept secret no longer. The rush of miners and prospectors began.

Strange stories of sudden riches travel up and down the crooked, rough streets of this desert mining camp. Some are veracious, but most are founded in the imagination of hopeful men, who have left home and a little business and have come hastening across the desert to Chloride, believing that fate was calling them to fortunes in the sun-baked painted mountains. The story of the leap into wealth made by Andy Flynn is one of the most interesting told in Chloride. For eleven years Flynn has been a cowpuncher, a railroad brakeman and a prospector. Two years ago he was a laborer in the white Hills silver mines, and last fall when he saw some ore from the Elkhart mine he went out and located a claim a half a mile away. He borrowed \$50 and set at work to open the ledge and see how much and what sort of ore he had. In six weeks he ran short of money, and food. He could get no money in Chloride and, discouraged, he walked to Kingman. There he offered to sell his claim for \$100. No man would so much as go and look at the property. A month more of work in a section gang on the Santa Fe Railroad and Flynn had saved enough money to resume the opening of the ledge. He worked a few weeks longer on his property and got his shaft down 20 feet. Then he began to crosscut to get the width of the vein.

'I put in a shot of dynamite one morning,' says he in telling of his mining experience, 'and ran away to await the blast. When I came back I saw ruby silver (the purest silver ore known) lying all about in great chunks. I was so excited that I could hardly get down into my mine to examine the exposed vein. But there was no mistake about it. The ruby silver lay there in a great pocket. I trembled with emotion. When I came to assay some of that ore it ran to \$6,000 a ton. I was offered \$20,000 for the mine three days later, but I was not selling any mine of ruby silver for that sum. A month later, that was last March, I sold on-half the Mollie Gitsen to George Carter of Butte City, Mon., for \$75,000. We are now

taking out ore that nets us \$3,000 a month but in ninety days more we shall more than double the quantity of ore each month.'

Then there is Frank M. Desmond, who has been a blacksmith in the little railroad town of Needles for ten years, and has had a grim struggle to keep the wolf away from his door. Fortune came to him unexpectedly. He has an income now of about \$700 a week, and all because he made a location of his California mine in the proper spot. He had been over at the White Hills at work on some machinery for the mining company there. He started back across the desert to return to Kingman last January. At Chloride he met an old friend, who asked him to share his tent and grub for a few days. Desmond went out to see the operations of the Hualapai Company at the Tennessee mine, and from what he saw there he believed the same ledge broke not far away and was renewed again further over to the northwest. It was only a theory and his friend laughed at the idea. There were no outcroppings of rock to prove it. But Desmond renewed his investigation and spent a day or two looking over the bleak hills. He was surer then ever that he was right and he located the California mine and filed his claim. The next day he went back to work at Needles.

At home and in his shop he thought more and more of the possibility of finding ore equal to that from the Tennessee and the Elkhart. A physician in Needles had enough confidence in Desmond's judgment to put \$300 in the prospect and buy a half interest. So Desmond went back to Chloride and began the work of opening his prospect. The mine yielded pay ore from a depth of seven feet below the surface, and up to date it has made enough money to pay for a \$22,000 stamp mill that has been built there, and the vein has as yet scarcely been scratched. Mr. Desmond and his partner have declined several offers of \$100,000 in the past month for their property.

'No one can ever tell in its early days how big and how rich a mining camp will become,' said Henry Blackwell, a western mining operator, who has come from Cripple Creek to look over the Chloride camp and has made two investments there already. 'If I had had fair faith in the ledges uncovered at Cripple Creek in 1891, I would have owned the \$10,000,000 independent mine there, which was offered me then for \$7,000. Whoever believed twenty years ago that the carbonates at Leadville would make that camp the wonderful mining town it is? I do believe, however, that Chloride is going to be the best silver and lead camp in the Southwest, and that it will be a town of 5,000 people in less than six months more. It may go higher. I have never been in a region more strongly mineralized than the mountains and hills are about this Sacramento Valley. The veins are unusually distinct along the hillsides, and may be from the Elkhart for four miles past the Barry mine, for which the owner has now this day a standing offer of \$130,000. All of us miners, who have come down from the north to see this desert base ore mining proposition at Chloride, wonder how such apparent indications of unusually rich ore, and so much of it, could have been neglected by prospectors for so many years. It does seem a shame that while thousands of the miners have been risking life and enduring hardships in other diggings, these ledges have been lying here among these scorched mountains only waiting for some people to come along and claim them. The matter of water, with which to operate the crushers and stamps in the El Dorado, is highly important, but the workings at the Elkhart and the Tennessee show that water can be developed as the mines go down into the earth. I believe that I am safe in saying that the ore in the Elkhart, Tennessee, Berry, Merrimac and Diana mines at Chloride averages 47 ounces of silver, \$11 in gold and 22 per cent of lead to the ton. So far the Merrimac is the richest ore producer in the camp.

It is owned by a Philadelphia man, who keeps his mouth shut and will not let any of his workmen speak about the property; but there is reason to believe that several carloads of ore near the surface of the earth have recently had returns from the El Paso smelter of sums ranging from \$1,850 to \$2,300.'

Had Felt Them. Visitors to cattle markets and fairs will be familiar with the system in vogue among butchers and farmers to determine the value of a beast.

Running his hand over the animal under discussion, a good judge will make a pretty accurate guess as to its weight and quality. At a certain cattle market the other day a well-known Irish dealer accosted the owner of a fat bullock.

'O'll give ye nine pounds,' he said, after critical inspection from a safe distance. 'Nonsense,' responded the owner. 'I want twelve for him. It isn't like you, Mr. M——, to be making a blunder like that. Come and feel his points.'

Instead of accepting the invitation, Mr. M—— backed a yard or two.

'Be jabbers Oi don't be remarked. Oi've had about enough o' that sars hem. The last time Oi thrived it on, the ongrateful beast liad me over a ten-foot wall. Oi only felt the points av the brute for two seconds, but Oi was convinced there was mighty little sense in the system, an' Oi'm not the bhoys to be afther trying it on agin in a hurry.'