

WEALTH FOR THIS MAN.

ROMANCE OF THE FOUNDING OF GALENA, KAN.

The Mysterious Man Who Discovered the Vast Zinc Deposits There and Sold His Secret for \$5—Present Mine Owners Willing to Share Their Fortunes With Him.

'Wanted, at Galena, Kan., an old man, a college professor, name unknown, home unknown, missing twenty-two years, discoverer of the richest zinc and lead mines in the world, heir to a vast fortune.' This is the strange 'want ad' of certain wealthy pioneer mine owners of the Missouri-Kansas lead and zinc mining district; it is, in brief, the story of a man, a stranger, who twenty two years ago came into southeastern Kansas, and through a profound knowledge of geology and mineralogy divined nature's hieroglyphics in rock and soil, 'staked off' the most fertile lead and zinc fields yet discovered, designated the exact spots where lay hidden vast vaults of mineral wealth, revealed his secrets to one man—and then departed.

During the years that have passed since that 'stranger' stood where the little city of Galena, Kan., has since been built, over \$30,000,000 worth of lead and zinc ore has been added to the world's mineral wealth as a result of his visit to Kansas. He paved the way whereby many men have become rich. He caused an uninhabited country to become the home of thousands of prosperous people, but their prosperity he never shared—he 'disappeared and left no sign.'

The story of this stranger is both alluring and pathetic, and yet it is so faithful to facts that the Historical Society of Kansas has tied it among the important records of the State.

Col. W. H. Stone, the oldest pioneer of Galena, and one of the widest known and most successful lead and zinc mine operators in the United States, is the man to whom the 'discoverer of Galena' told his geological secrets.

Col. Stone relates the following strange story of the discovery of Kansas lead and zinc fields—fields that during the last six months have become the Mecca of zinc miners in every part of the world:

'In April 1877, I, in company with several marshalls and deputy marshalls came from St. Louis to southeastern Kansas in pursuit of cattle thieves who had for some time been stealing cattle belonging to a man for whom I worked at Kansas City. During this trip our little party camped for several days on the very ground where Galena has since been built. There was not a single house for more than a mile in any direction from our camp. Joplin, Mo. seven miles to the east was the nearest town. It was then a thriving little lead camp but as yet no zinc had been mined there.'

'One day two outlaws were discovered at Joplin, and the citizens of that place immediately gave them an urgent invitation to 'quit camp.' This invitation was accepted without ceremony, the outlaws turning their faces toward the west. They passed directly over the present site of Galena, and beyond it a short distance they made a discovery of surface lead ore. Reports of this discovery soon became noised about Joplin, and people flocked to the new find in hundreds. Our camp was within sight of the main congregating place of the men as they, daily, came over from the Missouri camp to prospect.'

'The excitement constantly increased, until a thousand men, more rather than less' assembled each day on the slope below our camp. I myself became imbued with the spirit of things, and while the marshalls were away in pursuit of the cattle thieves I would often join the throng of fortune hunters. It was during my second trip down the slope that I first saw the man who has figured so much in my destiny, as well as in the destinies of hundreds and thousands of others interested in the Kansas lead and zinc fields.'

'Our meeting happened in this way; I was sauntering along among the miners, giving little heed to anything in particular, and noting things only in general. Having just come from a city, my clothes were very different from those of the men about me. In fact, I was the best-dressed man in all the crowd. Then, too, I was not tanned and shadowed by outdoor exposure and my appearance was quite different from that of the miners. As a result of this difference, I was noticed, perhaps, more than any other man in the crowd.'

'Well, among the men I saw one strange sad face, browned by the sun, and yet intellectual in every lineament—a face full of kindness and wonderfully sad. It was the most attractive face that I had ever seen, and I dare say that even the most unintellectual man in all that throng of people must instinctively have said, at first sight of it, 'Here is a wonderful character.'

'I could scarcely look away from the man—that face. He, too, seemed to look much at me, although doubtless from widely different reasons from those attracting

me toward him. His hands were hardened, and his clothes were such as the miners wore. His hair was dark, and yet streaked with grey. I believed him to have been a man who had seen at least fifty years of life and just as much of sorrow.'

'We did not speak—we simply looked at each other.'

'On the day following I was again mingling with the men—not now as a general observer with little interest in anything—I was looking for a face. After weaving in and out among the men for more than an hour I suddenly came face to face with the 'stranger' again. I don't know why I looked for him; I don't know why he spoke to me when we met, but I do know that our meeting brought about the discovery of the richest zinc mines in the world. It caused to be written one of the most interesting and important chapters in the history of the great West.'

'We sat down together, as it by common consent, although neither of us had said as yet more than 'good morning.' For a moment neither spoke. Then he inquired if I was a detective. I replied that I was not, that I was simply passing through the country on my way to the Indian Territory. I asked him his name, but he pretended not to hear me. I asked him where he lived, and he looked away and began talking of the prospects of finding ore where the men were working. I was more than ever interested to know something of the stranger with whom I had met, and I made repeated attempts to ascertain his name or residence—all with the same unfruitful result.'

'When he spoke of the geological formation of the palace, where the greater part of the work was being done, I realized in a moment that he was a man of high culture. His language was pure and beautiful. He seemed, moreover, to be a profound scholar, especially along the line of geology. He did not try to bewilder me with long geological terms, but talked so simply about everything, and yet so learnedly, that I almost fancied that he was looking into the very ground as he spoke. As we sat there talking a great crowd gathered about us, and we became the 'observed of all observers.' The stranger for such I have always called him, although he proved to be a most beneficial friend to me, said that the people took us for rich mining promoters. He expressed the opinion that they were digging in the wrong place to find mineral. He seemed very positive in his views. Do you know,' said he, 'that this country has a regular geological formation, and that rocks and minerals are in place here just as much as they are in the great camps of the Rocky Mountains? Even though mineral has been found here only in pockets, there is one law governing all deposits, and things have not occurred here by chance as some people suppose.'

'We separated, after talking for perhaps two hours. On the following day I met him again in the crowd, and we sat down together as before. I noticed that his eyes were red as if from weeping, and his face seemed very sad. He did not talk much, but looked away, as if to avoid my gaze. It was evident that he had sustained a great grief, and I determined to know more of his history. At this time I said but little, and he soon arose and walked away from the crowd. After a while he returned, and this time it was quite evident that he had been weeping.'

'He sat down beside me and I asked him if he had received bad news from home. At this he looked away, and made no reply. I could not get him to reveal even so much as a suggestion as to his past, excepting only as his scholarly conversation proved him to be a man of great learning.'

'This is not the place to dig,' he said rather impulsively. 'I know the place to dig, and it is quite a distance from here. 'Can you prove to me that this district has a regular geological information? I in- 'A formation by which veins may be traced and the location of minerals be accurately determined? 'I can,' was the laconic reply. 'At this time a belief came to me that the man was trying to enthrall me with his mining talk for the sole purpose of obtaining money from me. I therefore resolved to be cautious. I asked him if he would show me where rock was in place in the district, and where I might myself trace an absolute geological formation at the surface. After studying a moment, he replied that he would. 'How much will you charge me?' I asked. 'Again he studied, turning his face away. Suddenly he arose and started to leave. His actions were very strange. He had not gone futher than three or four yards, when he turned shortly about and came back to me. 'Would \$5 be too much?' he inquired hesitatingly. 'I was thunderstruck, I had expected him to say at least \$100, and perhaps much more. I told him that I would gladly give him \$5 to show me where the formation was plain at the surface. 'Shall we go now?' I asked. 'No,' he replied. 'This whole crowd would follow us. These people are watching our movements. They consider them to be of importance. Let us meet tomorrow at some place in the woods and then, keeping out of sight of these men, we can see the rock in place. I am going to Joplin to-night, and shall return at any time that you may specify. 'I am going over to Baxter Springs,' I said, 'and expect to return on to-morrow morning's stage. 'In the woods off yonder,' he said, 'you will find a little deserted log cabin near the stage road. When you get to that cabin have the driver let you out. I shall conceal myself among the trees beyond and wait for you. You will find a little path leading down a ravine from the cabin. Take that path. If you are alone I shall whistle to you—if not, I shall remain quiet. 'We agreed upon this plan, and soon after separated for the night, he going to Joplin, Mo., and I to Baxter Springs, Kan. 'On the following day, as agreed, I left the stage at the lonely cabin in the woods, just to the east of where Galena has since been built. I was alone I found the little path that the stranger had asked me to take. The woods about it were then, as now, quite dense, and I moved with some care that I might not lose the path, which seemed to be travelled but little. At last I heard a whistle, and answered it. Below me in the path stood the stranger. 'Are you afraid to go through this wood with me?' he asked, looking me directly in the eye. The idea of fear on this occasion had not before come to me, but his words seem so queer that I rather took them as ominous of evil. I put on a bold front and replied emphatically: 'Afraid! No, why should I be afraid? I'm armed! 'We walked on, saying nothing. I simply followed where he led. After winding about for perhaps thirty minutes, I came to the conclusion that the stranger was a fraud—that while he was very wise he was at the same time very dishonest. 'At last he paused at a large flint boulder. 'Observe this rock closely,' he said. 'Here begins our formation. Let us go straight on to that other rock yonder. 'When we reached the second rock the stranger pointed out a third one still further on, and in direct line with the two we had just examined. We went to the third

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