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William Disbro

December 30, 1999 11:08 AM

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Subject: [CAMARIPO] The Whitlock Consolidated Mining Company June 3, 1882 Mariposa Gazette

The Whitlock Consolidated Mining Companies Mines, Consisting of the "Margaritha," "Golden Fleece" "Bessie Collins," "Fortuna and Goodman Mines."

The above named mines, formerly located by Fritz, Snyder & Co., situated near the head of Whitlocks Creek, about five miles north of Mariposa, in this county, have recently been surveyed and platted by R.B. THOMAS, Deputy U.S. Mineral Surveyor, and relocated by John HIGMAN, George H. SCHOFIELD and others, with a view to further developing said mines, which have lain idle for the last 18 years.

These mines were opened and considerable labor and money expended by the original locators from 1854 to 1861. During that period a large amount of rich ore was extracted and crushed at the companies steam power quartz mill conveniently located at the mines. It is a well established fact that the rock yielded sufficient to pay a handsome profit

with reasonable expenses; but at that early period, when labor and materials were immensely high, or about three to one of the present, together with extravagance or inexperienced superintendents, besides the crude machinery used in attempting to save the gold at the time, reasonably accounts why the mines, as well as as many others similarly situated, did not enrich their owners and become a permanent source of revenue for an indefinite period, for the veins are large and inexhaustible. Subsequent to the year 1861, the property fell into the hands of Mssrs. HIGMAN and SCHOFIELD, who not only had the advantages of later experience in mining, than their predecessors, but of a moderate reduction in prices of labor and machinery, and the works were being carried on most favorably and profitably; when in the fall and winter of 1863 4, there came a unexpected flood of water caused by the heavy rains, which washed away about 1,000 tons of sulphurettes valued at \$250 per ton, and extensively damaged the reduction works works and mine.

This calamity at the time was a irreparable loss to the owners, who sought to retrieve their fortunes elsewhere, and by other pursuits, and have allowed the property to remain idle ever since with the exception of maintaining their rights of ownership. Mr. HIGMAN's accounts shows that the last lot of ore- 100 tons - taken from the mine and reduced yielded a profit of \$1,200. The last work done in the Goodman Mine by J. HIGMAN & Co., the rock yielded from \$40 to \$50 per ton. The vein was about 15 inches wide, but for the need of proper machinery to keep out

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the water the work was suspended.

The principle work was done on the Margaritha Mine, the vein being 3 to 5 feet in width and deepest workings about 200 feet. At the bottom of the shaft this mine is about 4 feet wide, and the ore taken therefrom yielded \$17 per ton, exclusive of the sulphurettes, which assayed from \$500 to \$2,000 per ton.

The loss of the sulphurettes by the flood alluded to, greatly embarrassed the company at the time, hence the cause of the suspension of a work, which no doubt, but for the accident, have developed mines unequaled in the Southern section.

We are pleased to learn that these valuable mines have been bonded to Col. SWADLEY, who intends shortly to visit the East with a view to forming a syndicate and incorporating a company, to raise capital sufficient to start work during the fall season as practicable.

Health permitting with the Colonel's usual energy we have great faith that we will soon be able to chronicle the commencement in earnest of a work invaluable to this section, and a development of mines equal to any in the State.

January 2, 2000 9:57 AM

Letter from Dr. BUNNELL.

[CAMARIPO] Letter from Dr. BUNNELL. Jan. 27, 1883 Mariposa GazettePart One

The Old Pioneer and Discoverer of the Yo Semite Valley

Early Reminiscences- The Mines- An interesting History of the Discoveries of Gold on Sherlocks, Whitlocks and Saxton's Creeks, etc.

Homer, Minnesota, Jan. 15th, 1883

Editor Gazette:- Your article in the Gazette of the 30th instant, entitled "The Mines," brings to mind reminiscences of my pioneer experiences in Mariposa county, as a miner, which, if not entirely agreeable, are, from the distant view of them, instructive.

As early as 1850, I knew of the existence of gold-bearing quartz veins or lodes on Sherlock's and Whitlock's creeks, but as my Mexican and Chilean miners were giving me good returns from the placer claim I had bought from the Texas company, I was but little interested in the repeated declarations of my Mexicans that the veins were rich. Finally, at the conclusion of the Indian War of 1851, a party of Mexicans came up to work for me, and camped opposite my log cabin by the outcropping of what is known as the DILTZ mine. Those men were experienced miners, and finding rich pocket specimens disintegrated from the vein, they traced it over the hill into Sherlock's Gulch, finding "color" in nearly all the dirt taken from the vein. They further declared their belief that it was the mother vein of supply to the rich diggings in the gulch itself.

Another party came later, and induced me to turn out all my men, some thirty at the time, to hunt for a "cavern of gold," as it was described, said to have been found on the south side of Sherlock's Gulch, but lost again in the dense thicket, in fleeing from the grizzlies. The tale seemed a little cranky, but my men appeared to believe in the honesty of our boy informant, and we toiled up and down that mountain side in line of battle, taking close observation till every

foot of the surface was explored. Our search resulted in the discovery of a vein of quartz, running nearly parallel with the gulch, but no pit, hole or cavern, and when the non existence of such a place was made evident to all of us, our Mexican youth with a simplicity to be found only among the gamins of our large cities, said: " Well, you have earthquakes in California, and the hole must have been filled up."

Sometime afterwards I had the vein recorded, as it was gold bearing. The Mexican encampment at the Diltz mine, divided their force, some of them working for me in the placer claim, while others left for Saxton's creek, where they found ounce diggings, and the quartz vein, afterwards known as the Snyder vein. A few only remained to prospect the Diltz mine, which was done by erecting an arasta and grinding out the "pocket"

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they had discovered. When they left, another party of Mexicans, headed by a monte dealer from Quartzburg, found the vein on the lower Saxton's creek trail, a little north east of the Diltz mine. Champlin H. SPENCER, had a small party of Mexicans from Sonora, working for him, who first attracted his attention to the Spencer vein. Dr. John M. CREPELLE, also had Mexicans working for him on Sherlock, who reported the quartz vein better than many worked in Mexico. Some of the doctor's men became dissatisfied and left him. In order to keep the others employed until diggings could be found, I allowed the Dr. the free use of a small piece on my claim, out of which his men took the largest piece of pure gold (as far as known) ever taken from the southern mines. It weighed 9 pounds avoirdupois, while that taken out by Paddy M'CANN and Pat HUSSEY, weighed

but six. Sometime previous to the quartz era inaugurated by "Quartz JOHNSON," Thomas J. WHITLOCK with a party of men from Missouri had been persistently mining near the head of Sherlock's creek, but finding the lead run out, as they supposed, prospected the gulches tributary to what is now Whitlock's creek. WHITLOCK's men found rich diggings up the creek, and tracing "float" or ragged gold to the WHITLOCK vein, were convinced that it afforded the gold of their newly discovered placer.

Taking the hint from this suggestion, outcroppings were traced over the ridge into the Fremont Estate, and at the foot of the hill along the trail to Mariposa, the same quality of gold was found, and in many instances after a heavy rain, gold was picked up from the surface. The WHITLOCK men finally made a record of their discovery, at which date your county records will show, but finding the cost of machinery too great for prudent investment of their hard earned gold they sold out their mine to me, and left for Missouri. About that time there was a quartz furore encouraged by the remarkable assay furnished us by the foreign and native Professors of San Francisco. Some of these assays proved that we had mines that would in some instances, yield us thousands of dollars per ton. One instance I well remember where a metallurgist afterwards connected with the U.S. Mint at San Francisco, reported to me a yield of 12 1/2 cents per pound, for rock I never found a color in, nor could my expert Mexican miners discover any. A probable solution of the mystery was, that by some error, another specimen had been substituted for the one sent by myself.

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William Disbro

January 2, 2000 2:02 PM

[CAMARIPO] Letter from Dr. BUNNELL Jan. 27th, 1883 Mariposa GazettePart Two

What wonder that for a time in those early days, we had golden dreams, and went our bottom dollar on the prospect? Dr. BRUNSON, the first surgeon of the Mariposa battalion, brought over two or three of his negro slaves and first prospected the SPENCER vein, but the encouragement received, held him but a short time, when he took his negroes and went back to his southern home. Captain HAWLEY was the first considerable worker in quartz mining, and the first victim. His mill was put up at enormous expense to crush rock from Saxton's Creek mines, and afterwards, to work the Spencer vein. Another mill was put up by an ingenious mechanic, whose name I do not now recall, near the mouth of Saxton's creek. Captain HAWLEY failed to extract gold in paying quantities, and his mill of eight or nine stamps, was sold to the French company in which Spencer and myself unfortunately became interested. The Superintendent of the company had been a Parisian sub editor, well versed in all that belonged to opera-bouffe, or the comedie Francais, but gold quartz mining he knew absolutely nothing. Therefore, a Berlin Mining Engineer was employed at a salary of five hundred dollars per month, and a mechanical engineer and mill wright was also employed at a like salary and board, while the superintendent, book keeper, his body-servant and cook, probably required another thousand dollars a month, for their services.

The mill wright referred to in your article, was entirely secondary to the quartz crushing mill, and was a very ingenious contrivance of the French mechanician, which, though it cost a good deal, could never be made to work. As for the Spencer and Whitlock veins, though barely prospected by the company, they reported a large expenditure in building roads and in opening the mines for future economic exploration. I will dwell upon this part of the history of those mines further than to say, that the French company fulfilled none of their engagements. Spencer went to Paris and brought suit in the criminal court against the President of the company. It was proved that he was guilty of criminal mismanagement, and was rigorously punished after the summary methods of French law. He said in substance, that the only way to make money out of mining, was "to work the shares up and down." Spencer advised me of the situation, and when he wrote me, supposed he had reorganized the company upon an honest and solid basis. I was assured of being refunded any expense I might incur in keeping the mill and property intact for the share holders, and when attempt was made by the Superintendent to place the property under a lease for a term of years, I levied a execution, and obtained a personal judgment for non fulfillment of contract. The mill property was sold on execution, and I bought it in. With a view of keeping up the work upon lodes or veins, I associated with me, in running the mill and working the mines, Charles CHAPIN, an engineer who had some experience at the

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Mt. Gaines mill. The expense of refitting the mill was greater than our combined capital would justify, and when we finally got to work, our expenses overran our receipts of gold. This was principally owing to the great cost of labor at that time, and the little preparation that had been made to extract the ore economically. I was encouraged to hope for succor, by receiving a letter from a special agent of the company, who had then just arrived in San Francisco. The agent wrote me to learn the situation, I replied by advising a continuance of his journey to the mines. The next steamer brought news of the disorganization of the company, and an entire abandonment of their California exploitation's in mines. I had pledged the mill property for money to pay Sheriff's fees, and a personal fund of \$1,500 in San Francisco, I drew and paid what I esteemed debts of honor. As to the mill and mines, they were transferred, as if by earthquake, into other hands.

It has been said that the passion for gambling is incurable. I believe that, for mining is equally so. At all events, with the English maxim before me, that " It takes a mine to work a mine," had I the means to indulge in the excitement of the almost certain reward, I would organize a company to work all the mines on Whitlock's, Sherlock's and Saxton creeks, by erecting a water power mill, located at some suitable point on the Merced river, which might be occasionally supplied with ore by a narrow gauge railroad. Then the other difficulties which beset our pioneer attempts at mining would vanish before the improved methods of saving gold, diamond drills, compressed air, and dynamite.

Truly Yours,
L. H. BUNNELL.

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William Disbro

January 11, 2000 6:25 PM

Dear Chuck,

Check out the message that I sent on Jan. 2, 2000 it has a article called Letter from Dr. BUNNELL. Jan. 27, 1883 Mariposa Gazette Part One in which you will find this first hand account by Dr. BUNNELL of his mining days in the Whitlock area. here is a excerpt from that covering your Thomas Whitlock

Sometime previous to the quartz era inaugurated by "Quartz JOHNSON," Thomas J. WHITLOCK with a party of men from Missouri had been persistently mining near the head of Sherlock's creek, but finding the lead run out, as they supposed, prospected the gulches tributary to what is now Whitlock's creek. WHITLOCK's men found rich diggings up the creek, and tracing "float" or ragged gold to the WHITLOCK vein, were convinced that it afforded the gold of their newly discovered placer.

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Hope this helps you some.

Aloha,

William Disbro

Chukrock2@cs.com wrote:

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> Has any one a line on this bird?It is PROBABLY THOMAS JEFFERSON WHITLOCK
> and he apparently was in Mariposa Co and had some connection to Whitlock
> Mines about 1850.Any one have access to 1850 CA census index and willing to
> check for this person?
> Chuck