

Forest Hill Divide Mines, M & S Press, 1870 to 1879

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 21, 9/3/1870, p.154

Notes of Travel in Placer County. [Written for the Scientific Press.]

Forest Hill, its Mines, Scenery, etc.

Forest Hill is situated on the divide between the North and Middle Fork of the American river, and 22 miles northeast of Auburn Station. Although somewhat depopulated at present (on account of scarcity of water) , it still contains about 250 enterprising inhabitants. The distance from Auburn Station is made in about five hours by Powell's stage line. For 15 miles of this distance there is the most beautiful view of any in the northern mines; to the southeast can be seen Georgetown, situated on the divide between the Middle and South Fork of the American, and on the northwest, Iowa Hill, on the range situated between the Middle and North Fork of the American -River, and in the direction of Donner Lake, 75 miles of glorious scenery are open to your view.

The Mountain Co., superintended by C. Beckman (Forest Hill), have a tunnel in 2,600 feet, and a shaft down 90 feet. The mine is owned by a company of Germans, and employs, on an average, about thirty hands. They have a crushing mill, but make no use of it at present. Their average net proceeds, over expenses, are \$1,000 per month. They work through the Baltimore tunnel. The Baltimore claims are very extensive and are owned by A. Hayward. Work was started on one of these (there are several) last fall, under the superintendence of P. Deidesheimer, but has been temporarily suspended; cause unknown.

The Jersey claim, owned by G. W. Beamer, is superintended by John Brown, and is now working seven men. This claim has paid exceedingly rich for many years, and although somewhat interrupted at present, its management has every confidence in a fortune being taken out in the next twelve months. The once immensely rich Jenny Lind claim is again being worked, with a good prospect of success. The Rough and Ready, pronounced worked out years ago, is about to be proven to the contrary by its present proprietors, Messrs. B. J. Glover and N. Hurtzig. Many other claims, of more or less note, on this ridge have a very extensive back channel, as yet almost untouched. The Mountain Co. only have worked such portion. All the claims on Forest Hill ridge extend through this back channel to the Devil's Canon, but their tunnels all being too high, it will take big capital to open them down to the proper drainage. When this is done, success is certain. As a proof that the inhabitants here have a high appreciation of themselves and the place, I will state that they have the tallest liberty pole in the State, which is 220 feet height

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 26, 4/26/1873, p. 261

PLACER COUNTY.

Placer Argus;

The Dardanelles claim at Forest Hill cleaned up last week, after a run of three weeks, about \$7,000, having employed during that time from eight to ten men.

Work is progressing on the Jersey claim which is yielding its usual good pay.

The Big Spring have completed their tunnel, to connect with the Dardanelles tunnel, which gives them good air and drainage. They have struck good pay.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 28, 5/9/1874, p. 296

The Dardanelles claim, owned by Mr. Jones, is panning out well. It is stated that \$80,000

has been offered for this claim by a San Francisco company, but \$100,000 is asked. The last clean-up for a run of one week was \$9,000. This was last week; the gold weighed 30 pounds.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 28, 6/27/1874, p. 405

Forest Hill District. — Owing to the scarcity of water a very small proportion of the richest claims in the district have been worked by the hydraulic process. The Dardanelles & Oro, owned by Janes, Dougherty and others, having the advantage of a full ditch of water belonging to the claims, have been enabled to keep three pipes running, working from 15 to 20 men. getting good pay. Young America, belonging to W. A. Freeman, is worked by hydraulicing the bed of the gravel which lies above the cement, and which will run from 20 to 40 ft. in depth. This claim is working eight men and is paying well. Washington claim, on Smith's Point, owned by Borland & Adams, is being worked both by hydraulic and drifting. It is working from six to eight men, and is paying well. Dardanelles canyon, owned by Cahill & Parrell, takes up the tailings from Dardanelles & Oro, by bedrock flumes. Dardanelles bed-rock is being worked by a large company of Chinamen, supposed to be making good pay. Uncle Sam belongs to Fox, Fallon and others, who are getting good pay, drifting and crushing cement gravel.

The Jersey, owned by Reamer & Brown, continues to sustain its reputation as one of the best paying claims in the district.

Big Spring, owned by Newman, Pecht and others, is working from 6 to 8 men, regular pay and good prospects.

The Emily, owned by Langstuff, Harper, Wilson and Lawler. During the past fall and winter they have run a bed-rock tunnel about 500 ft. in order to get fall, and are now taking good pay. Dr. Smith's claim, situated about half a mile southeast of Forest Hill, known as Seam or Vein diggings, which has not been worked on account of the scarcity of water, has recently been leased to Shorkey and Lathrop, who will work it on the shares. This claim prospects well.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 32, 7/8/1876, p. 33

Placer County Mines.

[By our own Correspondent.—No. 1.]

The above would probably be classed among the Forest Hill claims, several of which are well spoken of, such as the Modoo, Big Spring, San Francisco, Hope and Baltimore; the two last named now at work, as also the Dardanelles and Oso. The Consolidation has a frontage of 2,200 feet, 1,600 feet opened and now being worked; bank from 130 to 150 feet high and extending one mile into the hill. This is one of the rich claims of this divide, having yielded up in the past at least a round million, according to the best information at hand, the books showing \$160,000 in three years, and worked since 1853. It is at present and for the past four years has been averaging from \$25,000 to \$30,000 per Beaton, according to supply of water. and is believed that this amount could be easily doubled with the use of larger and better machinery for working.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 34, 6/9/1877, p. 365

McGilvery & Co., the purchasers of the Dardanelles and Oro hydraulic claims, near Forest hill, have closed down for the season, and express themselves, we understand, as very well satisfied with the results. They propose putting on a force of men for the purpose of running a hydraulic tunnel and fitting up their claims generally for the next season.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 35, 10/27/1877, p. 261

Forest Hill Items.—Placer Argus, Oct. 20: This has been a dull season for miners, none of them having been doing anything worth mentioning, owing to the want of water. What little has been done and is doing, is in way of preparation for the winter's rains. The Oro Con., of which Mr, Joseph McGillsray is Superintendent, has had about 100 men at work enlarging their ditch. When completed, it will carry from two to three times as much water as formerly. They are preparing for a big run this winter. At Breece & Wheeler's claim everything is shipshape and ready for operations. A good deal of bullion was taken out of the Adams Bros, claim last winter. They are now preparing to drift during the winter, it being their intention not to hydraulic while water rates are so high. They are ready for washing at any time. The owners of the Big Spring claim, south of the Dardanelles, are having some large pipe made to facilitate matters this winter.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 35, 11/17/1877, p. 306

The Placer Herald says: The activity displayed by the miners of this section in thoroughly and extensively fitting up their claims in anticipation of a bounteous water season has given quite a stimulus to the town of Forest Hill. Improving and repairing has been the order for some time. A vacant house is not to be found in that town, and business of all kinds is fairly prosperous. The Dardanelles Consolidated company, whose property comprises what was formerly known as the Oro and Dardanelles claims and ditch property, under the superintendency of Mr. Joseph McGillivry, have had a large force of men employed all summer and fall, and have effected some extensive and important improvements. They have cleaned out and enlarged their ditch from head to foot, a work which will materially increase the water supply of that part of the divide. They are now at work on the claim running drifts and fitting up generally for the washing season. In place, of the one pipe that heretofore carried water down into the claim, they are preparing to put down two pipes, each 22 inches in diameter. These will carry a large amount of water and will enable them to tear away the bank at an astonishingly fast rate. The gravel in this company's claim is known to be rich, and with their increased facilities for washing it, we may expect to hear of big returns from this source as soon as the water season commences.

Willis Jones is fitting up the Green Spring claim, which adjoins the Dardanelles Consolidated on the east, and intends to work it this winter.

West of the Dardanelles Consolidated, lies the Big Spring claim, owned by May, Pecht & Neuman. This is thought by some to be one of the best hydraulic claims for its size on the ridge. The owners have been drifting this past summer and have made it pay. They propose, however, to wash during the water season, and with this view have put in new pipe and otherwise fitted up their claim in excellent shape.

The Jersey, which lies just under the hill from town, owned by Howell & Co. , is a drift claim, and has been operated steadily all summer, yielding, we understand, very fair returns.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 36, 1/5/1878, p. 5

PLACER.

Divide Mining Items — Placer Herald, Dec. 29: From Mr. A Wilson, of Forest Hill, who has been visiting Auburn this last week, we learn that at the Centennial Mine near Todd's valley, work is being pushed ahead vigorously and the gravel is paying well.

POND & CONSTABLE. of Todd's valley, have their hydraulic mines all fitted up in fine condition for washing and are only waiting for rain enough to fill the ditches. They fired off a big blast recently that did excellent execution..

The Big Spring claim near Forest Hill, run by the May boys, tenth is fitted up for hydraulicing, but in the absence of water as yet the parties are drifting away, determined if they can't get gold one way they will have it another.

The Dardanelles, In Forest Hill district, have completed their extensive and expensive season's repairs to both mines and ditches, and have considerable ground blasted. With plenty of water, this company will make things lively.

The Green Spring, east of the Dardanelles, W. Jones, Superintendent, is fitted in good shape for hydraulicing, but like the other hydraulic mines is waiting for water.

At the Hope mine, run by Barlow & Phillips, they are drifting, and it is understood are doing well.

Reamer is prospecting and fitting up the Baltimore for future operations.

The Jersey, a drift claim, owned by a Welsh company, is now doing well. They have been troubled some with bad air in the past, but this difficulty now being overcome, they are in a fair way to make things count.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 36, 1/12/1878, p. 20

PLACER.

Divide Mining- Items.—Dutch Flat Forum, Jan. 3: From Mr. A. Wilson, of Forest Hill, who has been visiting Auburn, this week, we learn that at the Centennial mine, near Todds Valley, work is being pushed ahead vigorously and the gravel is paying well. Pond & Constable, of Todd's Valley, have their hydraulic mines all fitted up in fine condition for washing and are only waiting for rain enough to fill the ditches. They fired off a big blast recently that did excellent execution. The Big Spring claim, near Forest Hill, run by the May boys is fitted up for hydraulicing, but in the absence of water as yet the parties are drifting away, determined if they can't get hold one way they will have it another. The Dardanelles, in the Forest Hill district, have completed their extensive and expensive season's repairs to both mines and ditches and have considerable ground blasted. With plenty of water this company will make things lively. The Green Spring, east of the Dardanelles, W. Jones, Superintendent, is fitted up for hydraulicing, but, like the other hydraulic mines, is waiting for water. At the Hope mine, run by Barlow & Phillips, they are drifting and* is understood are doing well. Reamer is prospecting and fitting up the Baltimore for future operations. The Jersey, a drift claim, owned by a Welsh company, is now doing well. They have been troubled some with bad air in the past, but this difficulty being overcome, they are now in a fair way to make things count.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 36, 3/2/1878, p. 132

At Forest Hill.—Joseph McGillivray is using 1,200 inches of water, and under his management the Old Dardanelles is assuming the activity of its palmiest days. No doubt he will render a good account to his company when he gets through washing next summer. He is running the mines after his own notion, and he is the right man in the right place. Having had a long and successful experience at hydraulic mining. This gentleman was formerly the owner of the famous Ranch and Hydraulic claim in Trinity county, from which in the early days he made a good deal of money.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 36, 4/6/1878, p. 212

PLACER.

Cleaning Up.—Herald, March 30: A number of the hydraulic mines in Placer have made one run and had a clean-up, and from this time on to the close of the mining season cleaning up in one mine or another will be an every day occurrence.

McGilvrey, of the Dardanelles and Oro claims, at Forest Hill, where they are and have been running two pipes night and day since the commencement of the water season, has also made a clean-up with, we understand, encouraging results. In these claims a blast was fired last week of 11,000 pounds of Judson powder, which is said to have three times the explosive force of common black powder. Its effect, was effectual and satisfactory.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 36, 5/11/1878, p. 296

Drift Mining in Placer County.

Since speaking last week of the Pliocene channels that traverse so large a portion of the mining districts of California, and which are now being opened up at many points, we have obtained the following more full particulars of the claim belonging to the Blue Gravel Range company in Placer county, this being one of the most promising and accessible localities of the kind yet fixed upon for exploitation, and a description of which will convey a tolerably good idea of all the others.

The property of this company, which embraces an area of nearly 1,000 acres, is situated on the Forrest Hill Divide in the neighborhood of Todd's valley, being about 18 miles from Auburn station, on the Central Pacific railroad. It lies on the southerly slope of the ridge overlooking the South Fork of the American river, which runs in a narrow gorge more than a thousand feet below. Centrally through this tract passes one of the ancient, gold-bearing channels, buried here to a depth of about 130 feet. Portions of the ground in this vicinity were formerly covered with rich surface placers, fragments of which still remain. There are also within the boundaries of the company's tract extensive banks of auriferous gravel, some of which might be washed to advantage by the hydraulic method and will most likely some day be so handled. The deposits resting in the beds of the buried river constitute here, however, the feature of peculiar interest and greatest value, these being also the most easily available for productive operations. As the section of the old channel owned by the company covers a linear extent of nearly 10,000 feet, having an average width of about 1,600 feet on the surface, they are supposed to have something like five or six million cubic yards of rich bottom gravel, which, according to all precedent, will yield at least \$1 per yard, the average elsewhere having been much higher.

As will be seen by an inspection of Doolittle's map of Central California, there are two main channels bearing southwest across the country here, the one coming in by Forrest hill and

Todd's valley, and the other from Yankee Jim's, both distinguished for the large quantities of gold that have been extracted from them; first by drifting and afterwards by the hydraulic process. The group of claims worked along the Forrest hill branch have yielded as much gold, for the area of ground worked, as any other in California, the following being the product of some of the more noted of their number: The Independence, \$450,000; New Jersey, \$850,000; Deidesheimer, \$650,000; the Jenny Lind, \$1,100,000; mostly from the upper and poorer red gravel, and the Dardanelles, \$2,000, 000 taken out of the lower stratum of rich blue gravel, the area of ground worked over in these several claims not having exceeded four or five acres.

A short distance above the claim of the company we are speaking of, these two channels come together, the united channel thence pursuing its course through their ground to its lower end, where the old river bed finally disappears, having been eroded and swept away by the North Fork of the American. That this section of the channel, so deepened and augmented, is well stocked with gold, would be fairly deducible from its ascertained character above, had this fact not been established by actual workings and experimental tests. The Spring Garden claim adjoining this, on the north, has been opened and shown itself prolific in gold. The shaft put down by this company at a central point on their own ground, had also reached good gravel at the time the water broke in upon them, stopping further operations. The fertility of the channel here has, in fact, never been with the owners, mostly poor men, a question of such serious import as that of commanding the means for properly opening it. They know, as a matter of fact, that they have a section of the old Pliocene river here, and they know inferentially that it is rich in gold, but they have never been able to get it so thoroughly opened that they 'could reach and remove its contents.

Even in the flush times this was looked upon as a favorable site for a prospecting operation, As early as 1857 a company of miners started a tunnel from the bank of the North Fork with a view to developing the lower end of this channel. Having been disrupted by the Frazier River excitement, this company scattered the next year and never re-assembled, nor, so far as known, has any of them ever come back to prosecute the work or assert any claim to the, ground, which has now for a period of nearly 20 years been in the peaceful possession of the company or their predecessors.

After sinking a shaft to the depth of nearly 100 feet at the point mentioned, and being there prevented from going on by an influx of water too great for them to handle with their inadequate pumping apparatus, this company drove a tunnel from the lower end of their claim. After getting in several hundred feet they found the bedrock, pitching before them, showing that they were too high to bottom the channel. The tunnel was then carried down the incline of the bedrock and a steam pump rigged for hoisting the water. But the machinery here again proved insufficient, forcing the company to once more suspend operations. This occurred several years ago, and as the limited means of the company were by these efforts exhausted, nothing further has since been done towards the development of this property. .

Encouraged by the large returns these drift diggings are yielding wherever they have been effectually opened, the owners have concluded to make another attempt at getting their ground in proper shape for working. All that is now required to secure that end is the sinking of the present vertical shaft some 20 or 30 feet farther, and the transferring of the engine and pumps from the incline to the old shaft, there to be used for hoisting and pumping purposes, all of which can be accomplished with an amount of money so small that they ought to have no trouble in getting it.

In putting down this shaft the following material was penetrated: first, a body of cement

40 feet thick; then, a three-foot stratum of gravel ; next, another mass of cement 45 feet in thickness ; followed by six feet more of gravel ; and finally a sedimentary deposit nine feet thick, underlaid by a bed of large boulders and washed gravel, indicating close proximity to the rich stratum of blue gravel always found next the bedrock. All the gravel here intersected showed well in coarse gold, the best prospects being obtained from that nearest the bottom. With their claim in good working shape, the owners are confident that it would be netting handsome profits within 30 days after starting up.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 37, 8/24/1878, p. 116

Forest Hill.—Systematic work is going on at several places on the Forest hill divide, the object of which is to get at the deep gravel deposits in the bottom of the old river bed, under the divide. The Excelsior company and Howell & Co., owners of the Jersey, Independent, Jenny Lind and other old claims, are among those that are pushing the development of this locality.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 37, 12/7/1878, p. 360

Judson Powder.—On last Friday a blast of 25,200 pounds of Judson powder was exploded in the Dardanelles Consolidated mining claim, at Forest Hill, Placer county. The Nevada Transcript describes the blast and its effect: "It was in three different drifts and 12 chambers, the powder line being 85 feet back of the face of the bank. The bank was about 200 feet high. The force of ^the explosion moved the entire mass, and so pulverized and threw it that a person can now walk directly over the face of it in any direction. A careful survey shows that 13 cubic yards of dirt was broken to each pound of powder used." On Saturday another blast of the same powder was fired in the Big Bonanza gravel mine, at Gold Run. According to the same authority, 17,500 pounds was used, and 166,000 cubic yards of dirt put in readiness for washing

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 38, 6/28/1879, p. 397

Law Suit. —The suit of the Dardanelles gravel mining company vs. the Mayflower gravel mining company, which has occupied the District Court for the past 11 days, has resulted in a drawn fight thus far, the jury having disagreed. They stood eight to three in favor of plaintiff, one man having been excused from serving, because of illness. The suit was instituted to recover damages caused by the defendant washing away a ditch belonging to plaintiff, and also to obtain a perpetual injunction restraining the former from further working that part of their claim where the alleged damage was wrought.

Mining and Scientific Press, V. 39, 12/20/1879, p. 389

Divide Items.—Placer Herald, Dec. 13: The mining season has begun early this year upon the Forest Hill divide, most of the ditches already having considerable water in them. Pond & Constable, at Todd's Valley, are running with about 500 inches, and the prospects are that this will be much increased by the late storm. They will put off a blast of 18,000 pounds of Judson powder during the coming week. The Dardanelles mine is running one pipe with a capacity of 1,400 inches, night and day, and will start up another in a few days, Two more blasts will be fired during the coming week. About 9,000 pounds of Judson powder will be used in each. An upraise from the end of the Vigilance tunnel in this mine has been run into a channel of rich pay gravel.