

"The Long Rocky Road"

The History of the Meadow View Mine

Fourth of July Creek, Custer County, Idaho

by
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Introduction

High in a glacier-sculpted canyon east of central Idaho's Sawtooth Valley, up a long rocky road, there is a place where the beauty of the mountains and the toils of men have entwined. Since George Washington Blackman first prospected this place in the 1870's, its mineral wealth has drawn men with dreams. It is not a place of gold rushes. It is a place where the mountains have yielded metals such as tungsten, molybdenum, zinc, lead and silver. Blackman left his mark on these mountains, both with his prospects and with the landmarks that bear his name. Blackman Peak and Washington Peak are among these monuments to his toil. Others followed Blackman to this place, struggling up the ten miles of bumpy trail to the head of the canyon to work their prospects. Scattered log cabins, old adits, and bits and pieces of old mining equipment are testimony to these labors of the past.

The stories of these miners have faded from memory. Some are now known only by name and not by their accomplishments. There is a sense that a lot of work was conducted here, and yet few people know the stories. Of those who worked this place, one man stands out as having followed closely in the steps of George Blackman, leaving his own mark on the history and lore of this place. His name is Elmer Enderlin, and this is the story of his mine.

Arrival at Fourth of July Creek

Elmer Elwood Enderlin lived the life of a hard rock miner. He was born April 23, 1912, near Lower Lake, Lake County, California, and began his mining career at the age of 21. He worked in mines throughout the West, from California to Utah to Montana. As a self-professed "tramp miner," he never stayed in one place very long. After World War II, Elmer drifted between the mines in Butte, Montana, and mines in northern Idaho. His first experience with Idaho mining was at the Sunshine mine in Wallace, where he lasted one shift. Next, he headed for the Couer D'Alene Mines in Kellogg, where he stuck it out for about one month. From there, he went to the Highland-Surprise Consolidated Mining Company in Kellogg, where he worked for about three years (one of his longest stints at one mine). It was at the Highland-Surprise that the story of the Meadow View mine begins.

One day, in 1949, some of the men working with Elmer at the Highland-Surprise showed him some specimens of galena collected from down by Stanley, Idaho, in the Boulder Mining District. Elmer thought the ore specimens looked promising, so he drove his brand-new '49 Ford sedan out to the prospect to investigate. The prospect was called the Rupert mine, and it was

located near the headwaters of Fourth of July Creek near Blackman Peak. It was not an easy site to get to, however. Access was via a ten-mile-long rough and rocky trail that followed the course of Fourth of July Creek up to a cluster of mining claims at the 9,000 foot elevation. These claims included the Deer Trail and Confidence mines. The Rupert lay a short distance to the south of these workings, on a west-facing slope on the opposite side of the canyon from Blackman Peak. It was owned by Rupert Nice together with four or five other claims called the FDR-1, FDR-2, FDR-3, etc. Nice's grandfather had once held claim to the mine years before.

Elmer liked what he saw at the Rupert mine, so he formed a partnership with two other gentlemen to work it. Under the terms of the deal, Elmer would arrange to have a road built to the Rupert, while the others would arrange to bring up an air compressor and other mining machinery. Elmer had the road built, but his partners never showed up with the equipment. "It all blew up," according to Elmer. The road was built in 1949 by Jim Bradley of the Tunnel Rock Ranch. Jim had an Allis-Chalmers HD5 bulldozer, and charged about \$75 per hour to get the job done. The whole project cost about \$200 to \$300, paid for by Elmer.

Meanwhile, Elmer had set himself to the task of arranging for lodging in these primitive surroundings. There was an old log cabin on the nearby Confidence claims that was available, so Elmer made arrangements with the owners (Arnold and Marie Fuller, and Louis and Ada Gossi) to lease the cabin and surrounding claims. The deal with Fullers and Gossis was struck on September 8, 1949, to lease with an option to buy the Confidence Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4; Confidence Millsites Nos. 1, 2; and Silver Dollar Nos. 1, 2, 3 claims. While waiting for Jim Bradley to complete the road, Elmer improved his new-found headquarters by building a log privy nearby! So it was that Elmer Enderlin had officially set up operations on Fourth of July Creek!

Once settled in, Elmer began to work his various leased claims. To help him, he formed a partnership with Henry Connolly (1882-1975).¹ Connolly had worked for the Sidney Mining Company in Kellogg, and the two had met at the local restaurant where each frequently ate. Connolly was sixty-seven years old, retired and drawing social security at the time they formed their partnership, but he still liked to keep a hand in mining. Connolly was more than just extra help for Elmer, he also had a new 1949 Studebaker truck, which was a welcome addition to the equipment!

By the winter of 1949, the partnership of Enderlin and Connolly had assembled quite the mining empire. Not only were they working the Confidence claims at Fourth of July Creek and the Silver Dollar claims at nearby Strawberry Basin, they also had a 50:50 partnership in claims at Pine Creek, near Kellogg!

When not working the prospects, Elmer enjoyed hunting and exploring his new-found empire at Fourth of July Creek. On many occasions, he would go out hunting for deer and elk in the area. On one of his first hunts in 1949, Elmer noticed a red-stained streak of color on an exposure of rock in a basin known as Five Lakes, about one and a half miles south of the Rupert mine. He had passed Phyllis Lake, and was on his way up the ridge toward Washington Peak when he made the discovery. After collecting a few pieces of interesting rock from the outcrop, Elmer continued on his way toward Washington Basin to attend to the more pressing duty of finding some deer meat!

Connolly was not impressed when Elmer arrived back at the cabin after his hunt. When he asked Elmer if his hunt had been successful, Elmer responded that he didn't get any meat, but "I sure got some pretty rocks!" Connolly had expected venison, not rocks, and he was more anxious to get back to Kellogg to see a lady friend of his than to stake another claim! Connolly exclaimed, "Rocks! Oh, we got piles of rocks," and added, "Christ! It would cost a million dollars to put in a road up there!" Nevertheless, Elmer convinced him to hike up the ridge to have a look. Connolly was skeptical, but in spite of his protests he agreed to help Elmer stake new claims, provided he had a 1/3 interest in the deal. They hurriedly staked their new claims late in 1949.

The beauty of the alpine surroundings at their new prospect was breathtaking. The claims occupied a landscape sculpted by ice-age glaciers, with rock-step lakes and mountain meadows surrounded by arête peaks rising over a thousand feet above them. High on the cliffs above, mountain goats clattered on the rocky ledges, while rock rabbits (picas) chirped from beneath jumbles of talus alongside the meadow. So inspiring was this spot, that the prospectors named their mine in its honor... calling it the Meadow View.

In spite of the beauty of their mountain setting, the partners knew that winter was approaching. This high in the mountains, snow storms could come up quickly, leaving the roads impassable. With the staking of the Meadow View claims, their work for the season was done, and they returned to Kellogg to focus on other matters over the winter.

The D.M.E.A. Contract

In the summer of 1950, Enderlin and Connolly returned to their claims on Fourth of July Creek. The trek up the canyon was difficult so early in the season, and they shoveled considerable amounts of snow and rock to clear their way. One of their goals in this early visit was to relocate the Meadow View claims. They had discovered an error in the claim layout, which resulted in gaps ("fractions") between some of the claims. To clear up this problem, they reset the claim posts and filed new mining locations that summer. The new claims were filed in August, 1950, and their boundaries have remained unchanged since that time.

Aside from restaking the claims in 1950, little else was done at the Meadow View that year. The partners had little money between them, and besides, there was much planning that needed to be done to determine the best way to mine the claims. There were actually two veins in the outcrop, spaced about 70 feet apart. The No. 1 vein ranged in width from four to twelve feet, and could be traced for a distance of two hundred feet. The No. 2 vein averaged about three feet in width, and could be traced for over one hundred feet along strike. They aligned with other vein outcrops on a trend extending over three thousand feet along strike. The veins were highly sulfidic, containing abundant pyrrhotite (iron sulfide). Sphalerite (zinc sulfide) and scheelite (calcium tungstate) constituted the primary ore minerals.

Although little work was done at the Meadow View in 1950, it was a pivotal year for the partnership in terms of funding. The Korean War had caused economic difficulties within the United States. To expand production and insure economic stability, the 81st Congress enacted

Public Law 81-774, the Defense Production Act of 1950. Under Title III, Section 302 of the Act, the exploration, development and mining of critical and strategic metals and minerals was encouraged to aid in national defense. In December, 1950, The Defense Minerals Administration (DMA) was organized to act as direct contracting agency under the U.S. Department of the Interior. It was the DMA's responsibility to handle exploration contract applications and to dispatch U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and U.S. Bureau of Mines (USBM) field teams to perform field investigations on mines under contract with the DMA. Projects approved by the DMA could receive funding in partnership with the government.

Recognizing the rare opportunity to gain governmental assistance through the DMA, Elmer submitted an application for assistance on May 24, 1951. In it, he requested assistance for work on four claims: Meadow View No.'s 1, 2, 3 and 4. His application was acknowledged on June 28, 1951, and the Meadow View project was assigned to Docket Number DMA-1734X.

Commencement of Mining

In the summer of 1951, the partnership of Enderlin and Connolly scaled up their operation. Their first project was the selection of a site to "collar" the portal to the first Meadow View adit. With the help of Tibor Klobusicky (an engineer with the Highland-Surprise mine), the partners selected the appropriate location for the portal of the adit. Initially, it was to be lower on the hill, but after careful consideration, a higher site at about the 9,200 foot elevation was selected to avoid the wet conditions near the meadow and the spring that fed it. The partners couldn't have selected more spectacular scenery for their operation. The adit was just above timberline, and located on the north flank of an unnamed peak which towered above them at 10,514 feet! The panorama below their mine panned from the wildflower-painted meadow below them outward over an expanse of alpine forest to Blackman Peak. Still further in the distance, barely visible over the east flank of Blackman Peak, loomed the White Cloud Peaks.

Once the site for the portal had been selected, the matter of a road to their new prospect had to be considered. On July 31, 1951, the U.S. Forest Service approved Enderlin's and Connolly's road permit application, and authorized a "right-of-way strip of land 66 feet wide, 33 feet on each side of the road" about 2½ miles in length, "for the purpose of constructing and maintaining a mining road." Construction on the road project began soon afterward, with the work performed by Jim Bradley at a cost of about \$750.

Shortly after the road was completed, development of the adit began. To start the project, the partners leased a 1948 LeRoi Model 160G air compressor, and Elmer furnished the drill. He had an Ingersoll-Rand rockdrill he had bought in Salt Lake City, together with an early jackleg attachment. Not knowing much about jacklegs he wrestled with this drill for the first few rounds, but finally gave up in frustration, calling it "a miserable bastard!" Disgusted with the jackleg, Elmer went to Wallace, Idaho, and purchased a new Ingersoll-Rand Model 48 stopedrill (called a "buzzie"). Working with the buzzie was not very pleasant either, but it beat the alternative. Buzzies are designed to drill upwards, not horizontally, so advancing an adit took some ingenuity. To accomplish this, Elmer would set a timber across the floor of the adit, wedging its ends into the opposing ribs. He would drill each round by holding the heavy drill on its side,

allowing it to push off the timber with its "stinger" as it drilled forward into the face (or "breast") of the adit. About half of the tunneling in the adit was ultimately done using this method.

To assist the mining effort, Elmer arranged for Roy Otto (1913-1975),² a mining friend from Butte, Montana, to help with the work. Together that season, they advanced the adit 52 feet into the mountain. Each round had to be hand loaded (or "mucked") into the ore car, which slowed progress considerably. The season in the mountains grew short, and snow began to fall. With winter coming on, they had no choice but to stop for the season, even though they knew they were getting close to the ore.

On November 20, 1951, the DMA was replaced by a new government agency called the Defense Minerals Exploration Administration (DMEA).³ The old Docket Number DMA-1734X expired, so the partners applied for a new contract in December, 1951. This time, in addition to the Meadow View No.'s 1, 2, 3 and 4 claims, the partners included six adjoining claims they had staked in 1951. These were the Red Robin No.'s 1, 2, and 3; Jim Crow No. 1 and 2; and Lakeshore claims. The DMEA approved the application, and issued Contract Number Idm-E294, assigned to Docket Number DMEA-2213 (zinc), effective April 16, 1952. The total estimated cost for the project was \$27,120.00, half of which would be covered by the government.

On November 9, 1951, the partners purchased the LeRoi 160G "iron-wheeled" air compressor they had been leasing from Idaho Industrial Equipment Company. The compressor cost \$2,000, of which \$1,703.34 was covered by a loan from Idaho First National Bank. Later, the partners nearly lost their newly-purchased compressor, when it was discovered that it had been sold illegally! Idaho Industrial Equipment Company was agent for Butte Machinery Company in the area, and the compressor belonged to the latter. The money from the sale was pocketed by the agent, causing Enderlin and Connolly to be the recipients of a "hot" piece of equipment. In the end, the partners were able to keep the compressor, because the bank had approved the chattel mortgage on it. This caused the bank to be the liable party in the transaction, having not confirmed title on the equipment before approving the loan.

Enderlin and Connolly assembled an experienced mining crew to begin their work in 1952. Roy Otto was hired back, having worked for them in 1951, and Jerre J. Doyle and Edgar Steig (1923-1999)⁴ joined the crew later in the season. Jerre was another mining friend of Elmer's from Butte, Montana. Edgar was a professional salmon fisherman who occasionally earned extra income by mining. He was another acquaintance of Elmer from Butte.

Work commenced on July 16, 1952, and ran more or less continuously through September. Shortly after starting up, Roy Otto drilled into the ore. He was using a drilling pattern known as a "burn cut," which when loaded with dynamite and ANFO⁵ prill, detonates from the center hole outwards. The first blast into the ore launched a large boulder from the center of the "burn" out through the portal and straight down the hill! It's not every day that a miner will chase a boulder down a hill, but this one was so exceptional that the crew went down to get it! The intersection of the first vein caused a great deal of excitement, even appearing on the front page of *The Wallace Miner* newspaper under the headline, "Kellogg Partners Cut First Vein Objective."⁶

Heartened by the thrill of intersecting the ore, the partners pursued their project with added vigor. The Meadow View crew worked well together, and by the end of the season, they had achieved their goals for the season. They had driven 210 feet of tunnel that year. Of this, 115 feet was a cross-cut to intersect both veins, and 95 feet was drift along the veins. In Elmer's DMEA Report for September, 1952, he summed up their results:

"We completed crosscut to second vein Sept. 15th. also completing #1 drift about the same time.

"We then continued drifting on #2 vein for a distance of about 45 ft. with a good face of ore all the way and there is a full face of ore in face of drift at time of closeing project Sept. 30. If funds are available would like to continue this drift next season to determin the length of this orebody but will have to fix place to stockpile the ore the first thing.

"Due to the hard rock we used considerable more powder and steel than we had planned on especialy in crosscut.

"Otherwise this project was completed very satisfactory and looks like it should develope into a producing mine in a short time but the main thing now is a road from the mine to #93 hi-way which to truck ore over a distance of 13 miles. Elmer Enderlin, Secretary" ⁷

The Partnership Dissolves

Around December of 1952, Enderlin and Connolly agreed to dissolve their partnership. Connolly was considerably older than Elmer, and his heart just wasn't in the Meadow View project. To square things up, they agreed to exchange Connolly's 1/3 interest in the Meadow View for Elmer's 50% interest in the Pine Creek claims at Kellogg. Connolly did well by this deal, later making about \$10,000 on the sale of the Pine Creek claims.

Connolly didn't entirely pull out from Fourth of July Creek in 1953. He continued to keep an interest with Elmer in the Confidence mine lease, and even helped Elmer produce some ore from it later on. They built an ore bin there, and in September of 1957, made two shipments of lead-silver ore to Salt Lake City, totaling 83.2 tons. This venture was far from profitable. They barely broke even, netting only \$125.28 for the first load and 48¢ for the second! Eventually, Connolly lost interest in this arrangement as well, and moved on to other projects.

Work Continues

Undaunted by the pull-out of his partner, Elmer eagerly laid out plans to continue work in 1953. On July 12, 1953, he started up operations, as approved under Amendment #2 of his DMEA contract. His crew for the season included Jerre Doyle, who had worked with Elmer in 1951, and two new-comers, Henry Luis Judd (1902-1983)⁸ and Shando "Sam" B. Lambert (1900-1989),⁹ both of Clayton, Idaho. Judd and Lambert had been working on a pole line project near Sunbeam, Idaho, and were just getting laid off when Elmer got his contract. Both had mining experience, having worked at the Clayton Silver mine.

The first order of business in 1953 was the extension of the road to connect with the dump at the Meadow View portal. For two seasons the equipment had been set up about ninety feet below the portal, on a terrace at the end of the road built in 1951. Access to the mine was by foot up the

steep talus slope. Uhrig Brothers Construction, out of Hailey, Idaho, contracted to do the job using a Caterpillar D-7 bulldozer operated by Rod McKay. They completed the road extension in July, allowing Elmer to bring equipment directly to the new and more convenient working area adjacent to the adit. The project cost \$500, half of which was covered by the DMEA contractual matching funds.

The completion of the road extension also allowed Elmer to bring in a mucking machine. Up until that time, the crew had hand mucked the blasted rock. At about 14 tons of rock per round, the digging with shovels was getting a bit tiresome. The mucking machine they used was a Gardner-Denver model, rented from Butte Machinery Company in Butte, Montana. This new piece of equipment was not entirely without its drawbacks, however. For starters, the drift had to be enlarged to accommodate its dimensions. Secondly, it was a machine that if misused could be dangerous. An example of this danger took place around August of 1953. Henry Judd and Shando Lambert had been extending the drift on the Number 2 Vein, near an area where a spectacular pocket of scheelite had been exposed in the left rib. Judd had found the use of the step plate on the mucker to be a nuisance, so he had removed it to stand alongside the machine as he operated it. Because the mucking machine moves forward and backward along the rails as it works, the operator is supposed to stand on the step plate and ride the machine back and forth for his own safety. Judd's decision to discard the step plate proved to be a painful one. He soon found one of his feet pinned between a wheel of the two-ton machine and the rail. Judd called out for help, and Lambert quickly responded. Judd was yelling, "Get it off me! Get it off me!" when Lambert arrived to see what had happened. Surveying the scene, Lambert concluded that the situation was not life threatening, and since Judd was the victim of his own complacency, it was up to Judd to deal with the situation. "Damn it," said Lambert, "You drove it up there, now you drive it off!" So, Judd did. His foot was not seriously hurt, but he used the step plate after that.

A winter snowstorm and the breakdown of the mucking machine forced the Meadow View crew to shut down operations on October 18, 1953. Elmer summed up the results for the year in the narrative section of his DMEA October monthly report:

"During the month of Oct. we advanced 29 ft. along a small fault in westerly direction to try to pick up the ore at the suggestion of Mr. V. Johnson (USBM) but we did not find anything of interest so were advised by T. Killsgaard (USGS) to return to original South Heading and turn in a S77E direction to crosscut the argillite to footwall which would be about 55 ft. We advanced this heading a distance of 10 ft. when we broke the mucking machine down and a light snowstorm started the 18th. of Oct. so I decided that it would be best to shut down for the winter.

"If it snowed much at that altitude it would be difficult to move machinery on the present roads.

"I would be in favor of continueing this project as early as possible in the Spring to complete the 500 ft. of drifting allowed in the contract although we did not get as much work done this summer as I had expectd.

"I am well satisfied with the present ore showing and sincerely beleive that we will pickup the vein again in a short distance if we continue this heading to the southeast. Respectfully Submitted, Elmer Enderlin" ^{10,11}

Work resumed at the Meadow View on July 16, 1954, with several days spent on road repairs. Drifting didn't begin until July 23. To help with the work, Elmer purchased a new Ingersoll-Rand JR38A jackleg drill from Elwood Eggers of Intermountain Equipment Company on August 2,

1954. The DMEA would not share in the cost for this machine (as they had with his '48 buzzie), so Elmer paid the \$665 for the new machine himself.

Henry Judd was brought back as the only man on the payroll in 1954. Vein No. 2 had pinched out as they were drifting southward in September, 1953, so their 1954 work was focused on trying to find it again. The ore they encountered in 1954 was spotty, but offered some encouragement that the vein might pick up again. Never one to be discouraged by nature's surprises, Elmer closed down operations in October, 1954, making the following remarks in his DMEA monthly report:

"Closed down Oct. 12 in snowstorm as it would be difficult to move machinery off the hill with much snow on road although I am still at cabin and weather has cleared up again and road is open to foot of sliderock. We have full face of quartz in drift now on limestone foot-wall." ¹²

On November 5, 1954, Amendment No. 4 to extend Elmer's Exploration Project Contract Idm-E294 under Docket No. DMEA-2213 was approved, allowing him to continue operations one more year at the Meadow View. Elmer had proposed to begin a lower adit in the coming year, but his request was denied.

The season in 1955 was a late one, so work did not commence at the Meadow View until August. Elmer hired a man again to assist him, but instead of Henry Judd, he brought back Shando Lambert. Part of the delay in getting organized in 1955 was a change in lodging accommodations. Elmer had sold his lease on the Confidence, Silver Dollar and Timberline claims to the Highland-Surprise Consolidated Mining Company, and as part of the deal, he had rented out the old Confidence log cabin. When the Highland-Surprise operators moved their drill crews in, Elmer had to move out. Elmer and his crew relocated their base camp to a flat area of ground near the mine. Elmer erected a 16'x16' army tent as his temporary headquarters. This tent had a distinctive shape, being square on its sides, but crowned with a conical roof. Shando stayed in his own tent nearby.

Elmer's deal with the Highland-Surprise brought in much-needed funding. Not only did the company pay \$3,000 up front for the lease, but the drillers paid Elmer \$1 a day apiece (about \$300 a month) for the use of the old log cabin. Elmer also negotiated with Tibor Klobusicky of the Highland-Surprise over the contents of the cabin. Tibor didn't want Elmer to take the hot water heater and stove from the cabin, but Elmer advised him that those items hadn't been part of the original deal. In a hard bargain, Elmer offered to leave the stove and hot water heater in exchange for a '48 Gardner-Denver mucking machine from the Highland-Surprise. "Oh no! That mocker's worth \$3,000 to \$4,000!" Tibor exclaimed when Elmer made his proposal. Elmer stiffly responded, "The stove and tank are worth a lot of money too!" Tibor weighed the alternatives and finally grudgingly acquiesced to the deal.

With Shando Lambert's help, Elmer extended the drift southward a total of 39 feet in 1955. Elmer had not rented a mucking machine that season, and his negotiation for the mucking machine from the Highland-Surprise was too late to act on for the 1955 season. So, progress was slowed by hand mucking the old fashioned way!

As the weeks went by, Elmer realized that they could not complete their work by the August 16 deadline set in Amendment No. 4 of his DMEA contract. He applied for an extension, and was granted one under Amendment No. 5, to allow him to work through October 16. The work finally ended on September 30, 1955. After four seasons, the DMEA work had finally come to an end. Over this period, the Meadow View crew had driven 115 feet of cross-cut and had drifted 595 feet. The total cost for the project was \$24,213.14, of which half was paid for by the DMEA.

In his final narrative report, Elmer summed up their progress in 1955 at the Meadow View mine as follows:

"We started work at the property August 1st. on South drift and continued this drift a distance of 23 ft. during the month of August and 16 ft. during the first part of Sept. in a SE direction along small fault but did not find much of interest in that drift so discontinued this drift and returned to the North drift on no. 1 vein at the suggestion of Mr. Nickolson of the USGS.

"After continueing this drift through small fault a short distance I put in a short test hole in west wall of drift and it hit ore so I run a cross-cut in that direction to determine the width of the vein which was 10 ft. from foot-wall to hanging-wall.

"After I found out the width of the vein I continued the drift in a NW direction until I again hit the vein about 20 ft. farther north from where I had cross-cut it.

"Although I have some samples which I am going to have assayed as soon as possible I could not present any assays on it at this time but it is as good as the ore we drifted on on #2 vein or better.

"I am taking a sample of this ore to have a mill test run on it also to determine how much values could be saved from this ore and what process would have to be used. I will send a report on these tests in to your office when I get them completed sometime this Fall.

"I am very well pleased with the results of this project and am very Grateful for the help I have received from both the USBM and USGS in exploring this ore-body as I could have never opened these veins without their help.

"We completed this project Sept. 30th. and the USBM Engineer was here at that time to measure and map it. Respectfully Submitted, Elmer Enderlin, Owner"¹³

After completing the work under the DMEA contract, Elmer retained Shando for a short time that fall to help construct a log cabin at their new camp near the Meadow View mine. Henry Judd and his boys also joined in the effort, staying in a small camp trailer that Elmer had brought up to the mine. Elmer's father, Henry Enderlin, who came up from California to visit, also assisted in the effort, especially in showing Elmer how to properly frame in the windows.

The Meadow View log cabin was located on a flat (at about 9,000 feet MSL) in view of the mine. It measured 16 feet wide by 28 feet long, and was built of locally collected dead logs. It was erected in a grove of timber, and positioned downslope from a jutting rocky bank to shelter it from avalanches from the cliffs above. A short distance west of the cabin, on a trail leading to the Red Robin claims, a cold mountain spring flowed into the meadow. This spring flowed throughout the summer, furnishing ample water which could be piped directly to the cabin.

The Meadow View cabin originally contained one room, a loft, and a partly enclosed area on the east side for sheltering wood and supplies from the weather. In later years, Elmer walled in

this area to create a second room which became his kitchen. A shower was added to the north exterior of the kitchen area in 1989, and later enclosed. Although not chinked up to keep out drafts, the Meadow View log cabin was a sturdy one. With the shutters closed over the windows, it could withstand the most violent of snow slides from the cliffs above. The only vulnerable piece of the structure was the stovepipe, which Elmer usually had to straighten after the spring thaw!

Of equal importance to the cabin was the privy, which was built of logs a short distance downhill on the east side of the flat. Many a visitor expressed approval of Elmer's consideration for aesthetics in the construction of this structure. It was distinctive in that it faced downhill, so that users could appreciate the view while seated! One gentleman commented that he could always recognize a privy built by Elmer, from his trademark style of orienting them in this fashion!

The Meadow View cabin was not the first structure to be built at the mine. Elmer and his crew had built a tool shed at Tunnel No. 1 in 1953. Although it was well-constructed with brand-new aluminum sheeting, the structure collapsed and was swept down the canyon by snowslides in its first winter. As Elmer puts it, "It was torn all to hell." When he returned that spring, Elmer thought it was just hidden under the snow at the portal, but after doing some digging, he realized it was gone!

Incorporation

The budget at the Meadow View mine was a lean one, and with the completion of the DMEA contract in 1955, the budget got tighter. Without money to pay a miner to help him, there was little Elmer could do but maintain the mine with the obligatory minimum annual assessment work. This situation continued for about twenty-five years. When not fulfilling his annual assessment work at the claims on Fourth of July Creek, Elmer drifted from job to job at mines in Idaho and California. His tramp miner lifestyle made ends meet, but just barely.

In addition to work on his own claims, Elmer formed partnerships to work claims at several other locations in the district. Among these were the Patty Flynn No.'s 1 & 2 claims, located on a ridge between Mountain Home Canyon and Strawberry Basin. Elmer had discovered this deposit in the mid-1960's while hunting in the area. He staked it shortly thereafter. Lacking the funds to develop this new discovery, Elmer struck a deal with Lloyd E. Sanders ("a kind of promoter," according to Elmer), from Kellogg, Idaho. In an agreement dated September 23, 1966, Elmer granted Sanders and his wife a 10% interest in the Patty Flynn in consideration of \$2,000.00, with the additional stipulation that Elmer drive 70 feet of tunnel on this lode. Sanders got the money to grubstake the project from Emmett Shawgo, an interested acquaintance from St. John, Washington.

Although the Patty Flynn was not directly related to the Meadow View operation, the relationship that Enderlin and Sanders developed at the Patty Flynn caused Sanders to take an interest in the other claims. Realizing that Elmer was short on funds to develop his claims, Sanders suggested that he consider incorporating. By doing so, it was envisioned that capital could be generated by the sale of stock to get the Meadow View mine moving again. Aside from

minor surface work, not an inch of tunnel had been run at the mine since the DMEA contract had ended in 1955, so Elmer eagerly entertained this suggestion to fund the project. Sanders was familiar with "ins and outs" of establishing a corporation, so he handled the necessary paperwork and bookkeeping.

Articles of incorporation were signed on November 4, 1969, and filed with the Idaho Secretary of State on November 10, 1969. The new company was called the "Meadowview Metal Mines, Inc." It was assigned Idaho corporation number C41622. Capital stock in the new company totaled \$1,000,000, and consisted of ten million shares at a par value of 10¢ per share. Article II of the corporation, set forth their lofty goals:

That the purpose and objects for which said corporation is formed are:

(a) To form a private profit-making corporation.

(b) To purchase, locate, lease, or otherwise, acquire, mines, mining claims, mining rights, and lands and any interest therein, and explore, work, exercise, develop, and turn to account the same; to quarry, mine, smelt, refine, dress, amalgamate, and prepare for market, ore metal and mineral substances of all kinds, and to carry on any other operations or business which may seem necessary, convenient, or incidental to any of the objects of the company; to buy, sell, manufacture, and deal in minerals, plants, machinery, implements, conveniences, provisions, and things capable of being used in connection with the mining or other operations of this corporation, or required by workmen and others employed by the company; to construct, carry out, maintain, improve, manage, work, control, and superintend, any roads, ways, railways, bridges, reservoirs, watercourses, aqueducts, wharves, furnaces, mills, crushing works, hydraulic works, factories, warehouses, and other works and other conveniences which may seem necessary, convenient, or incidental to any object of the company and to contribute to, subsidize, or otherwise aid or take part in an such operations.

(c) To buy, sell, exchange, encumber, lease or transfer, or carry on any transaction with or concerning real and personal property which will forward the mining operation.

(d) To erect any structure, structures, or buildings necessary to carry forward the purposes set forth.

(e) To hire and retain workmen, laborers or any other employees necessary for the carrying out of the proposed mining operation.

(f) To issue certificates of stock in the proposed corporation, which will be transferable upon the approval of the Board of Directors.

(g) To enter into any financial arrangements that may be necessary to effect the above purposes, including but not limited to the public sale of stock, floating of debentures, borrowing of monies, purchase of other corporations stock, purchase of public and private debentures and such other transactions as may appear convenient and necessary.

The Meadowview Metal Mines, Inc. had three founding members: Elmer Enderlin, Lloyd E. Sanders, and Allen W. Getty. Allen Getty was a new name on the scene at Fourth of July Creek, but he was by no means a stranger to Elmer in 1969. He had come to know Elmer around 1957, when Elmer was working at the Fluorspar mine, near Challis, Idaho. Getty, a native of Pocatello, was running an automotive repair shop in Challis with his brother and mother at the time. Allen and Elmer first met when Elmer purchased a used truck from the shop. As the years went by, the two grew to be good friends and ultimately partners in the mine. Getty's mechanical skills were

also of great value at the Meadow View mine, where equipment breakdowns were the rule, not the exception!

Sanders eventually faded from the scene, leaving Enderlin and Getty to act as the officers of the corporation. Elmer served as president, while Allen served as vice president and secretary. The initial plan to publicly sell stock in the corporation never materialized. Instead, they chose to divide shares amongst a select group of four partners. To assist with the issuance of certificates, the partners engaged James Bennetts, an attorney based in Challis to handle the necessary paperwork. For his services, Bennetts was issued 10,000 of the common shares. Elmer received 5,990,000 shares, and the remaining 4,000,000 shares were divided equally between Allen Getty and his son, Bret. The certificates, featuring a rampant eagle vignette, were issued on May 25, 1977.

The Last Years

In spite of the excitement of incorporation, and the anticipation of developing the mine in its new state of ownership, political changes were taking place in the 1970's that proved to be an overwhelming challenge to the fulfillment of Elmer Enderlin's dreams. On August 22, 1972, the 92nd Congress enacted Public Law 92-400, establishing the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. The Meadow View mine, located within the Challis National Forest, fell within the bounds of this new land designation.

Public Law 92-400 withdrew the Federal Lands within the area from "mineral entry" (staking of mining claims). Unpatented existing mining claims were grandfathered in, however, and remained valid as long as annual obligations were met. The law also authorized portions of the SNRA to be considered for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System under the Wilderness Preservation Act of 1964. Although never put in effect, the threat of a Wilderness Area designation near the Meadow View mine diminished its appeal. Mining activities on existing claims within the SNRA were also required to abide by rules set forth in a minerals management program administered by the Forest Service. Under these guidelines, if mineral interests that were deemed to "substantially impair park values" were identified, the Forest Service was authorized to "extinguish" their mining rights through equitable negotiations. The specter of the suppression of mining projects was demonstrated when ASARCO's proposed molybdenum mine on Castle Peak in the White Clouds (about 5 miles northeast of the Meadow View) was curtailed. Echoing the concerns of several mining companies that visited the Meadow View, one professional visitor wrote:

"We are agreed with regard to the economic potential of the deposits and feel you are to be commended on your very professional approach to the additional exploration work you plan.

"My client, however, is deeply concerned regarding the practicality of mining in a National Recreational Area regardless of the validity of your claims. There might be a change in thinking during the coming months but, as of now, I can only advise you that our response is negative."

Undaunted, Elmer pressed ahead with plans to find a way to develop the Meadow View. "We can make it a model mine," he stated, "with the mill built underground and out of view." In spite of the stringent regulatory atmosphere of the SNRA, Elmer's relationship with the U.S. Forest Service was a friendly one. He held a special regard for James "Jeff" Jones, the geologist who

served as contact person for Forest Service minerals program until 1991. The positive relationship was mutually beneficial, in that Elmer acted as a watchdog for unauthorized public activities in the Fourth of July Creek area. Many a poacher was turned in, thanks to Elmer's vigilant stewardship. The Meadow View's location was also important in times of emergency. At least one man's life was saved, thanks to the shelter afforded by the Meadow View cabin in the cold winter storms!

In the early 1980's, the report of dynamite echoed from the Meadow View mine once again. After many years of minimal work, tunneling resumed that year. The increased activity was spurred by the presence of Elmer's teenage grandnephew, Rob Enderlin, who spent several summers helping at the mine. Tunnel No. 1, the adit which had been the site of the 1950's activities, was left idle in favor of a new adit about ninety feet lower in elevation (~9,110 feet MSL). Elmer had planned on adding this new level under his DMEA contract, but his proposal had been denied. The lower adit was a critical addition, in Elmer's view, to demonstrate the vertical continuation of the veins which had been developed in the upper adit.

The collar to Tunnel No. 2 had been blasted to start the project a number of years before Rob's arrival, so the task at hand was to advance the adit in hopes of intersecting the vein. A cross-section prepared by geologist Jeff Jones of the Forest Service indicated that the projection of the No. 3 Vein should lie about 170 feet ahead of them. By September of 1982, the portal to the adit had been timbered, and a few feet of advance made. Although this distance would seem paltry in a larger mine, it was a commendable effort for a 70-year-old miner and his teenage "coolie laborer!"

The summer of 1983 saw great progress made at the Meadow View mine. Rob Enderlin returned that year to continue advancing the tunnel. With Tunnel No. 2 being only 30 feet in length, they had a long way to go to the target.¹⁴ At twenty years of age, Rob had the brawn to help Elmer advance it at a rapid rate. By late August of that year, they had extended the adit 110 feet, for a total length of 140 feet. With only 30 feet remaining to arrive at the target, the excitement was building. Summer quickly drew to a close in the mountains, Rob returned home, and Elmer directed his attentions to his other claims before the onset of winter. Fulfillment of the dream would have to wait for at least another year.

Rob returned again in 1984, but was not at the mine long enough to get much accomplished. He was about to embark on a career in the Navy that year, so his time was short. With his chief source of "coolie labor" no longer available, Elmer's progress at the Meadow View mine slowed to an agonizingly slow pace. By September of 1986, the lower adit was only 155 feet long, still 15 feet short of the target. Elmer did what he could with his old equipment, and welcomed the help of anyone who ventured up to the mine and was willing to work. The Getty family helped where they could, as well as several of Elmer's family. Among those relatives who helped the most was Sharon Enderlin, from Alturas, California, who often brought friends to join the "coolie labor" workforce!

By August of 1989, the adit had advanced to a length of 189 feet, 19 feet beyond the projected target. This last advance was made with the help of Elmer's geologist cousin, Dean Enderlin, who spent time at the mine in the summers of 1988 and 1989. After Dean mapped the geology of

the adit in 1989, concerns arose that the adit had passed across a fault, which had cut off the orebody. A 16-foot-long exploratory long-hole, drilled into the adit breast in August of 1989, confirmed this suspicion. The fault was apparent both underground and at the surface, but it had not been recognized in the initial targeting of the course of the adit. To compensate for this error, a spur bearing southwestward from a point in the adit lying east of the fault was begun in 1989. In the years that followed, Elmer drove this lateral a distance of 35 feet, shooting part of it as a raise in an effort to intersect the targeted vein with the least amount of effort. The last round in this spur was mucked out in the summer of 1996.

Closure

As the stormclouds of winter settled over the Meadow View mine in the fall of 1996, so did the stormclouds of governmental regulation. These clouds had actually been gathering for three years, but they were coming to a head. Pressures in the 102nd Congress to reform the Mining Law of 1872 had led to the enactment of Public Law 102-381 on October 5, 1992. Under this law, which is administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), miners must pay an annual rental fee of \$100 per year per mining claim. Previously, claimants were required to submit an affidavit, certifying that they had performed \$100 worth of assessment work per claim per year. Small miners, holding no more than ten mining claims, could apply for an exemption from this rule.

Recognizing that his twelve claims would not allow him to qualify him for the small miner exemption, Elmer abandoned two of his claims: The White Cloud No. 1 and Timberline No. 5 in 1993. This left him with ten claims consisting of the Meadow View No. 1, Meadow View No.'s 3-6, Red Robin No.'s 2-3, Patty Flynn No.'s 1-2, and Rupert. In accordance with the new requirements, Elmer filed the new paperwork for the 1993 assessment year in August of that year. What he didn't notice was that the new law also demanded that paperwork be filed for the 1994 assessment year at the same time! This peculiar provision of the new law, which required that paperwork be filed in advance of actual mining performance, caught many small miners unaware. In the past, the law had required a certification of past performance, not a prediction of the future.

On June 24, 1994, the Idaho State Office of the BLM issued a decision, declaring the ten claims "abandoned and void for failure to pay rental in the amount of \$100 per claim or to submit a certification for exemption from payment of rental fees for the 1993-94 assessment year." An appeal was filed with the BLM by Allen Getty for Elmer Enderlin on September 13, 1994. On June 25, 1997, the Interior Board of Land Appeals (IBLA) ordered that the appeal be dismissed on the grounds that it had not been filed within the required 30 days of service of the decision. With that order, the fate of the Meadow View mine was sealed. The mine had been lost.

On August 31, 1997, Elmer and Dean Enderlin arrived at the Meadow View mine to begin the solemn task of dismantling and removing the equipment. In the days that followed, they were joined by Sharon Enderlin's friend, Ray, from Alturas, California. Allen and Carol Getty, with their sons Bret and Loren, daughter Yvonne, and other members of the family, also joined in the work. Within a few days, most of the equipment was loaded or gone. With pickups and a trailer,

the crew managed to dismantle and remove most of the equipment in a matter of a few days. Only the locked up adits, the log cabin, and a few odds and ends remained. On September 3, 1997, with Dean's truck loaded with equipment and bound for California, Elmer loaded his dog, Higrade, and hopped in. With few words spoken, he turned his back to the mountains to make the final trip down that long rocky road.

Although, the Meadow View mine never achieved the production that was Elmer's dream, it *did* accomplish one thing. Having been declared a "certified discovery" as a result of the DMEA work in the 1950's,¹⁵ the mineral resource of the Meadow View will forever be known and formally recognized. Perhaps someday, during a time of national need, or under different economic and political circumstances, this resource will see production.

The Vault

The elusive prize that inspired Elmer's dreams for so many years was a mineralized zone he affectionately called "The Vault." The Meadow View deposit was actually made up of a number of zones of ore mineralization (veins), with the No. 3 Vein being the primary focus of interest in the last years of exploration.

To understand the origin of these veins, a review of the geology of the Meadow View and its surroundings is in order. As is often the case with ore deposits, the geology tends to be complex. It is this complexity that creates the unusual conditions that concentrate desirable minerals!

The host rock of the Meadow View deposit is carbonaceous argillite, quartzite and dolomitic limestone of the Salmon River sequence (formerly assigned to the Milligen Formation).^{16,17} These rocks are marine in origin, and formed in the Upper Mississippian geologic time period (325-340 million years ago). Overlying the Salmon River sequence is the Pole Creek Formation, composed of chert and argillite pebble conglomerate and fossiliferous black limestone. It is also of marine origin, and formed in the Pennsylvanian Period of geologic time (280-325 million years ago). The contact between the two formations is a low-angle fault (regional detachment), which has been warped by later regional compression so that its cross-section resembles a tilted "S."

Mapping by Sengebush in 1984, suggests that the Meadow View lies in the center (axis) of a recumbantly folded antiform (in the form of an inverted and tilted "U"). The core of the antiform is rock of the Salmon River sequence which is exposed in the vicinity of the Meadow View through a window in the overlying Pole Creek Formation. This window extends along a northerly trend from Washington Basin to the White Cloud Peaks. It is about three quarters of a mile wide at the Meadow View mine. Most of the mines and prospects of the district lie along this trend.

Ore mineralization at the Meadow View probably occurred in conjunction with the intrusion of silicic magma (the Idaho batholith) in the Late Cretaceous Period of geologic time (65 to 110 million years ago). The rock associated with the Idaho batholith in the vicinity of the Meadow View mine is locally called the White Cloud stock.¹⁸ This intrusive is composed of quartz monzonite (a type of plutonic rock closely related to granite), about 83.6 (\pm 2.8) million years in

age.¹⁹ Quartz monzonite, like other granitic rocks, is rich in silica. Such intrusives when originally molten, shed superheated water and other volatiles into the surrounding formations as they invade them. Where these hydrothermal solutions come in contact with highly reactive rock formations, especially limestone, a process called "contact metamorphism" can occur. The limestone is chemically replaced by other minerals, forming a rock called tactite or skarn. Tungsten, molybdenum, zinc and copper are metals frequently found in formations where this process of enrichment has occurred. The tungsten usually occurs in the form of the mineral, scheelite (calcium tungstate), which fluoresces bright blue in ultraviolet light. The molybdenum usually occurs as molybdenite (molybdenum sulfide) or as an impurity in scheelite. At the Meadow View deposit, the zinc occurs as sphalerite (zinc iron sulfide) and copper as chalcopyrite (copper iron sulfide). Either of these minerals can also host impurities of other metals, such as silver. Pyrrhotite (iron sulfide) also occurs in abundance in all of the Meadow View veins, although it has no ore value.

The Meadow View veins are discontinuous (lenticular) contact metamorphic zones ranging up to 12 feet in width. Each of the three mapped veins in the mine lies in or near a limestone/argillite contact, and the veins tend to align in the same direction as the foliation in the host rock. All of the veins pinch and swell (a feature common in fold- and shear-controlled deposits). The relationship of the Meadow View orebodies to folds was first documented by U.S. Geological Survey geologist Elton A. Youngberg, who wrote in a memo dated February 5, 1952:

The veins or mineralized bodies are of the replacement type. The mineralization is localized in the center portions of tight folds. Replacement has concentrated at the nose of the fold and weakens away from it, giving the ore bodies a tear drop shape. This is particularly characteristic of the No. 1 vein. The axes of these folds plunge at almost 90° down dip of the bedding. It is believed that this structure has provided channel ways for hydrothermal solutions from an underlying igneous body probably related to the quartz monzonite intrusive a short distance to the east.

Although the western edge of the main body of the White Cloud quartz monzonite stock ends at Phyllis Lake, several smaller plutonic bodies lie closer to the Meadow View mine. A 30-foot thick sill of quartz monzonite was encountered in Adit No. 2 of the mine, and a larger body crops out just north of the mine. At the Red Robin No. 3 claim, a spectacular garnet-rich skarn zone, highly enriched in scheelite and molybdenite, occurs directly at the contact with this body. Garnet and other minerals of a group called "calc-silicates" are especially common in skarn zones. Another notable calc-silicate zone was encountered in the Meadow View Adit No. 2, where a 15-foot thick zone of massive wollastonite (calcium silicate) and idocrase (calcium-magnesium-aluminum hydroxyl silicate) was encountered about 25 feet in from the portal.

The close proximity of the Idaho batholith to the Meadow View mine is no doubt responsible for an invisible, but noteworthy, feature of the mine. This feature is radon gas. Fourth of July Creek lies just a short distance south of the Stanley uranium district, where 65 radioactive anomalies have been mapped. At least eight prospects are known to have shipped ore. Radon gas is a byproduct of the radioactive decay of rare minerals associated with granitic rocks, and its presence at the Meadow View mine comes as no great surprise.

Reflections of Life in the Mountains

Although the thunder from the rounds being blasted at the Meadow View no longer echoes through the mountains at Fourth of July Creek, the fond memories of those who were fortunate enough to be a part of the mine are everlasting. Over the forty-eight years that Elmer worked in the mine, the reputation that he built became almost legendary.

Elmer's summer sojourns to the mountains were seldom uneventful! His summers were short, so as much time was spent trying to stay warm by the stove as was spent working! July and August usually provided the best conditions for working at the mine, but being so high in the mountains, the weather could turn nasty at any time. Elmer usually tried to depart from California around the 4th of July, to arrive at the Confidence Millsite skid shacks before other summer visitors had the chance to steal anything! Early July was usually spent getting things in order: Cleaning the shacks, connecting the water lines, and clearing the roads. Later in the summer, after the snow drifts on the Meadow View Road had melted, Elmer would visit the log cabin near the mine and occasionally stay there. Although the Meadow View cabin was technically the headquarters of the mine, the Confidence skid shacks were more accessible in the early part of the season. For this reason, they served as Elmer's base of operations for many years.

The Confidence Millsite shacks were distinctive structures lined up neatly in a row on the north side of Fourth of July Creek near the gate to the access road for the Silver Dollar and Patty Flynn claims. They were aluminum-clad, with single doors and minimal windows. They had been used as construction shacks for a road job on Cherry Creek, on the Ketchum side of Galena Summit, before finally being moved to the Confidence Millsite by the Highland-Surprise mining crews. Because each was small, Elmer adopted an interesting system for using them. The first shack was Elmer's storage building, where various pieces of small mining equipment were haphazardly jumbled (but protected) in a manner akin to that of a rat's nest! The central shack was his cook-house, shower, and general office. This was the heart of Elmer's empire, as was clearly indicated by the sign on the front, which read, "Enderlin Mining Office." The last shack was the bunkhouse. It was dimly-lit, but well-heated with two wood-burning stoves. Getting back and forth between the latter two shacks was a bit of an inconvenience in the winter snows. Elmer also notes that he occasionally startled unsuspecting hikers on the nearby trail, as he flitted across the dirt path between the two shacks in his long johns! In spite of their rustic traits, the shacks were warm and comfortable. Not only did they appeal to Elmer, but they also satisfied "Marty," a marten that lived in a burrow underneath one of them!

Elmer swore by (and at) his International Harvester pickups, which he affectionately called his "cornbinders." In later years, he had a number of these trucks parked on the Confidence Millsite. Some ran, some didn't. Considering the roughness of most of the Fourth of July Creek and Meadow View Roads, it's a wonder that any truck could survive more than a few trips to the mine. Broken axles, engine fires, bent doors, crumpled bumpers, torn-off tail pipes, cracked windshields... the list goes on and on! These were the trademarks of vehicles in the Meadow View fleet! In spite of the remoteness, Elmer could always get help when he was in trouble. Many a visitor to Fourth of July Creek drove back to town with an urgent message to call Allen Getty for help! Allen would always come to provide his mechanical skills, and he could usually get things going again. It was said that the only tools he needed to fix things were a sledge hammer and a cutting torch!

Visitors to the mine came from many backgrounds, from dudes to hardened miners. Those who enjoyed their stay, usually brought two important things with them: An open mind and lots of grub! Those who didn't, usually suffered in one way or another. For some, a one night stay in the area was truly terrifying! This was the case with a banker from Rexburg, who chose to leave after spending a sleepless night listening to Elmer's constant nightmare-induced wails! They had been staying in a cabin over in Washington Basin (at the Black Rock mine), and visions of the local bears were adding drama to Elmer's dreams. The banker's parting comment was, "If that's the way it affects people up here, I don't want any part of it!"

To those who crossed Elmer, he was considered to be dangerous, and a man to be avoided. One victim of Elmer's short temper at the mine advised others at a local bar, "Watch out for that old guy. He'll kill ya!" Another gentleman (a shepherd of Hispanic persuasion), whose broken English and strange behavior Elmer perceived to be a threat, received Elmer's easily translatable greeting, "¿Sabe shotgun?" Even thoughtless campers, who unwisely chose to camp in the middle of his access road and block Elmer's path, were bombarded with insults like, "Haven't you got a brain in your head?" Others, who respected both Elmer and the rules of the land, found him to be a genial host and a good friend. Anyone who thought to deliver a watermelon to Elmer while visiting the mine, or shared freshly caught trout from nearby Phyllis Lake at Elmer's table, was sure to make a friend!

Fishermen, hunters, geologists, naturalists, and countless other outdoor enthusiasts paid the Meadow View mine visits through the years. For some, the visit was a one-time encounter. For others, it was an annual event. Still other visitors came to the mine on official business, and were grateful for Elmer's accommodations. One of the latter was Robert Sengebush, who spent the summer of 1983 around the Meadow View conducting geological investigations as part of his Masters thesis for the University of Montana. In his thesis, Sengebush (or "Singin'-in-the-Bush," as Elmer called him) kindly acknowledged Elmer for allowing him "valuable access to remote portions of the field area via his mining roads, and for unique historical and geologic perspective on the White Cloud Peaks area."²⁰

Elmer received as well as gave nicknames! A ranger in Stanley referred to Elmer as "Dig-More-Rocks," in honor of his persistence in prospecting. His grandnephew, Rob, called him "Van Camp," in teasing reference to the beans which were the food of choice in the Meadow View pantry. Elmer even refers to himself as "that mean ol' man of the White Clouds," taking pleasure in the reputation some of the visiting dudes have created for him. By whatever name he is called, his reputation is widespread. The images of Elmer and Higrade, his blue healer dog born in a badger hole, are indelibly preserved in the memories of their countless friends in the mountains of Idaho. Like old George Blackman, Elmer made his mark in the White Clouds, and the story of the Meadow View mine will not be forgotten.

Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the generous help of the many friends and acquaintances who contributed to this report. Special appreciation is offered to Mr. Thor H. Kiilsgaard, of the U.S. Geological Survey office in Spokane, who graciously searched the archives and arranged

for copying of the DMEA final report and maps in 1999. Thor is still on the job almost half a century later! Thanks is also due to the U.S. Forest Service, Sawtooth National Recreation Area, who accommodated the concerns of the Meadow View mine operations for many years, and exercised exemplary governmental management of the Fourth of July Creek area during the period that the prospect was active.

A special acknowledgment goes to Allen Getty and his family for their support of the mine and for helping to inspire this project.

Closing Down for Winter

by Elmer Enderlin

Just settin' on a log,
A pettin' my dog,
A waitin' for snow,
So South we can go,
And come back in the Spring,
When the little birdies sing,
And dig on the ore,
Until our fingers are sore.
We'll open up the vault,
And if it's empty it ain't our fault.

The Idaho Prospector

by Elmer Enderlin

The stars are shining bright,
And it's cold out tonight.
I wish it would snow,
So South we could go,
And leave these mountains sleep
Under the snow so deep.
Rest up until June,
Which will be all too soon.
Then come back to the hills,
And pay up all the bills,
So we can dig some more holes
Like the lowly moles.
We'll quit that first million,
And start on the billion!

Footnotes

¹ Vital statistics from Social Security records.

² Vital statistics from Social Security records.

³ Additional summary information on these programs can be found in the following publication: Kiilsgaard, Thor

H., 1997, Mining properties in Idaho that were involved in the DMA, DMEA or OME Mineral Exploration Programs, 1950-1974: U.S. Geological Survey Open File Report 97-439.

⁴ Vital statistics from Social Security records.

⁵ An explosive mixture of ammonium nitrate and fuel oil.

⁶ The Wallace Miner, vol. XLVI, no. 29, August 14, 1952, page 1, column 2.

⁷ October 2, 1952: Enderlin & Connolly DMEA Monthly Progress Report for September, 1952, Narrative section.

⁸ Vital statistics from Social Security records.

⁹ Vital statistics from Social Security records.

¹⁰ October 26, 1953: Enderlin DMEA Monthly Progress Report for October, 1953, Narrative section.

¹¹ The "T. Killsgaard" referred to in the report was Thor H. Killsgaard of the U. S. Geological Survey, a member of the USGS-USBM Field Team based out of Spokane, Washington.

¹² November 1, 1954: Enderlin DMEA Monthly Progress Report for October, 1954, Remarks section.

¹³ October 12, 1955: Enderlin DMEA Monthly Progress Report for September, 1955, Narrative section.

¹⁴ The tunnel was thirty feet long by July 22, 1983, according to a cross-section prepared by Jeff Jones of the USFS.

¹⁵ In their final reports, DMEA Field Teams recommended a "Certification of Possible Production" for selected properties in the program. According to Elmer Enderlin, the Meadow View received this certification.

¹⁶ Sengebusch, Robert, M., 1984, The geology and tectonic history of the Fourth of July Creek area, White Cloud Peaks, Custer County, Idaho: University of Montana Master of Science thesis, 79 p.

¹⁷ Ross, Clyde P., 1962, Stratified rocks in south-central Idaho: Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology Pamphlet 125, pp. 42-45.

¹⁸ By definition, a "stock" is an exposure of plutonic rock that covers less than 40 square miles in outcrop. Larger exposures (or collections of stocks) are called "batholiths."

¹⁹ The age is based on a biotite potassium-argon age determination: Cavanaugh, P. C., 1979, The geology of the Little Boulder Creek molybdenum deposit, Custer County, Idaho: University of Montana Masters thesis.

²⁰ Sengebusch, Robert, M., 1984, The geology and tectonic history of the Fourth of July Creek area, White Cloud Peaks, Custer County, Idaho: University of Montana Master of Science thesis, 79 p.

Closing Remarks

This web version of "The Long Rocky Road" is an adaptation of an original manuscript prepared in 2001. The original included photographs and additional supporting documents that are not presented here due to technical limitations. The narrative can stand alone, however, and it is here presented for the benefit of those who may be interested in this history.

Elmer Elwood Enderlin died on the morning of May 16th, 2004, in Lower Lake, Lake County, California. His cremated remains are buried in Lower Lake Cemetery alongside his parents, paternal grandparents, and other family members. Buried with Elmer are samples of his beloved Meadow View mine ore. Near the end of his life, Elmer often reflected on all that he had done. He had few regrets, although he was saddened that his dream to see the Meadow View mine put into production would never be fulfilled.

As directed in Elmer's will, his shares in the Meadowview Metal Mines, Inc. were distributed as follows: To Allen W. Getty (Elmer's long-time friend and colleague), certificate number 6 in the amount of 3,000,000 shares; to Lily Enderlin (Elmer's sister-in-law), certificate number 7 in the amount of 2,890,000 shares; and to Sharon Enderlin (Elmer's cousin), certificate number 5 in the amount of 100,000 shares. The corporation was administratively dissolved by the Idaho Secretary of State on February 7th, 2005.

Dean Enderlin, Calistoga, CA, 10 October 2005

Elmer Enderlin

Elmer Elwood Enderlin, age 92, passed away peacefully on May 16, 2004, at his home in Lower Lake. He was born April 23, 1912, on the Steinhart Ranch in Spruce Grove, near Lower Lake, to Henry and Mable (Dean) Enderlin.

A descendant of Lake County pioneer families, Elmer grew up in Spruce Grove, living on several properties that were leased by his father. The family eventually took over the 40-acre ranch in Little High Valley, which had been settled by Elmer's grandfather in 1897. It was there that Elmer grew to adulthood.

He attended Spruce Grove School until the eighth grade. The family made a subsistence living during very difficult economic times. A portion of the family income was derived from a herd of about 400 Angora goats, which were shorn to produce mohair.

At about age 20, Elmer chose to give up a life on the ranch for a life as a miner. He worked in gold and mercury mines in California, copper mines in Montana and Arizona, silver mines in Idaho, Nevada and Utah, and uranium mines in Idaho and Arizona. At least 50 mines in the West saw Elmer on their payrolls, some more than once. He was one of a breed of worker known as the "tramp miner," who chose a restless life of moving from one mine to the next, never satisfied to stay in one place for very long.

Locally, Elmer worked at the Otto quicksilver mine, near Middletown, the Knoxville quicksilver mine (near Homestake's McLaughlin gold mine), The Eagle Rock quicksilver mine near The Geysers, and the Abbott quicksilver mine, east of Clear Lake Oaks. His last years of mining were devoted largely to his interests at his own tungsten-molybdenum prospect, the Meadow View Mine, on Fourth of July Creek near Stanley, Idaho.

Elmer is survived by a sister, Elsie Lawson of San Leandro. Three brothers, Frank, Walter and Lamar predeceased him. Elmer also leaves many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends to mourn the loss.

A private family graveside service will be held at Lower Lake Cemetery at a future date.

Cremation will be arranged by Jones & Lewis Clear Lake Memorial Chapel in Lower Lake.

(Source: Obituaries, Lake County Record-Bee, May 27, 2004)

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