

CHARLESTON DISTRICT

Vanderburg W.O. 1936

(47)

Item
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The Charleston District, also known as the Copper Mountain or Cornwall District, is in northern Elko County, about 55 miles north of Deeth. It is on the south side of the Jarbidge Mountains, and in particular on the south side of Copper Mountain, which rises to a height of over 10,000 feet above sea level. Charleston came into existence in 1876 when placer gold was discovered four miles north of the townsite on 76 Creek near the base of Copper Mountain. The bed of 76 Creek produced considerable gold in the years following the discovery of placer gold. Since water is available in 76 Creek the placer deposits were worked thoroughly. Lying between 76 Creek and the Bruneau River are Pennsylvania Gulch, Union Gulch, Dry Ravine, and Badger Creek, in which placer deposits also were worked in the early days.

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The placer gravels of the Charleston District extend for miles along the Bruneau River. They consist mainly of well-rounded pebbles derived from rather coarsely crystalline rhyolite, which is one of the principal rocks of the District, and smaller amounts of quartzite and granite pebbles. In places these gravels are 50 feet thick, and often rest upon a light yellow clay of decomposed tuff, which may indicate the bottom of the gravel beds. A long period of erosion and working over by earlier streams is indicated by the well-rounded character of the gravels. The placers of the Mountain City District, 35 miles to the northeast, appear to be of similar origin.

In 1907, a Utah company, at a cost of \$25,000, built a ditch several miles in length around the south slope of the mountains in order to bring water from a tributary of 76 Creek for use in hydraulicking the gravels in the Badger Creek area. The tributary normally carries but little water, and it is reported that water flowed through the ditch for a short time only during one season.

In the spring of 1932, a Denver group obtained an option on the Prunty Ranch, which is traversed by the Bruneau River and Badger Creek. Considerable prospecting was done and it was estimated that the gravel contained an average of 75 cents worth of gold per cubic yard. For some unknown reason this prospecting was not followed by any extensive development of the placer ground.

In recent years, during the spring and summer seasons, from 5 to 30 men have been engaged in placer mining in Pennsylvania, Union, and Dry Gulches. Most of this work is done by small-scale sluicing when water is available. One of these sluicing operations is shown in figure 20. The average yield per man by such small-scale operations is less than wages. The gold recovered is quite fine.

The Island Mountain is 75 miles north of Nevada State. The isolated mountain terrain. The placers are 75 feet above the river.

The placers of the Rouselle, and the most promising.



Figure 20.

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