

KENTUCKY CAMP CHRONICLE



Newsletter of the Friends of Kentucky Camp

October 1999

HOW THE OTHER 90% LIVED

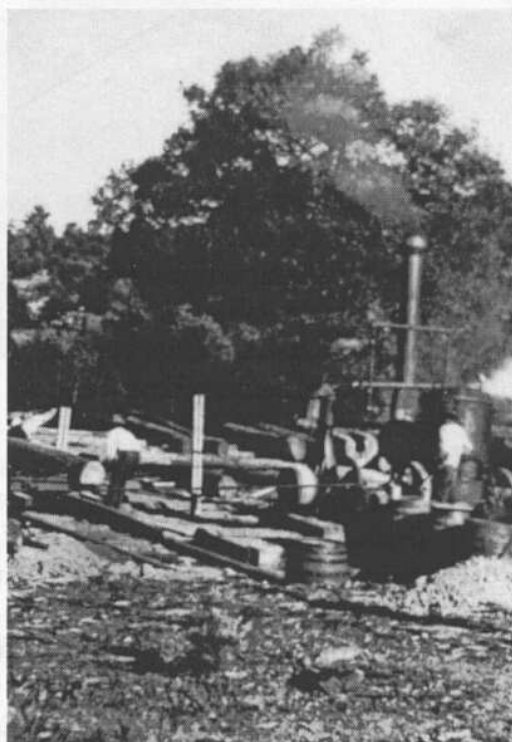
Conclusion of a 3-part article, by Mary Farrell, Bill Gillespie, and Jim McDonald

In last December's and February's issues of the Chronicle we compared the Santa Rita Water and Mining Company, which built Kentucky Camp, and the Exposed Reef Mining Company, which set up operations in the Huachuca Mountains, to the southeast. Although the two gold-mining companies had a lot in common, there appear to be two main distinctions in their settlement patterns. For one thing, the SRW&MC facilities and sites were more dispersed, the Reef facilities more aggregated. Second, at the Reef, housing for managers and workers was very similar, while housing for managers of the SRW&MC was much more substantial than that for the workers. What accounts for the differences?

It could be the nature of the minerals sought, and the nature of the other resources necessary to seek those minerals. At the Reef, the ore is localized, in a few veins. The mine was located in a forest, so wood for both construction and fuel was handy, and the Exposed Reef Mining Company had a sawmill right on site. Water necessary for milling was also available nearby, so the company could build all facilities close together, served by a single nucleated community.

In contrast to the Reef's single ore body, at Kentucky Camp the gold is dispersed in

placer gravel deposits, spread out over several square miles. Not only is the gold more dispersed, the resources needed to process the gold are not handy-- hydraulic monitors require prodigious amounts of water, and the most dependable water supply (still marginal by California standards) is over 5 miles away. A lot of the SRW&MC's \$175,000-investment went into constructing the water system, so the operation is spread out, spatially extended by necessity and by design. It makes sense, to be efficient, that the workers' housing would be located close to work sites, so, maybe that caused the dispersed settlement pattern.



Portable lumber mill at the Reef.

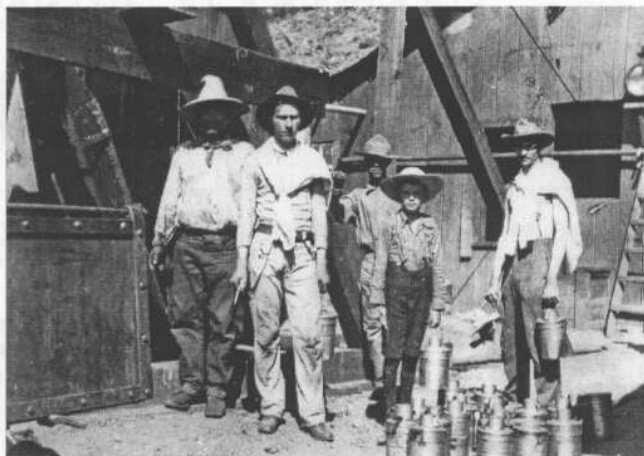
But a look at the regional context suggests it wasn't only the distribution of *natural* resources that influenced each mine's settlement pattern. *Social* resources played a part. At the Reef, the nearest full-service community was Tombstone. In 1900 Tombstone was still one of the largest towns in the territory. But it was located some 25 miles away, a good day's travel – far enough that the small isolated Reef Camp would require a company store, post office, and other amenities usually associated with larger centers.

Kentucky Camp, in contrast, was located a scant two miles from the existing town of Greaterville, and the Santa Rita workers could have used the stores, post office, and other services of that town without time-consuming travel. There was also a railroad station less than 10 miles away, which provided quick access to Tucson and other cities.



Reef Mill under construction, 1901

So, practical utilization of existing natural and social resources appears to explain why SRW&MC settlements are spread out and the Reef settlement is aggregated, with more services. But, economic efficiency doesn't completely explain the disparity in building constructions in the Santa Ritas and the more homogenous buildings at the Reef.



Workers of the Exposed Reef Mining Company

What else might be factors?

First, the construction at both Kentucky Camp and the Reef might have been at least partly for the "marketing" angle, and investors' sakes. During the long start-up period while the Santa Rita water system was under construction, there would not be much to impress investors. No mill under construction, no heavy equipment being shipped in from San Francisco. So a big building, with state-of-the-art tools like one of the first rural phones in the county, was probably the most impressive thing potential investors could see.

The Reef townsite had its own "showpiece," the mill, which was the focus of most of the investment and activity at the site. We see the showpiece of each operation as a kind of advertising, symbols meant to convey solid investments and high optimism.

Second, consider class and ethnicity: At the Reef Camp, both management and the labor force were predominantly Anglo-American. There is some evidence that the Santa Rita Company, in contrast, had predominantly Hispanic labor directed by Anglo management and supervisors. So class distinctions and ethnic discrimination may also figure in the greater dichotomy in

architecture between the managers' facilities at Kentucky Camp and the other habitation sites.

Third, families vs. single workers: At the Reef, we know that women and children were present. Not only did the Reef manager Mark Walker bring his wife and daughters to the camp, but Mrs. Walker's writings on the Reef make it clear there were other children present (with, we presume, their mothers). We don't know if the presence of women and children affected architecture at the Reef, but we can speculate that if the Santa Rita workers were mostly recruited from Greaterville or other nearby communities, they would have had permanent housing and families there, so tent quarters could have been considered adequate for temporary, part-time housing.

Fourth, back to economic efficiency again: trees and a sawmill right at the Reef town site probably made local lumber cheaper than the canvas we think was probably used at the Santa Rita camps.



Reef Superintendent Mark Walker's daughter rides a pony

Fifth, climate: the Reef sits at 7000 feet elevation, which might have made tent-life intolerably cold for anyone, especially since newspapers reported work at the camp throughout the winter. The Santa Rita operations were over 1000 feet lower, where conditions are not quite as harsh.

Which was the most important factor? The "families" argument has already been debunked. Last April, Forest Service archaeologist Bill Gillespie and his Passport in Time crew began further studies in Boston Gulch one of the Santa Rita workers' camps, and found a corset stay and a doll's head, which most likely indicates women and children were present, after all.

In archaeology, it's often easier to refute an idea than to prove it, because our information comes from artifacts affected by myriad factors. What if our PIT crew did *not* find a doll's head and corset stay? That wouldn't prove that women and children were *not* present – maybe just that they didn't lose those items at Boston Gulch.

(This article is based on information collected, in part, by Passport in Time volunteers, who did extensive survey and mapping of the SRW&MC company settlements in 1993 and 1999, and of the Reef townsite in 1997 and 1998.)



FALL POTLUCK POSTPONED DUE TO WATER SHORTAGE

Our Fall potluck picnic originally scheduled for October 9 has been indefinitely postponed, pending the repair or redrilling of the well. Meanwhile, workdays will continue on the second Saturday of each month. Come join us October 9 or November 13 as we get the little cabin ready for the rental program. We'll be repairing, cleaning, and sealing floors, fixing mud plaster inside and adding to the sacrificial coat outside, and doing numerous other jobs in addition to the electrical installation described on page 5. No experience necessary! All are welcome!

CLIPPINGS by *Lew Orrell*

Certain newspaper accounts tempt one to believe that James Stetson had not set foot in Arizona Territory prior to his arrival in Tucson in 1902. For many reasons such conclusion requires a bit of a leap of faith, but there is as yet no evidence to the contrary. (You will remember that Stetson hove into view in this bustling community in the guise of the Superintendent who was to breathe life and substance into what became George McAneny's Santa Rita Water and Mining Company).

With our doubts about Stetson's degree of familiarity with Tucson prior to 1902 temporarily sequestered, we can comfortably admire his ability to carry water on both shoulders under difficult circumstances. On the one hand, construction of McAneny's mini-estate (don't call it a "camp"; it was too sumptuous for that) and of the hydraulic system needed for mining the gold placers surely required on-site supervision. On the other hand, wooing and bedding a bride and building a circle of friends who invited his membership in not one, but two fraternal organizations required a considerable presence in Tucson. How could he do it?

To answer our own question, let's examine the above listing of the demands upon Stetson's time to see if it is overly conservative and restrictive. Dividing the construction work at the mine into three major categories will simplify analysis. First, installation of the large-diameter pipe, valves and other fittings needed to carry water from the dam to the sluicing sites for mining the gold. This was a critical task and Stetson no doubt insisted on being present to ensure the correct grades, adequate physical support for the pipe line, and tight joining of the pipe sections. However, there was an unexplained delay of many weeks in the arrival of the hardware at the siding for the Sonoita railroad station. If there were nothing else

demanding his attention, this hiatus provided him opportunity to spend "value time" in Tucson.

Second, there were two tunnels needed to connect portions of the water ditch. One was 250 feet long; the other, 1,057 feet. Not much of a challenge as mine tunnels go, but critical enough to require Stetson's attention unless he had expert help. At this time there were two other mining camps above Greaterville, Rosemont to the north and on the same side of the mountain range and Helvetia to the northwest on the opposite slopes. Both had seen boom times, especially Helvetia, and both were in cyclic declines when Stetson was faced with drilling the tunnels. As the mines at both camps were copper, it is plausible that a Cornish Captain could have been found among the unemployed at one of them. Were that the case, the lucky Stetson had only to contract the drilling as tut work (fixed number of dollars per foot of tunnel). In this case he would have been well advised to absent himself in Tucson until time to pay off the Captain and his small crew of "Cousin Jacks."

The third category, construction of the mini-estate, would have been the easiest for Stetson to deal with. There had been significant building at Rosemont capped by erection of a two-story, wood-frame hotel. A second boom for Helvetia in 1899 yielded several permanent buildings for the Helvetia Copper Company and a boarding house.

Folk from south of the border were present in large numbers among the populations of each of the three camps. Over countless generations they had developed an unique expertise in building with adobe brick, the chosen structural material for each of the five buildings for McAneny's mini-estate. Stetson had merely to visit each of the three camps, pick his lead man, hand him the dimensioned floor plans, stake the locations of the five buildings, then make only periodic checks on

progress. Continuous supervision was better supplied by his lead man.

Now that we have developed a plausible scenario for blocks of free time for Stetson consistent with his responsibilities to the Santa Rita Water and Mining Company, how could he use them effectively for socializing in Tucson? Leap on the back of his favorite horse and spend two to three days in transit in each direction? Wouldn't leave much time for lollygagging in the big town, would it? But, therein lies our tale, so to speak. No, he merely rode to Helvetia where for \$4 round trip he could board the stage to Vail. There he transferred to the Southern Pacific railroad on which he rode in much greater comfort and speed to Tucson – a matter of only a few hours, not days.

It is, we hope, much clearer now how Stetson could be as much a citizen of Tucson as he was of the Greaterville Placers. Perhaps next we should inquire of some of the men who were active in two or more of the three mining camps and exerted more or less influence on Stetson and the Santa Rita Water and Mining Company.

IT'S ELECTRIFYING!

Mark Doumas is heading up a project to bring electricity to Cabin C and to our new restroom. The out-of-the-way restroom location was chosen to keep the facility away from the main part of the site. A low-wattage light will make it easier to find, and the trail safer to navigate, at night. Likewise, although gas or propane lamps in the cabin would be romantic, electric lights will be safer for future cabin users.

Mark estimates we will need 60 hours of labor to complete the electrifying task. Please contact Kathy Makansi if you can help with ditch digging, wiring, or carpentry associated with the work.



NEW WATER PROBLEMS BESET KENTUCKY CAMP

The lack of water was always a problem for the miners; now it's a problem for hikers, visitors, workday crews, and our new caretakers, Ron Kisselburgh and Joan Chianese. Ron and Joan arrived in early September to discover there was no water in the trailer, at the outside faucets, or anywhere at Kentucky Camp! Apparently the well's pump, installed before the site became part of the Coronado National Forest, had ceased working.

Bailey Foster of Foster's Pump Company has spent several aggravating days trying to extract the broken pump so he could install a new one. But the cast iron pipe casing was so rusty and corroded, it collapsed. Estimates for drilling a new 400-foot-deep well run as high as \$22,000, which is well beyond the financial resources of the Nogales Ranger District.

Meanwhile, the District folks have brought in a "water buffalo" for our new caretakers, who have shown great spirit and patience enduring the drought. Ron and Joan, originally from Connecticut, have a home in Tombstone. Ron is familiar with both historic site preservation and trail work, having worked on the Appalachian Trail and watched over the Bureau of Land Management's Fairbank site. Come by to bring them some delicious water, help them repair the cabin floor, and welcome them to Kentucky Camp!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The next work days are **October 9** and **November 13, 1999**. There will be all kinds of fun chores to choose from, including:

- 🔧 help repair, clean, and seal cabin floor
- 🔧 help paint woodwork in Cabin C
- 🔧 help install window covering
- 🔧 patch and repair adobe walls
- 🔧 buy a Kentucky Camp T-shirt
- 🔧 plus, many other fun tasks.



The Friends of Kentucky Camp, a chapter of the Coronado National Forest Heritage Society, is a non-profit organization established to help in the preservation and interpretation of Kentucky Camp. Friends sponsor work days, coordinate volunteer activities, and conduct and supervise stabilization and preservation, in cooperation with the Coronado National Forest.

Student (\$5), individual (\$10), family (\$15), contributing (\$25), supporting (\$50), and lifetime (\$200) memberships are available. Send checks to Friends of Kentucky Camp, 716 Calle Rita, Tucson, AZ 85706.

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Visit Kentucky Camp on the internet at <http://www.Azstarnet.com/public/nonprofit/coronado/Intro.htm>.

See past issues of the Kentucky Camp Chronicle at <http://www.azstarnet.com/~patish/chrondx.htm>.

Contributions to the newsletter are welcome; send to Mary Farrell, Coronado National Forest, 300 West Congress Street, Tucson, AZ 85701.



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