

San Juan Mining District-- G. Oldies

Tape Catalogue Card

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 Address Prof. Duane smith-Fort Lewis Cololege
 Date
 Place Durango, Colorado
 Interviewer Joy Poole
 Phone

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Time	Names & Places	Subjects covered
00-14		Music --Introduction
14-53		San Juan Mining region defined. Professor Smith describes area boundaries. Triangle was Telluride, Ouray and Ophir region. They were the earlist mines in the areas.
53-75		Speaks of the larges mines in the area, which were the Topmboy, Liberty Bell and Smuggler. The largest was the Tomboy.
75-158	Otto Mears, John Potter	As the mining area became more well known, more money was needed to develop it. Prospectors and miners brought in partners. Describes the process of getting the English to invest in the mines. First engineer in the area was from Durango. He travelled to England and China to interest investors in the Telluride mines. The English money was brought over to start the mines. Some Telluride miners later sold out to British investors.
158-230		Telluride was the isolated part of San Juan area in 1870. Ophir developed first. The miners came over the passes. They started with gold in 1870, panning in creeks and hard rock mining in the mountains. The miners needed everything, so stores and services followed, setting up camps and the towns grew. By early 1880's, there were a few towns in the area. The miners came down from the mines to town for supplies and recreation. The towns grew very quickly.
230-297		Professor Smith describes types of mining used. Panning or placer mining was the earliest form in early 1858 and 1859. There was not as much gold found with this method in the San Juan Triangle area, more in Colorado Springs. Gradually found outcroppings of gold and silver veins and went into hard rock mining. This took more skills and equipment. By 1880, placer mining was finished, there was more money in quartz mining. The railroad helped as it hauled in supplies. The San Juan was a showplace for mining in 1890's. The Telluride -Ophir area was the first ones to use electric power for their trams. They were very modern in their outlook. Old timers were conservative and reached their peak in 1890 through 1914. San Juan was a leader in technique. The San Juan region dies down in the 1920's. Idarado came in later. It was run by leasors or by large company. Small miners gave up by early 1920's. San Juan area was in the forefront as far as using latest equipment and methods for mining.
297-355	Otto Mears	Professor Smith describes the way the railroad affected mining. Most mining districts needed the railroad to open up the areas. The railroad was a big boon to the mining area. It was used to ship in supplies and shipped ore out. Investors rode the trains from large cities to mining towns. The first railroad into Silverton was in 1882 and the D&RG arrived in in Ouray in 1880's. Otto Mears realized toll roads were not the ultimate answer and built 3 small railroad lines out of Silverton. Later he had a bigger vision-- a railroad from Silveron around to

Ridgeway in 1891. He later lost the Rio Grande Southern in the Silver crash. Telluride boomed after the railroad arrived.

355-397 L.L. Nunn Professor Smith talks about power for the mines. Describes process of getting coal to the Tomboy to run the mine. The DC current was not able to be used for power to the mine. L.L. Nunn arrived in Telluride in 1880. He was general manager for the Gold King mine in Ophir. The cost of fuel for operation was too high, so Nunn built the first electrical plant (AC current) in Ames and ran alternate current line to the Gold King mine and it worked. The plant operated 6 days a week. People would ride the train from Telluride to Ames to watch the start up of operations on Monday mornings. Other mines quickly acquired electric lines to their mines. Telluride was 1st area to use the AC power for mines in Colorado.

No accurate figures for amount of gold mined in area. In 1875 until 1923, roughly in district of Telluride area \$104 million worth of ore taken out. \$59 million gold, \$31 million silver and the rest copper, lead and zinc. Figures given for specific mines.

397-419 The Tomboy- Smuggler area operated for almost 100 years, a great record. Speaks of Idarado closing.

Music, closing and credits.

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