

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

71. Howland Tunnel

Tunnels are a natural part of mining operations, especially in mountainous terrain. While mineral lodes might be explored and developed with shafts or inclines, tunnels allow ore and waste material to be hauled out on the level rather than having to be hoisted to the surface. In the Little Cottonwood Mining District alone nearly 300 tunnels were recorded before 1880, most of them being fairly short in length and used to develop a single lode. However, a number of longer tunnels were planned, intended to tap mineral lodes at depth and provide a drain for ground water that plagued most mines in the Wasatch. One of these was the Howland tunnel.

The Howland Tunnel Company was incorporated in San Francisco in the early part of 1872 to develop the Howland tunnel claim filed by William H. Howland and fourteen other men, some of them being trustees of the company. The intent was to run a tunnel 6,000 feet in a northeast direction under the entire length of Emma Hill, thereby cutting all the lodes at great depth, as well as discovering lodes not already found on the surface. The company was capitalized for ten million dollars, an amount that raised some eyebrows in Salt Lake City. The *Salt Lake Herald* called the amount “so absurd that no one will be deceived by it.” They were probably right, because in the next two years the tunnel had been run less than three hundred feet. In March of 1874 the company was reorganized and the new president, a Mr. Benjamin O. Cutter, visited Alta in the company of William Howland, at which time they let a contract for driving 1,000 feet of the tunnel. It was later stated that when the tunnel is completed it would come out in Big Cottonwood by way of Cutter Gulch, a temporary re-designation of Honeycomb Fork, which must have pleased President Cutter. A contractor began work immediately, but his efforts ended before the end of year, probably due to lack of funds. The project remained idle throughout the next year, at which time three Alta miners relocated it as the Champion Tunnel. Not to have his grand plans defeated so easily, Howland sold some of the company’s stock in Salt Lake City and bought the tunnel from the three men, placing it back in the hands of the Howland Tunnel Company. But to no avail. Nothing further was done, making it available for relocation again. In 1878 it was relocated as the Scranton Tunnel, and again in 1880 as the Solitary Tunnel, and again in 1884 as the J & W Tunnel. By this time its length had grown to 600 feet. After several more years of idleness, William Howland came back into the picture with funding from an unknown source. In July of 1887 he filed a notice with the mining recorder stating that the Howland T&M Company would resume work and reclaim all rights of old locations from 1872.

This time it appeared the Howland Tunnel Company was back in business. A contract for 100 feet of



Fig. 1. The culvert at the right side of the telephone building north of the Peruvian Lodge in Alta marks the site of the Howland tunnel. The portal was on the other side, and in its day the tunnel’s snowshed ran through the culvert. The Little Cottonwood highway runs across the bottom of the photo.



Fig. 2. The Little Cottonwood highway runs toward the upper right in this aerial photograph, passing below the large dot, which is the location of the Howland tunnel portal. The Peruvian Lodge is below the highway at the left, the Goldminers Daughter lodge and the large paved parking lot is at the lower center, and the Alta Lodge is at the right. The upper dot is the location of the Enterprise shaft, which is mentioned in the text..

tunneling was let, a 20x40 boarding house was constructed, a number of improvements were made in the existing tunnel, and at least sixteen miners were employed. This activity ran through the summer and fall, then came to a halt. John Strickley, a long time merchant at Alta, had been providing merchandise and cash advances to the tunnel company, its contractor and personnel to the amount of over \$2,000, and received no payments in return. In November 1887 he filed a complaint in the Third District Court seeking payment. Judgment was entered in default and the company’s property was sold at

public sale. John Strickley was the only bidder, so he became the new owner of the tunnel.

While John Strickley ponders what to do with his new possession, it is necessary to go back a few years and bring another person into this narrative. In August of 1870, a year and a half before William Howland came into the Alta scene, the Enterprise claim was recorded, with its discovery shaft less than 500 feet up the slope north of the Howland tunnel site. This mine was worked with considerable success and became well known among Alta miners. Then, as was the case with many mines, it went through a series of owners, law suits, and more owners. Along the way it was patented, which allowed it to be idle over long periods without being subjected to relocation. In November of 1885 it was sold to the person of interest here, Elizabeth C. Champion. This woman came from a large Pennsylvania family of modest means, yet somewhere along the way she accumulated some wealth, allowing her to make this purchase. She formed the Enterprise Gold and Silver Mining Company to hold her new mining property. Her husband, Joseph B. Champion, a mine operator and promoter, was not a party to the purchase, but became one of the company's officers. His work in Montana then took them out of state for the next two years. When they revisited the mine in 1887 Howland was busy with his tunnel, giving them a chance to inspect his work. Its proximity to the Enterprise mine must have impressed them, because the following year, three months after it fell into the hands of John Strickley, Elizabeth C. Champion bought it from him. She had her brother-in-law, James M. Champion, who was working in Park City mines, come over to inspect the properties and take charge. Under his direction a drift was started in the Howland tunnel to run under the Enterprise mine. Meanwhile she formed a new company, the Elizabeth Consolidated Gold and Silver Mining Company, to hold all her mining properties, with the directors of the company, other than herself and her husband, being from Salt Lake City and Ogden.

At this point the people involved in this mining venture were swept through a kaleidoscope of events, starting with Joseph Champion promoting a gold mine in California. His convincing certainty of success and great returns resulted in all local parties, including his wife, investing heavily in his venture. It didn't take long before it became apparent that all that glittered was not gold, and the great gold mining promise came crashing to the ground. Amid the gloom came a further realization that the promoter, Joseph Champion, had withdrawn most of the gold mining company's funds, leaving nothing for the investors. This was followed by a feeble attempt to continue the drift from the Howland tunnel to the Enterprise mine, with hopes of realizing some profit when they would strike that lode. But that did not happen. The secretary/treasurer of the Enterprise company chose to leave town for a job in Denver, and Elizabeth Champion severed her marriage to the man all came to despise. The final blow came when the president of her company, unable to face his losses, chose to end his life.

All this turmoil would cause great changes in any person's life, and so it did for Elizabeth Champion. She reorganized her company, assuming the presidency herself, and for vice president chose a young miner who had returned to Salt Lake City the previous year. John B. Skewes had been working in California mines until his wife died. He then came back to Utah where his ten year old son could stay with his parents. He returned to mining in Bingham and southwest Utah. Following the reorganization Elizabeth Champion became possessed by two demons - liquor and men. She had encouraged a local miner to move into the cabin that Howland had built at the tunnel and take charge of the mine. To keep him happy at his job she repeatedly visited Alta to spend a few days or a week, leaving him in high spirits. When Skewes came into town she spent time with him. While both men knew of the other, and of her addiction to alcohol, they had remarkably different behavior. The miner would be in high spirits while she was with him, or for a short time thereafter, but when he'd hear about her being with any other man he would grow despondent and depressed. Skewes, on the other hand, always appeared to accept her ways, offering advice, never in anger, and always encouraging her to stop drinking. He finally accomplished that by convincing her to marry him and live at a mine he bought near Monticello where, he said, there is no liquor kept, so one doesn't deserve much credit for abstinence.

The Alta miner did not take her departure well. He got his revenge by suing the company for unpaid wages. Judgement was rendered in default and the miner took possession of the company, which he immediately sold to a Salt Lake City businessman. Its property remained idle until the first years of the twentieth century.

Elizabeth Skewes lived with her husband and his son at his mine in San Juan County until December 1909 when he was kicked in the chest by a horse. He died from his injuries on Christmas day. His widow and her stepson relocated to Moab where she remained until her death on 31 January 1917. Her meager possessions included two mining claims in San Juan county, which were sold to defray expenses. Curiously, one of them was named Enterprise, a reflection of her many years of mining involvement in the Wasatch.

In October 1903 the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company bought the long idle properties of the Elizabeth Consolidated Gold & Silver Mining Company. The Howland tunnel had been in existence for thirty years, but for all that time it had a length of only 700 feet and the 300 foot side drift driven toward the Enterprise mine. It would see far more activity in the years ahead, but before addressing that it is necessary to pause and look at the genesis of the Columbus Consolidated company.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

72. Columbus Consolidated Mining Company, Part I

In the middle of the 1890 decade Alta was well on the way toward becoming a ghost town. The winter residents could almost be counted on the fingers of two hands. Then as the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, activities began to increase, promising a revival of the mining industry. One miner commented, "There are more persons in Alta at the present than there have been in four years, more mines operating and a greater number of prospects being inquired into than at any period since the palmy days of the old Emma and Flagstaff." One of the new people was 30 year old Tony Jacobson, a man who would have a profound impact upon early twentieth century mining in Little Cottonwood Canyon. He brought with him at least fifteen years of mining experience, first in Park City, then in western Utah and Nevada. But of equal importance, he had the benefit of the wisdom of his father, Anton Jacobson, who was an Alta miner as early as 1871. Anton's first claim was located in Grizzly Gulch and named after his wife, Matilda. That mine was later consolidated with the Davenport and worked with considerable success. He filed four more claims before leaving for other mining districts. Now, nearly a quarter century later, his son was in Alta, and from subsequent events it is apparent that this man had an idea about what was needed to successfully operate a mine here and a plan to accomplish that.

His first claims, filed in September 1899 and January 1900, were located in Grizzly Gulch. Then he moved farther down the canyon and took an option on a claim owned by the old-timer Fritz Rettich. It was known as the Columbus and had been developed with a tunnel about 150 feet long. Its location was near the north end of today's Gold Miners Daughter lodge. Almost immediately Jacobson filed claims for the Columbus No.2 lode on the north side of the Columbus claim, and the Columbus No.3 lode on the south. He worked these during the year 1901 and found the lodes so promising he recorded two more claims on the north: C.K. and C.K. No.2. On the basis of his four claims and the lease on the Columbus, he formed the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company in April of 1902. The incorporators, other than himself, were his younger brother, A. O. Jacobson, mining engineers Arthur E. Snow and Roland H. Strickland, and attorney Job P. Lyon. The last two men worked together in an informal association in mining ventures, Lyon as legal advisor and Strickland as engineer and promoter. Lyon may have helped with the incorporation process and both may have assisted in securing finances during the following year, but neither one remained with the company beyond its first year. Tony's brother would remain as a partner throughout Tony's life, then continued as one of Alta's major mining professionals.

With the company established, the year 1902 was one of great achievement and even greater promise. By midsummer as many as twenty miners were employed and a carload of ore was being shipped each week, enough to pay expenses while development work was blocking out tons of ore underground. The tunnel had been extended to a length of about 600 feet, with numerous drifts and inclines run to follow ore bodies. The problem

of ventilation, while never mentioned in news releases, appeared to be handled temporarily by using the draft from a stove. This is suggested by the tall smokestack seen in Figure 1.. A conically shaped stove was made of sheet metal, resting on the ground, and having a tight-fitting door, also of sheet metal. A 6-inch stove pipe, was connected to the top of the stove, extending twenty to twenty-five feet in the air to provide a strong draft. Another pipe of similar diameter was attached to the stove near its base and run back into the tunnel, using as many lengths of pipe as might be necessary. Joints were sealed with tarred rags, the entire assembly made as air tight as possible, save the opening at the top of the chimney and the end of the pipe in the tunnel. When the stove and chimney were heated by a roaring fire inside, they became an air pump, drawing air in from the tunnel and out the chimney, air replaced by fresh air flowing in from the portal. This method was used at many mines over the years. It was reported the



Fig. 1. The main tunnel of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company is almost hidden behind the miners and their families posing for this picture. In midsummer of 1902 there were as many as twenty miners employed, and some of them had taken their families to Alta. The mine still had some primitive structures, as seen on the slope above the portal. Of interest is the outhouse and a line of laundry secured to it. Also the tall smokestack, which is discussed in the accompanying text. (Salt Lake Mining Review photo)

draft at the end of the pipe in the tunnel would be nearly strong enough to draw the flame from a candle. That this was a primitive method of ventilating a mine tunnel cannot be denied, but it was a temporary expedient. During the year a boiler and air compressor were ordered, installed and were operating in mid-December. Besides ventilating the tunnel, its compressed air ran air drills, supplementing the manual labor that had been in use.

The 1902 year ended with several other important events. In October the Columbus claim, the base of all the company's operations, was formally purchased from Fritz Rettich, and three additional claims, Columbus Numbers 4, 5 and 6 were added to its holdings. Possibly of greater importance was the addition of three new men to the company's directory, each a source of important development funds. C.K. McCornick, a son of long-time Salt Lake City banker, W. S. McCornick, and an investor in many western mining ventures, became vice president of the company. The other two men were from Michigan, the first of a number of investors from that state to contribute to the company's finances.

With the infusion of capital, Tony Jacobson began implementing his vision of a successful mining operation. One of the key items was the provision of a concentrator. While some ore of shipping grade was taken out of the mine, most of the ore blocked out for future development was of a milling grade and had to be concentrated, or refined before it could be shipped profitably. The need for this had been cited even before the company was incorporated, and a small jigging plant was provided to treat some ore, but his view of a successful operation required a large plant, which in turn required a significant amount of power. The cost of purchasing and hauling coal up the canyon, which had been done for the small compressor plant, was considered excessive. The alternative was to use electrical power, generated by a hydroelectric plant on the Little Cottonwood stream. And so in June of 1903 he filed notice with the State engineer to appropriate water from the creek. Contracts for the construction of the power plant were awarded in August. In anticipation of its completion a large new building, 35' by 80', was constructed near the portal of the tunnel to be used as a compressor house, machine shop and blacksmith shop. Also during the last quarter of the year a boarding house was completed to house the miners.

During the 1903 year the company also added to its land holdings. The Columbus tunnel was getting its finest ore when it entered the Braine fissure, which was under the Braine claim, which in turn was completely enclosed by the Columbus No.2 claim. To prevent lengthy litigation, the company simply bought the Braine claim from its owner. This seemed to be a standard tactic for Tony Jacobson. His approach was to file claims located contiguous to one another, leaving no open space between them. Old nineteenth century claims, however, were generally long and narrow, oriented in various directions and rarely located side by side or end to end. While Jacobson bought such claims of conflict, his contiguous claims took care of the open spaces between the earlier ones. Old claims he bought included the Braine, Comet, Xantippe, Garfield, Enterprise and Michigan. As a result they simply disappeared. In later years when the Columbus Consolidated properties were transferred to another mining company, it included all the land covered by the old claims, but in the name of the newer claims.

During 1903 the company also filed another claim of its own, Columbus No.7, and acquired five additional claims filed by William Dwyer, a long-time miner who was working with the Jacobson brothers almost since they came to Alta. The claims were the Dwyer and Dwyer Nos.1 to 4. While he filed them in his own name, he later transferred them to the Columbus Consolidated company. The portal of the Howland tunnel, which was discussed in a previous Faint Trails article, was on the Dwyer claim. Since that tunnel was heading toward the Braine fissure, Jacobson began doing exploration work in it. Realizing its potential value to the company's operations, he bought the property and rights of the Elizabeth Consolidated Gold & Silver Mining Company, which included the Elizabeth, Shasta, Trinity and Enterprise claims. While not specifically cited, it also included the Howland tunnel. Miners were put to work extending it to connect with the Columbus tunnel. While most of the company's buildings would remain at the Columbus portal, the Howland tunnel would soon become the center of the mining operations. There was much activity and expansion still ahead that will be discussed in the next episode.

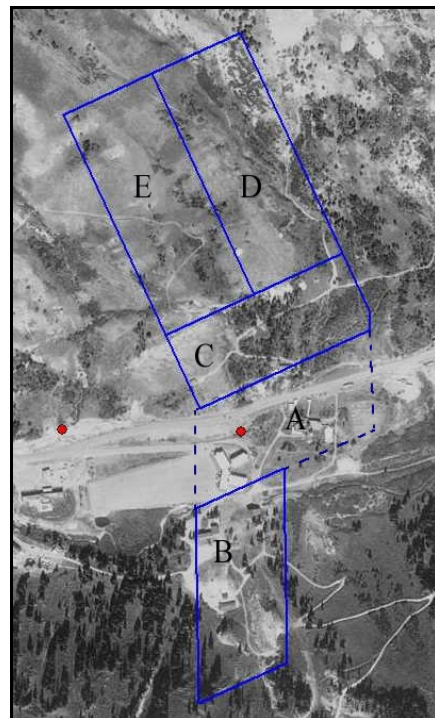


Fig. 2. The claims of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company at the time of its incorporation in April 1902 are shown on this aerial photograph. They are: B - Columbus No.3, C - Columbus No.2, D - C.K., and E - C.K. No.2. The Columbus claim, A, shown in dashed lines, was still under lease. The dot in the Columbus claim is the location of the Columbus tunnel, midway between the modern highway and the Goldminers Daughter lodge. The dot at the left is the location of the Howland tunnel, across the highway from today's Peruvian lodge.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

73. Columbus Consolidated Mining Company, Part II

At the annual stockholders meeting of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company, held the first week of January, 1904, the reports were nothing but favorable. The underground workings had been expanded and



Fig. 1. This photograph, taken late in 1903, shows the large 35' x 80' building under construction to house an electrically driven compressor as well as a machine shop and blacksmith shop. It also shows the recently completed boarding house and the small steam driven compressor installed in 1902. The view is up canyon, with the south fork going off to the right in the distance. (Salt Lake Mining Review photo)

great quantities of ore, both first class and milling grade, were exposed, with a considerable amount of first class ore shipped to the smelters. The surface improvements were the most visible, including the boarding house, the building to house a new large compressor and shops, and the hydroelectric power plant under construction four and a half miles down the canyon. Also announced at the meeting was the plan to immediately begin construction of a concentrating plant capable of treating 100 tons of second class ore a day. The machinery for the mill was purchased locally, much of it being old, but serviceable equipment from the Kearns and Weber mill at Park City. When it was decided to increase the mill capacity to 150 tons a day, additional machinery was purchased from the Tesora mill at Tintic. As soon as the roads were in condition to be used, the machinery was hauled up the canyon to Alta, where work on the mill building had already begun. Its location was on the west side of the Howland tunnel.

Alta received its first electricity from the Columbus power plant during the last week of June 1904. As soon as connections could be made, the newly installed compressor began running, providing compressed air to the Columbus mine at first, but soon to many of the other mines in the vicinity. It also wrapped Alta in its mantle of pulsating sound that would continue for another thirty years. The concentrating mill didn't make use of the electrical power until the end of October. All the machinery had been installed before that time, but couldn't be used until the four electric motors had been received, installed and all connections made. The mill began running and producing concentrates after surprisingly few start-up problems. Its first shipment was made in mid-November, presumably from ore extracted in the Howland tunnel, because the underground connection to the Columbus mine was not made until the end of that month. After that time all ore was taken out through the Howland tunnel and placed in bins in the mill building or into a newly constructed bin for first class ore. The concentrates were stored in other bins in the mill until they could be taken down canyon to the smelter.

With the mill running three shifts, it was concentrating about 120 tons of crude ore each day. Its importance to the company was shown by the report at the end of the next year, 1905, which stated that the company started the year about \$60,000 in debt, and ended it free from all encumbrances. This was in spite of the construction of a new office building and a three-story boarding house, the last major additions to the surface facilities.

Tony Jacobson had a concern for the safety and well being of his miners. His provision of the crude draft stove to provide fresh air in the early Columbus tunnel was one indication of this. After the compressors were available to drive pneumatic tools, the exhaust from the tools



Fig. 2. This photograph, taken in the second half of 1904, after the Columbus Power Plant was operating, shows the boarding house and the big compressor house with its compressor driven by electric motors. The boiler and steam driven compressor have been removed. The faint line across the slopes above the buildings is the right of way for the old Alta horse tramway, later to be used for the Little Cottonwood highway. (Utah Historical Society photo)



Fig. 3. Columbus Consolidated mill as it appeared during the later stages of construction, about August 1905. The ore bins at the front corner are not yet completed. A trestle, enclosed in a snow shed, leading to the portal of the Howland tunnel is seen behind the building at the upper left. The view is toward the northeast. (Salt Lake Mining Review photo)

served the same purpose. A bunkhouse was built to house the miners in 1903, but as the operations expanded, that initial building became too small for the increased number of men. In his mining experiences before coming to Alta, Jacobson had suffered many of the discomforts of the average miner's life. He knew the best way to keep good men on the job was to provide good accommodations. And that is exactly what he did with the new boarding house. It was in a style almost unknown in mining communities, certainly never before seen in the Little Cottonwood Mining District. A Salt Lake Tribune reporter called it a "model of convenience and comfort."

The new boarding house was built almost as an addition to the old one, but with its larger size the appearance was that the smaller building was added to the larger one. It was 75 by 35 feet in size and three stories high above the basement. The main floor had a dining room 40 by 20 feet in size, allowing a large number of men to be served at one time. The interior walls were covered with composition board and wainscoted, giving a modern appearance. The third floor, being under the roof, had its useful space increased with the provision of six dormers on each side. Iron bedsteads and mattresses were provided for the occupants. The building was variously reported to accommodate between one hundred and one hundred fifty men. Between the mine and the mill a large number of men were employed by the company. In the summer of 1906 that number was reported to be over one hundred.

The basement of this building held rooms for storage of meats, vegetables and other stores. But it also had a room with a large cement lined pool, variously reported as a great plunge bath and a swimming pool. It is not likely it resembled a swimming pool as might be expected today, over a century later, but it did provide a means to bath or just relax, since the water was kept at a warm temperature with steam pipes. The building also had tub baths, wash bowls and all other features of sanitary plumbing, presumably also in the basement. And, of course, the building was provided with electric lighting.

The office building constructed at the same time was placed between the big compressor building and the new boarding house. It was a two story building, somewhat smaller than the first boarding house. It had three dormers on each side of its roof, a distinguishing characteristic allowing this structure to be identified over the next three decades or more. More will be said about this building in future articles.

These structures were a harbinger of things to come. They resulted from a new mode of mining, one on a scale far exceeding what had been seen in the past. Almost all earlier mines had boarding houses, or bunk houses, but with operations that involved only a few men the buildings did not have to be very big. Or comfortable. Now that the Columbus company showed what a modern boarding house could be, other mining companies built structures of similar size. They included the Continental Alta and Michigan-Utah up in Grizzly Gulch, and South Columbus Consolidated directly across the canyon. Since the latter company was under control of the Jacobson brothers when its boarding house was built, it was an identical copy of the Columbus Consolidated building.

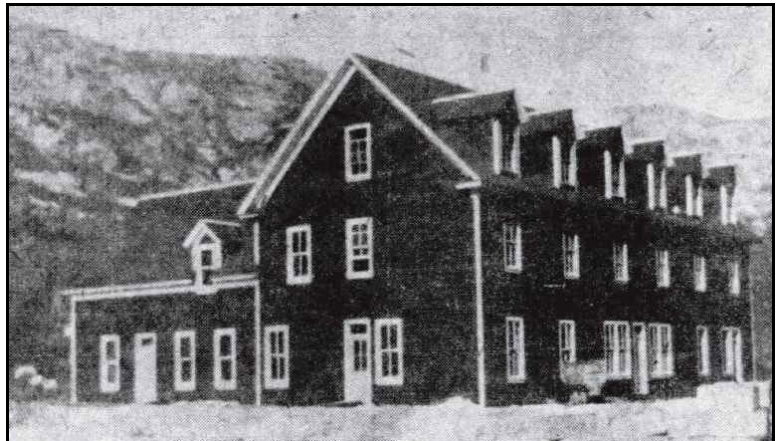


Fig. 4. The three-story Columbus Consolidated boarding house constructed in 1905 is seen here from the southwest. It was built onto the old smaller bunkhouse on the left. That structure, which is seen in Figures 1 and 2, had a dormer added to the roof during the two years of its existence. (Salt Lake Herald photo)

While the surface building may have been impressive, the important work of the company was taking place underground where the ore was being sought and extracted. However, success does not come without problems, both of which will be discussed in the next episode.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

74. Columbus Consolidated Mining Company, Part III

While the surface workings of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company may have been impressive, the important work was going on below the surface, down in the subterranean passages of the mine. Mention has



Fig. 1. This photograph, taken sometime between 1908 and 1912, shows the Columbus Consolidated buildings at the Columbus tunnel. From left to right they are: the big compressor building, seen in an earlier photo, but now sporting two dormers on the roof and an annex at the rear; the office building with three dormers on each side of the roof; and the large boarding house with six dormers on each side and an annex which was the original boarding house built in 1903, now with an additional two-window dormer on its roof. The low building with a sloping roof on the left was a barn; the purpose of the small building at front center is unknown. (University of Utah, Special Collections)

been made of the original Columbus tunnel being only about 150 feet long when Jacobson took an option on it. In less than two years it had been driven to 600 feet, but with drifts and winzes run to explore ore deposits, the total underground workings had increased to nearly 1100 feet. Some ore was shipped to the smelters during these first years, but only that produced as a byproduct of the exploration and development work. It was not until the concentrating mill was operating and the connection was made between the Howland and Columbus tunnels at the end of 1904 that shipments began in earnest. During the 1906 season many teams were kept busy hauling ore down the canyon to the smelters. In July of that year it was reported sixty-eight teams were employed and twenty-five more were required, but not available. These may not all have

been four-horse teams, but a team of that size could haul five to six tons on each trip. Shipments slowed during the winter when impeded by heavy snowfalls and muddy roads, but in spite of that twenty-eight teams were being used in January of 1907.

Much of these heavy shipments were made possible by the concentrating plant, which was treating as much as 150 tons of milling grade ores during a three-shift day. To provide this amount of raw material the underground workings were being continually expanded. When an ore deposit was encountered, it was explored by drifting and sinking to determine its extent. If it went deep enough, a new tunnel level was established as a base for further operations. In this way the mine had a 100 level in early 1905, a 200 level before the end of that year, a 300 level in early 1906 and a 400 level later that year. Levels were often numbered in round hundreds, although their actual vertical depth was usually much less than that. In this case it could have indicated the distance down the large incline connecting the various levels. The 400 level received much attention because of its exceptionally rich deposits. While depth may have yielded riches, it also imposed problems, for water accumulating in the levels could not drain naturally as it could in the main tunnel. As a result electrically driven pumps were installed in each level to pump the water up and out.

The heavy shipments of 1905 and 1906 enabled the company to pay off its encumbrances and, to the joy of its investors, announce its first stock dividend of 15 cents a share in December 1906. This was followed by additional twenty cent dividends in March, July and September of 1907. As one reporter commented, "80 cents a year on \$5 stock is not bad." But the good times were not destined to continue. During that year metal prices began to fall, reaching a point where Tony Jacobson chose to suspend shipment of all but the highest grade ores, shut down the concentrating mill and reduced the number of miners employed, leaving only those who would continue development work, mostly at the deepest levels of the mine. In addition, he suspended further payment of dividends. This did not please the stockholders, causing the eastern investors to attempt taking over the company at the 1908 annual meeting. However, Jacobson and his local supporters managed to retain control.

What was happening was but an indication of things to come. From this point on the company was destined to suffer many problems, punctuated by an occasionally snippet of good news. One of the continuing problem areas was water in the mine. For instance, development work in the 400 level came to an end in May of 1908 when the miners tapped a big water course. Over 600 gallons per minute gushed out of what the miners called a bug-hole; it could have been handled by the two pumps at that level, but one of them broke and the water rose to the 300 level. Two attempts to lower the water were unsuccessful due to equipment failures, allowing the

incline to fill up again. Finally, a third attempt was successful and the miners were able to return to work in the lowest level after a delay of over two months.

Another problem was that of hauling ore from the mine to the smelters. The very rough and steep canyon road was bad enough when it was good, but heavy winter snows and deep spring mud made the road all but impassable. In an attempt to bypass the problematic road in the upper half of the canyon, Jacobson turned to the aerial tramway of the Continental-Alta company. This tramway has a story of its own, but suffice it to say that in the winter of 1904-05 it was constructed by that company to run between its mine at Grizzly Flat and Tanner Flat, five miles down the canyon. It operated for one season before being totally wrecked by snowslides in the winter of 1906. It was completely rebuilt in 1907. Since it ran right past the Columbus Consolidated ore bins, a loading station was installed there and the tramway was used to move ores from the mine down to newly constructed ore bins at Tanners Flat, allowing the teamsters to avoid the difficult road above that point. This arrangement worked well a little over one year until the tramway was again wrecked by snowslides in the winter of 1910. By that time the combination of low metal prices, limited shipments, lost time due to flooding and equipment failures placed a huge burden on the finances. As a result an assessment of 25 cents per share was imposed in March of 1911, and another one of 10 cents in October. Then another water source was struck, flooding the 400 level again. The pumps were handicapped by a lack of electrical power due to low creek flow at the power plant, so the water continued to rise until it was at the 200 level. New pumps were ordered and another ten cent assessment was called. The winter had passed before the pumps were back in operation and the water was finally below the 200 level in June. But by that time the stockholder's meeting had been held and the Salt Lake people, including the Jacobson brothers, were voted off the board. As a result they left the company and moved on to other endeavors.

The new management didn't have much more success with the mine's problems. They managed to make sporadic ore shipments, albeit at a much lower level than had been seen in previous years. By the end of the 1912 year they gave up fighting Nature; they pulled the pumps and closed the mill. Then, as if Mother Nature gave them one more challenge, in the early morning darkness on Saturday, 11 January 1913, the big boarding house caught fire and burned to the ground. About two dozen men fled the fire in their night clothes, finding themselves out in the snow with the temperature at ten degrees below zero. None was severely injured and they were able to find shelter and clothing in other buildings in the area. But the boarding house was a total loss.



Fig. 2. The Columbus Consolidated boarding house burned down about a year and a half before this photograph was taken. It had been located on top of the dump to the right of the compressor and office buildings. See Figure 1. (Utah Historical Society)

Several months before the boarding house fire rumors of a consolidation began to circulate. They soon became fact when, on 8 February 1913, the Wasatch Mines Company was incorporated as a consolidation of the Columbus Consolidated, Superior Alta and Flagstaff mining companies. On the 3rd of March the Columbus Consolidated properties were transferred to the Wasatch Mines Company in exchange for stock in the latter organization. And with that transaction, the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company ceased to exist. Then, about a year and a half later, on 7 September 1914 the concentrating mill was destroyed by fire, taking with it all the snowsheds and small buildings except the big ore bin that had been used for shipping grade ore. Now the only visible reminders of the late company were the compressor and office buildings.

Within two years of its formation, the Wasatch Mines Company began driving its long drain tunnel, this being one of the major purposes for the company's formation. The need for a deep tunnel to drain the Alta mines was recognized for many years. Tony Jacobson actually started such a tunnel in 1907, placing its portal in Superior Gulch, some distance west of the Columbus Consolidated workings and nearly 600 feet lower. After it had been driven a distance of 400 feet the venture came to a halt. A faulty survey had indicated the portal to be on Columbus Consolidated ground when, in fact it was on Alta Superior property.

The story of the Columbus Consolidated is largely a story of Tony Jacobson. He was involved in at least eight other companies in the Little Cottonwood district, during and after his tenure at the Columbus company. In each case he was the first president of the company and was accompanied by his brother, A.O. Jacobson. Tony died on 28 October, 1915, following an operation for a respiratory condition he had suffered for the previous two years. His brother carried on the Jacobson mining tradition for another twenty five years.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

75. Alta 1939 and the Red Shelter

The Columbus Consolidated Mining Company's office building, constructed at the same time as the big boarding house in 1905, has been mentioned in the past two Faint Trails episodes. In each case emphasis was made of the three dormers on each side of the roof since they are a distinguishing feature of this building. It was also mentioned that the building, in addition to the larger compressor building, survived the conflagration that destroyed the boarding house in February 1913. Having stated all that, it is now necessary to step forward to 1939, the year when Alta made the transition from a center of mining to one of winter sports.



Fig. 1. These buildings survived the fire that destroyed the Columbus Consolidated boarding house in February 1913. They are, from left to right: the big compressor building behind the low barn, the office building with three dormers on each side of the roof; and a smaller two-story building whose purpose remains unknown. (University of Utah Special Collections)

It began in 1936 when Salt Lake County received a deed from the Rio Grande Western railroad company for the right of way of the old surface tramway between Wasatch at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon and Alta. During the following two years the rail roadbed was transformed into a paved two lane road, making Alta accessible during nearly all conditions of weather, fair or foul. In 1938 the Salt Lake Winter Sports Association was formed with the intention of

building a chair lift to take skiers to higher slopes than they were apt to find under manual power. The new lift was to follow the line of the present day (2012) Collins lift, running into Collins Gulch about as far as today's angle station.

One of the members of the association was William O'Connor, the manager of the American Smelting and Refining Company, as well as the Michigan-Utah Mining Company in Little Cottonwood Canyon. That company had an aerial tramway running down the canyon from the mine in Grizzly Gulch, but it was no longer in use. Through O'Connor's help the Association was able to salvage tramway parts to use for the new ski lift. Building the lift was a formidable task, as it was only the second one to be built in this country, the first being in Sun Valley. As might be expected, the project encountered many problems and suffered repeated delays.

On Tuesday, the first of November, 1938, the Chamber of Commerce Winter Sports Committee announced it would sponsor the opening of the new ski lift on Saturday the 12th. That didn't happen. On the 15th they said the lift would be ready for use within 10 days. On the 28th of November they said the lift would be completed by the first of December, but set no firm date for the official opening, possibly the middle of the month. On the 1st of December they announced the dedication of the Alta winter playground would be on Sunday the 4th, but the next day the dedication was postponed one week. Then, in mid-week, the president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce said inaugural runs would be postponed until the first Sunday after the lift is finished, adding, "whenever that is." One might sense a bit of exasperation here, and rightfully so.

The University of Utah Ski Club scheduled a slalom tournament for Sunday the 8th of January, 1939. The planned run was on Collins face, starting at the upper terminal of the ski lift and ending at the lower terminal. Obviously the plan included the use of the lift to carry the contestants to the starting point, but the day before the slalom the skiers were advised they had to report at the lower terminal by 11:30 a.m. and be at the upper terminal by 1 p.m., a longer interval than would be required for a lift ride between the two points. Sure enough, a photograph taken the Sunday following the slalom, the day the lift finally began carrying skiers, showed a switchback track going up the slope on the west side of the lift, a remnant of the activity a week before.

Sunday, January 15, 1939, marked the first day of operations for the new ski lift, over two months after its originally announced opening. There have been a number of reasons postulated for that delay, involving equipment breakage, misalignments, tower failures, etc., but the more probable cause was that parts being fabricated by a company in Salt Lake City - various brackets and the ski lift chairs - were delivered between 30 Nov. 1938 and 15 Jan. 1939. After all required parts were available and installed, the lift gave good service during its first day of operation. However, on the second weekend it suffered the breakage of a gear. It was found the

lift could still operate, but with a lighter load. It ran the rest of that day with skiers riding on every third chair. The gear was repaired before the third weekend of operations.

Amenities and shelter for skiers were in short supply. The Forest Service was building a shelter that was still under construction at the time the ski lift began operation. It was located some distance to the east of the center of activity. Known shortly thereafter as the Rock Shelter, it was remodeled many years later to become the Snow Pine Lodge. But there was another shelter very close to the bottom of the ski lift. It was the old office building that once served the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company. By this time the compressor house had been torn down, leaving the office building as the only surviving structure. Still sporting its characteristic triple dormers on each side of the roof, it was given a respectable facade with a coat of red paint, possibly an inexpensive red barn paint. Also, it was given two large signs on the side facing the highway. The larger one advertised Coca Cola, but also gave the building's name - Alta Ski Shelter. The smaller of the two signs promoted Royal Crown Cola. In its new role the building became known as the Red Shelter. It is not clear who was responsible for the remodeling to serve in its new role. It received practically no attention in the press, but there have been suggestions that the food that was available was prepared by Bertha Howard. She had been the cook at the Balsam Inn at Brighton when it burned down in March of 1937, and in 1941 was the manager at the Alpine Rose lodge, also in Brighton.

The third Sunday of the lift's operation practically ended its season, for the day ended as a heavy snowstorm arrived. That was followed by storm after storm. Massive avalanches destroyed a number of buildings and badly damaged the Forest Service shelter. Snow removal equipment was primitive when compared to what is available today, so the highway was not opened all the way to Alta until mid-March, at which time trenches had to be dug in the snow to allow the lift chairs to pass through. Photographs taken that day show that the day was very warm, most likely indicating the ski season, the very first, albeit brief ski season at Alta was rapidly coming to a close.

The Red Shelter served skiers for another season. By that time the Forest Service Rock Shelter was being



Fig. 2. The Red Shelter, formerly the office building of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company. Notice the three dormers on each side of the roof. The base of the new Alta ski lift is across the bottom of the canyon. Collins Gulch is above and Mount Baldy is on the skyline.

repaired and was in limited service, and the Alta lodge had been built. The Red Shelter was then converted to a private home by Dick Durrance, a nationally known ski racer who moved to Alta to take over the ski school. He and his wife spent several months remodeling the building, then only lived in it for a few weeks in January of 1941 before it caught fire and burned to the ground, taking with it all their possessions, including his collection of medals and trophies. An overheated stove was blamed for setting the home ablaze while its residents were having dinner at the adjacent Alta Lodge. It was as if the building, a relic of the mining era, was bowing out to let the new era, that of winter recreation, take over.



Fig. 3. Photo taken on 19 March 1939, the first day of ski lift operation after nearly two months of heavy snow storms and destructive avalanches kept the canyon closed. The remains of a large aerial tramway tower, a remnant of the mining era, is at the upper left. The road is still in the process of being opened. The Red Shelter, in the center of the photo between the lift terminal and the road, escaped without damage.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

76. Alta - Brighton Horse Trail

The above title has never been the name of this trail, but rather denotes its function during part of its existence. To explore its origin and progression it is necessary to go back to the very early days of mining in Little Cottonwood Canyon. When the prospectors went into Grizzly Gulch, their trails generally followed the line of the road as it appears today, at least until they reached Grizzly Flat, and another eighth of a mile above the flat. The road that was blazed much later, sometime in the twentieth century, stays on the north side of the



Fig. 1. This map shows the old and current trails and roads to Twin Lakes Pass in upper Grizzly Gulch. The Grizzly Gulch road as seen today is indicated with the letter A. B is the original trail and road above Grizzly Flat, while the trail C is the subject of this article. The 1875 vintage Prince of Wales road is indicated by letter D. The road designated as E did not appear until the mid-twentieth century. The dot at letter F is the Prince of Wales pump house site, and the dot at letter G is Michigan-Utah's Patsey Marley mine.

stream and climbs steeply over some rough terrain, part of its length running over exposed rock with many boulders, large and small. It is indicated as letter E in Figure 1. The nineteenth century miners chose not to follow that route, instead they crossed the stream and followed a gently climbing path on the south side of the drainage, letter B in the figure, the old and new routes meeting at the top of the grade. At that point the trail split, the branch of interest here turning in a southerly direction to cross a small meadow before continuing its easterly path, making a gently climbing traverse until it reached Twin Lakes Pass. The other branch headed in a northerly direction to access the multiple claims on the north slope of the gulch. The trail running as far as this junction and the northerly branch quickly became a road, but the branch going up to the pass remained a trail, at least until 1875. That was the year the Prince of Wales mine, across the ridge in the head of Silver Fork, was making major improvements, which included two steam engines to drive hoists and pumps. To provide water for the boilers, the company

filed a claim on three springs high in Grizzly Gulch, not far below Twin Lakes Pass, but much closer to the trail going up to the pass, and proceeded to install a small boiler and pump to deliver the water to the mine. Accordingly, the trail was improved from the junction to a point close to the pump house site, where a short diversion was made to allow early delivery of necessary construction materials. Beyond this point the trail never became anything more than a trail, but it provided much used access to claims on the northeast slopes of Grizzly Gulch as well as those in Honeycomb Fork. Since the road heading in a northerly direction to Silver Fork pass and the Prince of Wales mine was constructed at this same time, it is reasonable to believe an extension from that road was made for alternate access to the pump house.

During the first half of the 1870 decade this trail may also have been used by travelers coming across from Big Cottonwood Canyon, being either miners traveling to or from Park City, or early visitors at Brighton's hotel taking an excursion to Alta. But in 1875, when the horse tramway between Wasatch and Alta was completed, people began to use it in their travels to and from Brighton's hotel. They would ride the tramway to Alta where they could take a wagon as far as the Prince of Wales pump house, then either walk or ride horses the rest of the way up to Twin Lakes Pass and down the other side using one of two trails that descended to the upper Twin Lake. From there the old logging road would take them down to Silver Lake. For



Fig. 2. The light colored mine dump in the center distance was the Michigan-Utah company's Patsey Marley operation, as seen from the present Grizzly Gulch road. The early road up the gulch crossed over to the base of the dump, which was not there at the time, then headed to the left below the large boulder field. The stream runs in the gully in the foreground.

ten years the horse trail in Grizzly Gulch received much use for this purpose. Then in 1885 or 1886 Daniel H. Brighton built a primitive road from the lower Twin Lake to the pass and down to the Prince of Wales pump house, allowing travelers to go all the way from Alta to Silver Lake by wagon, although a report in 1890 claimed, "The road from Alta to Brighton's, three miles, is also open, yet easier in saddle than in wagon," implying the road was pretty rough. Presumably the present road from the pump house site to Twin Lakes Pass follows the alignment of Daniel Brighton's road. On the other side of the pass his road is now the much used Twin Lakes Pass trail.

To find this long abandoned trail and road, one must follow the Grizzly Gulch road another eighth mile above Grizzly Flat. Looking across the stream to the south side there is a big mine dump as seen in Figure 2. That is



Fig. 3. Granite stonework provides a waterway across the trail to prevent erosion during spring snow melt, yet is narrow enough to allow man and beast to step across easily.

part of the Michigan-Utah company's Patsey Marley operation, so named because the tunnel runs into Patsey Marley hill. There has been on-site evidence that a bridge once spanned the stream's gully in the foreground of the figure, but that would have been during the operations at the mine over there, from 1917 to about 1927. The old trail and road probably crossed a little farther upstream where a ford is obvious. This may have been the original crossing, but it was much improved when the Utah Power and Light Company made a road to the other side, then off toward the west when it installed the power lines into Alta. The old trail and road of interest here turned to pass under the foot of the mine dump, which was not there at the time, then head in an easterly direction under a large boulder field and up through a wooded slope. Just before reaching the top of the grade the horse trail went off to the right. Its path can be seen if one watches for it, but the base of the trail has been badly washed out over the years. This was the junction between the trail continuing east toward the pass and the one heading

north. When the road on the north side of the drainage was cut into its hillside, probably in the years following World War II, considerable debris was pushed off the side into the streambed. As a result the water was diverted and began flowing down the old road on the south side, washing the soil away and leaving a surface of mostly bare rock. The stream only flows in the spring while the snow is melting, but during that time the road is nearly impassable by foot traffic.

From this point the trail becomes less obvious, especially after the vegetation has grown high. It first crosses a small meadow where it has served as a streambed during the snow melt and appears as a deep trench. It then climbs through a wooded slope and near the top divides with the left branch going to the pump house site, while the right branch continues towards the pass. From this point the trail shows considerable evidence of both use and improvement. At one place where it traverses a slope there is a long low granite wall supporting its outer edge. At numerous places where water channels come down the slope to cross the trail, granite blocks have been placed to form a gutter channeling the water to the other side, but narrow enough to allow man and beast to step across with ease. In the late springtime their effectiveness is evident as most have water flowing through them. In spite of their age, being in place well over one hundred years, most are still intact.



Fig. 4. Another granite gutter channeling water across to the other side of the trail, this one showing some of the ravages of time.

This horse trail offers a much more pleasant route to Twin Lakes Pass than the road going up the middle of the gulch. What it lacks is enough use to keep it open and obvious to the casual hiker. With a little trail work and more feet passing over it, a great alternate route would be opened to the general public. Its only disadvantage is that, being on a north facing slope, it holds snow early in the fall and late in the spring.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

77. A Cluster of Claims

In the previous Faint Trails article, Alta - Brighton Horse Trail, mention was made that the early use of the trail was for access to claims on the northeast slopes of Grizzly Gulch as well as those in Honeycomb Fork. Some of those claims fell in a cluster at the east end of Honeycomb Ridge, directly above Twin Lakes Pass. Several

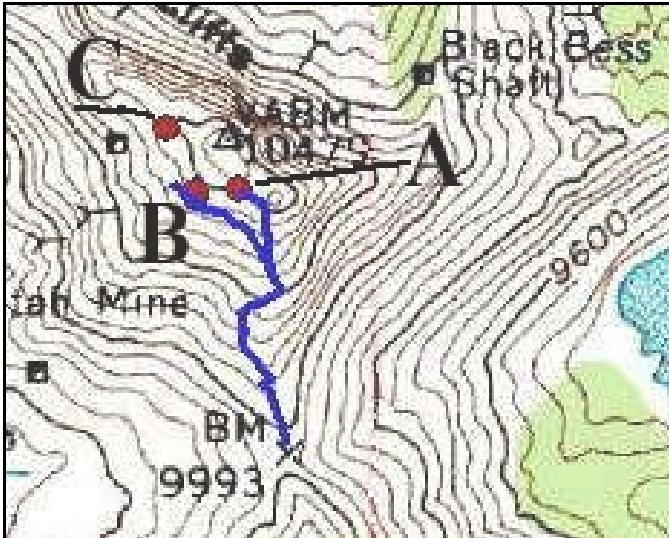


Fig. 1. This map shows the miner's trail between Twin Lakes Pass, at the BM 9993 legend, and the cluster of mines near the top of Honeycomb ridge. The dots are the locations of mines mentioned in the text. The Bute shaft is at A. Point B actually is two dots so close together they merge into one, but represent the Florinda mine with the Marietta shaft directly above it. Point C is the "Blackbeth" shaft. Black Bess Shaft is located in the upper bowl of Honeycomb Fork. The upper end of the Twin Lake reservoir is at the right margin.

the ridge into Grizzly Gulch. When the claim was surveyed in 1873 this site, the one shown in the figure, was noted, but at that time it was only a 'hole' about seven feet deep. Obviously more work was done after that time, but nothing remains other than the great mound of waste rock.

Going back to the point where the ascending trail splits, the westerly branch climbs gently and shows indications of considerable use in the past, including several low supporting stone walls. At the top of its ascent there is a sizeable flat area that once held a cabin for the Florinda mine. The collapsed tunnel and incline is on the other side of the cabin site. Only thirty feet directly up the slope is the open, but grated shaft of the Marietta claim. These two claims, the Florinda and Marietta, overlapped at this point, explaining their close proximity. However, there is a little more to their story. The Florinda claim was recorded in June of 1871 and apparently worked to a considerable extent. When it was surveyed for patent in October 1873 it had an incline and drift as well as a shaft and drift. It also had a house 11' by 20' covering the incline, joined by a boarding house 16' square. About that time of the survey the claim was transferred to the St. Louis & Utah Silver Mining Company, after which time nothing more appeared about the mine or the company.

The Marietta claim was recorded late in 1876 by a James Wilson from Marietta, Ohio, thereby explaining its name. Wilson had it surveyed for patent, at which time the claim's discovery shaft was said to have been about thirty feet from the Florinda incline and house. This suggests the Marietta shaft and the earlier Florinda shaft were one and the same. The claim was then transferred to the Bute Silver Mining Company, which happened to be a corporation of Ohio. Since the major workings of the Bute company were in Honeycomb Fork, it is unlikely any further work was done on this shaft, unless it was done under lease.

were completely within the Little Cottonwood Mining District, while others ran over the ridge into the Big Cottonwood district. Access to these claims was by way of the previously described horse trail and later the road in Grizzly Gulch to Twin Lakes Pass, then another trail going up to the claims. Heading up in a northerly direction from the pass, this trail can be easily followed, since it is frequently used by hikers. After passing a power pole, only a short distance from the pass, a trail branches off to the west. While it appears to be a much used, do not be deceived. It goes nowhere. It is a good example of the axiom that when a choice has to be made, the most used trail is the wrong one because everyone takes it, then has to come back to take the right one, giving the wrong one twice as much use. Two-thirds of the way to the ridge, about two-tenths of a mile, the trail splits. In this case both branches are of interest, each leading to mine dumps that are visible from Twin Lakes Pass.

Continuing on the branch going up the fall line, it goes only a short distance before turning to the left and ending on the top of a dump as seen in Figure 2. This was on the Bute claim. While remains of the Bute mine are seen as a large prominent dump in Honeycomb Fork, the claim actually extended over



Fig. 2. This mine dump at the east end of the Honeycomb ridge was on the Bute claim. Little Cottonwood Canyon is in the background, with Mount Superior at center.



Fig. 3. View looking down onto the top of the Florinda dump, where the foundation stones from its cabin can be seen. The closed incline is on the left. Upper Grizzly Gulch is in the background.

was, and the name Black Bess came out sounding more like Black Beth, and the surveyor accepted it as that. Nothing factual about this, but it is amusing to speculate.

It is not likely that much work was done on this Blackbeth shaft. When the Black Bess claim was surveyed four years later this shaft was not mentioned. At that time all work was on the other side of the ridge in the Honeycomb cliffs, and later, after the Black Bess Mining Company was formed, the work was concentrated at the Oregon shaft in the bowl at the head of Honeycomb Fork. It is interesting to note that the Black Bess claim was originally 1400 by 600 feet in size, with about two-thirds of it being on the Grizzly Gulch side of the divide, in the Little Cottonwood Mining District. After it was surveyed for patent in 1877, it was noted that the Little Cottonwood rules allowed claims to be only 100 feet in width, so the claim notice was amended and the part in Grizzly Gulch was cut down to that width. It was resurveyed in its new configuration in 1880, at which time its former size of 11.41 acres was reduced to 5.99 acres.

Looking at the old Blackbeth pit it is easy to see what interested the miners back in the early 1870s, because it straddles a contact between two formations, the west side being a creamy white rock, the east side a very

The trail to the Florinda mine continues, turning northerly to follow the contour of the hillside almost to the top of the Honeycomb ridge. Along the way there are remnants of several more mine workings, all save one unidentified. The exception is the 'Blackbeth' shaft, a shallow pit completely hidden in a thicket of small bushes and trees above the end of the trail. It was cited by the surveyor of the nearby King of the West claim. The origin of the Blackbeth name is unclear, but it raises an interesting speculation. The King of the West survey was made about the same time the Black Bess claim was recorded in the Big Cottonwood Mining District. However, the latter claim extended from the upper end of Honeycomb Fork across the Honeycomb Cliffs into the Little Cottonwood district and in its original configuration covered the north end of The King of the West claim. The surveyor noted that the adjoining claims were the City Rock and Blackbeth. Obviously he meant Black Bess. One can imagine him asking one of the miners, presumably a crusty individual with missing teeth, what the name of that adjoining claim



Fig. 4. A metal grate covers the open Marietta shaft. Below the far end of the grate the flat area that once held the Florinda mine cabin can be seen.

fragmented reddish brown rock.

Going back to the Florinda site, if one looks up the slope above the closed incline there will be seen a long trench, reminiscent of the slump that appears over a collapsed tunnel. However, this one continues a long way, and if it is followed it will be found to go past the Bute site all the way up to the ridge where there is a sizeable notch. Looking over the other side there is a steep, deep couloir going down into the head of Honeycomb Fork and toward the Oregon shaft, later known as the Black Bess shaft. All this is a surface indication of the City Rocks fissure and the big reason for the cluster of claims near this ridge top. In the other direction, below the Florinda site, the fissure is not quite as noticeable on the surface, but it continues down into Grizzly Gulch. Over the years it was worked by a number of mining companies, including the City Rocks, Black Bess, Utah Mines Coalition, and finally the Michigan-Utah in its several incarnations.



Fig. 5. A hiker is descending the Florinda mine trail. In the distance are Mounts Millicent and Tuscarora, and the ridge rising to Mount Wolverine.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

78. Alta Consolidated Mine

Anyone who has walked up the road from Alta into Grizzly Gulch has noticed the large mine dump with a gap through its center allowing the road to pass through. One might assume the road builders, when faced with this obstacle, started digging, removing enough of the dump to make way for the their road. But that's not the way it was. The road was there about four decades before the mine dump. This is how it came about.



Fig. 1. The waste rock dump for the Alta Consolidated mine has portions on both sides of the Grizzly Gulch road. The mine buildings were on top of the dump on the right. The view is looking down canyon.

It started in 1882 when the Silver King claim was filed by one William D. Brandt, located on the north slope of Grizzly Gulch. Nothing of note was done with it until eleven years later when Brandt and two others filed a claim for the Silver King Tunnel to work the lode. Even then nothing was reported about activities there until 1897, when being worked under lease, the Silver King began shipping ore. The tunnel was located a very short distance above the Grizzly Gulch road, but set back far enough that its waste rock dump posed no threat to the road. Then in 1908 came word that Tony Jacobson, the president of the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company at

Alta, had taken an option on nine claims in Grizzly Gulch, including the Silver King. This was followed by the incorporation of the East Columbus Mining Company to hold and work them. Among these claims were four tunnels that had been worked to a greater or lesser extent during the previous years. It was the Silver King tunnel, the lowest of the four, that became the base of operations for the company. While some work was done under the new management, it was not until 1911, when the brothers Tony and A. O. Jacobson and their associates left the Columbus Consolidated company, that they reorganized the properties into the Alta Consolidated Mining Company and gave their full attention to this operation.

During the first season of work from twenty to twenty-five men were employed at the mine. In addition to underground work, a large blacksmith shop and timber shed was built at the tunnel portal. A gasoline engine and blower was installed to pump air into the mine for ventilation, and supplies were brought in and stored for use during winter operations. It was said that all expenses were covered by the ore shipped during that period. In the winter sleighs were used to haul sacked ore down the canyon as far as the sleigh could go. Then the sacks were dumped at the roadside to wait for teamsters' wagons to haul them the rest of the way to the smelter. During the next year a new boarding house was completed and an underground connection was made with the Brooklyn shaft, providing good ventilation and air circulation in the mine. That shaft was from the highest of the four tunnels existing on the claims absorbed by the Alta Consolidated company.

The most important event of the 1912 year was the reconstruction of the aerial tramway that ran from Grizzly Gulch to Tanner Flat, about five miles down the canyon. This tramway had originally been built by the Continental Mines & Smelting Company in 1904-5, then rebuilt by the Unity Mines company in 1907 after the original was destroyed by snow avalanches. The Columbus Consolidated Mining Company made use of the rebuilt tramway for a number of years, using a loading station at its mine where ore could be dumped into the buckets as they passed through, until that tramway also was wrecked by avalanches. After the Michigan-Utah Mining Company was formed in 1912 a decision was made by that company to rebuild the tramway. One of the towers supporting the cables was located a short distance below the Alta Consolidated mine, across the Grizzly Gulch road. After arrangements were made for the Alta Consolidated company to use the tramway to transport its ores down the canyon, the construction of a loading station and ore bin was

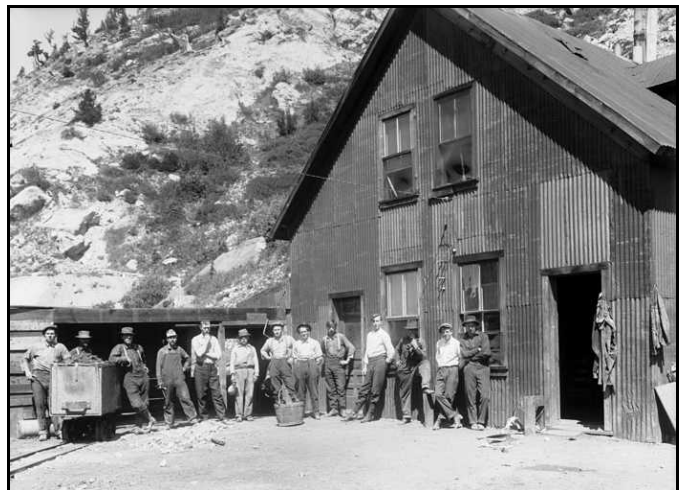


Fig. 2. The Alta Consolidated Mining Company building at the tunnel in Grizzly Gulch. The workers came out and posed for this picture, taken on 17 August 1915. (Utah Historical Society)



Fig. 3. The Alta Consolidated mine with its trestle, chute, ore bin and loading station as seen from the opposite side of Grizzly Gulch. The Michigan-Utah aerial tramway passed directly under the ore bin. (Utah Historical Society)

undertaken. To provide access from the tunnel, a trestle was constructed to run from the top of the mine dump, across the road and some distance beyond to a chute going down into the ore bin. This was an impressive structure, being quite high over the road, and even higher as the ground dropped away toward the outer end. Pushing a mine car across it to dump the load down the chute to the ore bin was not a task for the faint of heart.

The construction of the trestle and loading station was completed in June of 1913 and ore shipments over the tramway began. It was stated that the ore bins at the mine would no longer be used after they were emptied. The new system worked quite well for the rest of that year. Then in January, during a period of high winds, a portion of the trestle was blown over. Repairing the damage took many months. Shipments by that method were not resumed until June of 1914. It is believed that the repair included the installation of a chute allowing waste rock to be dumped between the Grizzly Gulch road and the loading station to

provide a stabilizing influence to the trestle structure. The chute can be seen in a photograph, a portion of which is shown in Figure 4. It is likely the dump seen today on the south side of the road was not the result of needing a place to deposit the waste rock; there was plenty of room for that on the north side of the road. It is more likely it served to support the long, high and spindly trestle.

The tramway connection worked well for many years, with periodic intervals of repair or reconstruction. The Michigan-Utah company was shipping ore with it through the late 1920s, but by 1933 operations had ceased and most equipment had been dismantled. It is not known exactly when the Alta Consolidated company stopped using it.

The company suffered a serious change of personnel late in the year 1914 when its president, Tony Jacobson, died. His brother, Alfred O., but always known as A. O., assumed the presidency. He had been vice president and superintendent and in fact had been running the company while his brother spent much of the previous year in California, trying to regain his health. He went on to become one of the symbols of Alta mining well into the 1930s, as well as being active in Nevada mining ventures almost until his passing in 1942.

While none of the surface installations have survived until this late date, there are some things other than the waste rock dumps to be seen. East of the dumps a road can be seen running from the Grizzly Gulch road up to the site of the tunnel. And on the west side of the small waste rock dump a road can be found going down along the side of the dump to the site of the old loading station, which was also used to load wagons when the tramway was not operating. That road continues around to the southeast side of the small dump to the location of the Copper Prince tunnel, originally a Jacobson claim, but later transferred to the Michigan-Utah company. In 1915 the Alta Consolidated company received compressed air from the big compressor station originally installed by the Columbus Consolidated Mining Company. Pipes were put in place from the compressor all the way up to the mine, after which time powered equipment was used underground. Today sections of this pipeline can be found on the hillside above the Grizzly Gulch road.



Fig.4. The Alta Consolidated trestle and loading bin. The view is looking down canyon, with Alta and Little Cottonwood canyon below. Notice the chute directly above the apex of the small mine dump that allowed waste rock to be dumped there. This photograph is dated 17 August 1915. It may be assumed the small dump was created during the year since June 1914, when the trestle was placed back into service. The cables in the lower left corner are from the Michigan-Utah tramway's upper terminal, contributing to its structural strength. The actual tramway cables ran under the Alta Consolidated's loading bin. (Courtesy Utah Historical Society)

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

79. Davenport and Matilda Mine

The Davenport mine, being among the earliest prospects in Grizzly Gulch, gained both reputation and recognition among Alta miners. In fact, its name was applied to the entire slope on the north side of Grizzly Gulch, which became known as Davenport Hill, a name that continues to be used on maps today. In June of 1870 the claim was filed by eight men, giving an 1800 foot length, 200 feet for each claimant plus another 200 feet for the discoverer. It ran in a near north-south direction with its centerline being on U.S. Mineral Monument #1 in the pass between Grizzly Gulch and Silver Fork., with 800 feet being in Grizzly Gulch and 1000 feet in Silver Fork. As a result the claim was recorded in both Big and Little Cottonwood Mining Districts. The discovery shaft and working incline were located 150 and 125 feet, respectively, in a northerly direction from the mineral monument. Their location is indicated by the dot labeled number 6 in Figure 1.

During its first year the claim was worked by three of the claimants. They built a cabin over the shaft and continued their work into the winter. However, that effort came to an end in February of 1871 when a snow avalanche came down the slope above and smashed the cabin, killing a hired miner who was sleeping inside.

In 1871 Davenport's ore was hauled down Silver Fork to Big Cottonwood Canyon, and some amount of ore, reported to be 11 tons, was sold to the short-lived Hawkeye Mining & Smelting Company for reduction in its smelter at Silver Springs. That transaction came to grief when the Hawkeye company failed. The numerous law suits to reclaim unpaid debts were combined into one great lien upon the company, and since there were no funds available the court ordered the company's property to be sold. The Davenport miners finally got paid for their ore nearly a year after it had been delivered.

Also in 1871 the mine started to fall under new ownership. Between August 1871 and April 1872 all shares were purchased by John H. Ely. This man was an old time miner who had been in Little Cottonwood Canyon briefly in 1865 before moving on to the Pahrangat Mining District in Nevada. Later, with a partner, he established a mill at a site that became known as Bullionville, about ten miles south of Pioche. In 1869 the Ely Mining District was organized in honor of John H. Ely. He returned to Utah and can be placed in the Wasatch as early as May of 1871. Three months later he began buying shares in the Davenport mine and had complete control of it by April of 1872. During that time he had been working with intermediaries in New York City so that in June the mine was sold to the Davenport

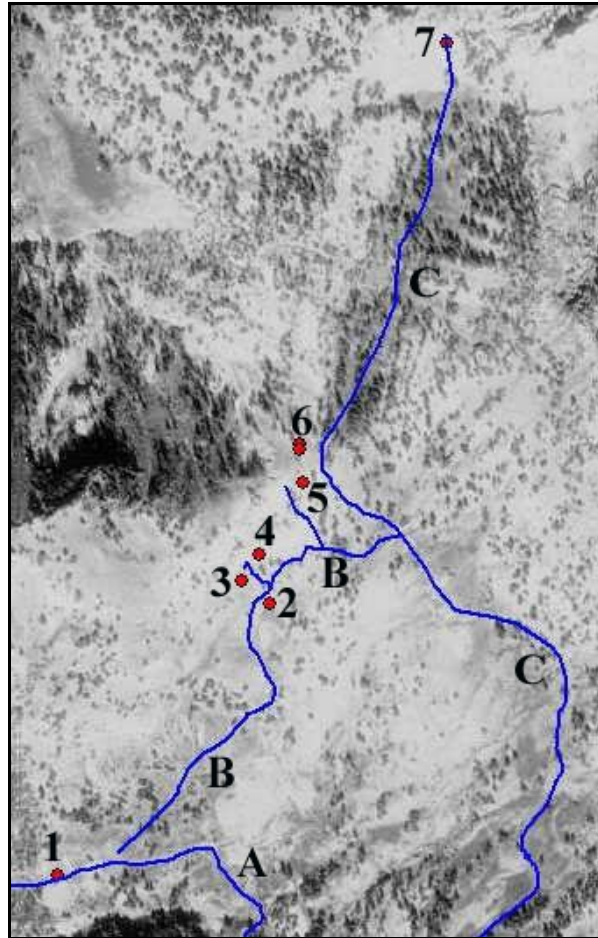


Fig. 1. The trails and sites mentioned in the text are shown on this aerial photograph of the north slopes of Grizzly Gulch. For orientation reference, the dot with the numeral 1 is where the Grizzly Gulch road passes through the gap in the Alta Consolidated mine dump, numeral 5 is the U.S. Mineral Monument #1 in the pass between Grizzly Gulch and Silver Fork of Big Cottonwood Canyon, and the letter C is the Prince of Wales road running from Grizzly Gulch to the Prince of Wales shaft at numeral 7. Letter A is the Grizzly Gulch road, while B designates the Davenport trail, with branches to the Matilda mine and the pass.

Mining Company, Ltd., of London, England. However, Ely remained in charge and was sometimes called its owner. Even before the sale of the mine was completed, he began the driving of a tunnel from the Grizzly Gulch side of the divide and the construction of a tramway from the tunnel site down to Grizzly Flat. He had a steam sawmill brought in and installed on the flat, probably the same mill that had been installed at Alta by Samuel A. Woolley in 1868 and sold to the Emma company in 1871.

All this activity brought the prospect of legal troubles with the adjacent Matilda mine, whose shaft was located only 200 feet away from the Davenport tunnel. The Matilda claim was located in July of 1871, over a year after the Davenport's location, but during that year all the latter's activity was across the divide in the Big Cottonwood part of its claim. The Matilda was named after the wife of one of the locators, Anton Jacobson, father of Tony and A. O. Jacobson, who would become prominent in Alta mining during the early part of the twentieth century. The potential trouble was easily solved by the consolidation of the two mines to be operated under the name of

the Davenport Mining Company, Ltd., but became generally known as the Davenport and Matilda. Almost immediately a drift was run toward the Matilda from a point some 300 feet inside the Davenport tunnel.

In addition to the steam saw mill, Grizzly Flat saw the construction of a number of other buildings, including two boarding houses, an outfitting store, office and ore house, as well as a “palatial winter residence” for John H. Ely, as stated in a letter from an Alta correspondent who reported on a Christmas dinner for 23 guests hosted by Ely. All these improvements were accompanied by two furnaces that were constructed at the mouth of Little Cottonwood Canyon to process the ore from the mine. It was only several months into the 1873 year before the company saw a change in management. John H. Ely and his superintendent, W.B. Smith, moved over to the nearby City Rocks mine as Manager and Superintendent, respectively, but only for a few months before they departed from the Wasatch. The mine shipped ore throughout the rest of the year, but in November the miners complained about not having received their wages for the previous month. The situation was said to have been due to incompetence, dishonesty and extravagance during the previous year, causing matters to go from bad to worse and the company getting heavily in arrears to their workmen and others. Law suits followed, causing the company’s property to be attached. Then other parties intervened and the company fell under the control of New York capitalists. They paid its indebtedness, allowing the mine to be operated for several years, after which time it was worked sporadically under lease.



Fig. 2. A large metal spool remains on the dump at the Davenport tunnel, a remnant of the tramway that ran down to Grizzly Flat.



Fig. 3. This view of the north slope above Grizzly Flat shows the Davenport trail climbing diagonally up to the right before turning to pass to the left of the Davenport tunnel dump, which is located below the pass between Grizzly Gulch and Silver Fork at the top of the photo. The dump for the Matilda shaft is barely visible above and to the left of the Davenport tunnel dump. The dump near the right margin is from the Lavinia mine, with the Lower Grizzly dump directly below. The large dump below the center of the photo is from the Victoria, the actual mine being at the small dump above the large one. This mining topography was much altered and rearranged during mid twentieth century workings of the mine dumps.

There are a number of reminders of the Davenport mine and its operations to be seen today, starting with the Davenport trail, indicated as B in Figure 1. This trail starts above the Grizzly Gulch road about 225 feet east of the cut through the Alta Consolidated dump. It climbs steeply and now joins the Prince of Wales road a short distance below the pass into Silver Fork. But in the early days it ran to the pass itself, giving access to the original Davenport workings, number 6 in the figure, as well as other mines in the area. On the way up the slope the trail passes the dump for the Davenport tunnel, 2, where a large metal spool from the old tramway remains, a solitary artifact from the early days. A short distance above this dump a faint trail goes up toward the northwest. This gives access to the Matilda discovery, 3, and shaft, 4.

If one takes the branch of the Davenport trail going up to the pass, special attention should be given to the United States Mineral Monument Number 1, mounted atop a mound on the east side of the pass. In 1938 the original monument was replaced with a mushroom marker having an inscription, “MM No.1.” This served both the Big and Little Cottonwood Mining Districts, one of the few monuments to be shared by more than one district.

From the pass there is a very faint trail heading in a northerly direction, traversing the slopes on the right and leading to a narrow flat about one hundred fifty feet away. That was the location of the original Davenport operations in 1870 and 1871. Also, one might notice the cave-like excavation at the northwest side of the pass. This is the remains of the Island mine, having nothing to do with the topic of this article, but worthy of note. Of course all the workings mentioned have been closed, leaving little more than scars on the earth’s surface.

FAINT TRAILS IN THE WASATCH

80. Tarbet Tunnel

There are several points of mining interest and a great deal of scenic splendor to be seen when visiting the site of the Tarbet tunnel high in Albion Basin, under the soaring cliffs of Devils Castle. Curiously, it is located on the Tunnel claim, and were its actual name not known, it might well be called the Tunnel tunnel. But within the ranks of the Pittsburg Consolidated Mining & Milling Company, the owner of this property, it was known as the Tarbet tunnel, named after the president of the company, Alexander H. Tarbet.

The remains of this tunnel are found on a loop trail that leaves Albion Basin's Cecret Lake trail 0.45 miles from the parking area, just as the trail enters a wooded section. The loop trail heads in a southerly direction, toward the Devils Castle cliffs, and reaches a prominent mining site in four-tenths of a mile. This is the location of the Tarbet tunnel.

The Pittsburg company was incorporated on 8 Sept. 1903 by a number of Salt Lake City men, but the Pittsburg mine dated back more than thirty years to April of 1871. Located at a lake that assumed the Pittsburg name, high in American Fork Canyon, the mine was only a short distance below the ridge between Sugarloaf Peak and Devils Castle. From the American Fork side, that ridge was known as Pittsburg Hill. In spite of its difficult location, plagued by winter avalanches and the hardships of a long primitive road and trail, the mine was worked over the years and shipped enough ore to pay its expenses. At the time the new company was formed, the mine had a considerable extent, with three tunnels at different levels, interconnected underground by raises.

Alexander Tarbet was not one of the incorporators of the new company, but must have joined it shortly after its formation. In August of 1904, less than a year after the company's incorporation, he filed a bond as

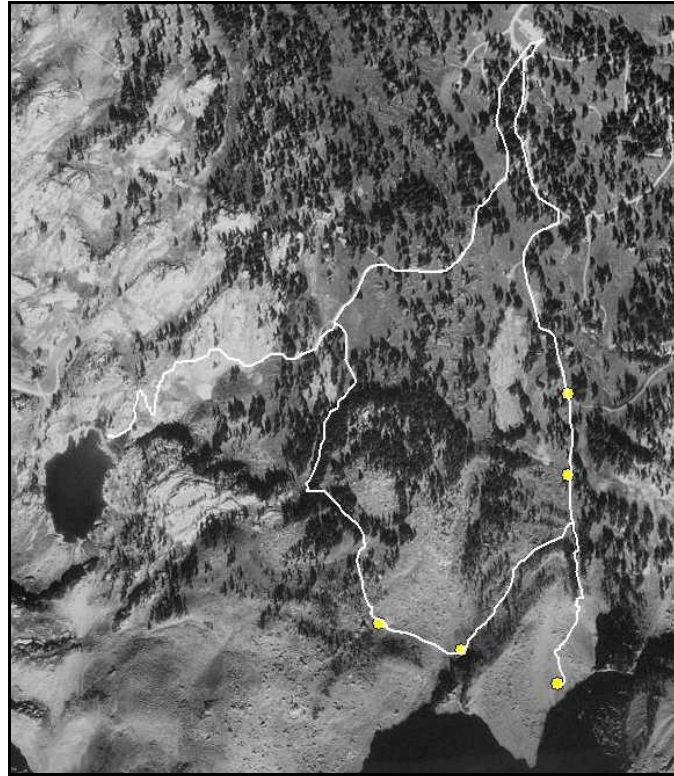


Fig. 1. The trails and sites mentioned in the text are shown on this aerial photograph of upper Albion Basin. The parking area for the Cecret Lake trail is at the top of the photo. Cecret Lake is at the far left, and shadows from Devils Castle are at the bottom. The described loop trail leaves the Cecret Lake trail at the center of the photo.

its president. He had been involved in mining for thirty years as a miner, manager, and owner, and made several fortunes in that time. Under his management and with the infusion of capital, it was expected a vigorous development program would be undertaken. Rumors began to circulate suggesting the company would drive a new tunnel from the Alta side of the divide, and by the end of 1905 it appeared the rumors were fact, for the company had placed a mortgage on its property to finance the venture. But appearances can be deceiving. The fact was that the Pittsburg company's claims were all on the American Fork side of the divide. While they may have thought it a simple matter to negotiate for a site and an easement for a tunnel, all the property of interest was held by the Pioneer Consolidated Mining Company, and that company was not receptive to such agreements. A number of news releases reported negotiations between the two companies and even suggested the Pittsburg company had purchased the entire holdings of the Pioneer company, but that is not supported by documentary evidence. In March of 1911 the company took the first positive step toward securing land for the tunnel when Daniel Doyle, the superintendent of the Pittsburg mine, filed the Tunnel claim in Albion Basin, the eventual site of the portal of the new tunnel. But by that time the company's work had been suspended due to national financial conditions.



Fig. 2 Tarbet tunnel site. The high boulder overhangs the cabin site. The tunnel is behind the boulder at the left edge of photo. The mine's road enters and crosses the dump on the right.

In the spring of 1915, with improved conditions, work was resumed to put the mine back on the shipping list. Great quantities of supplies were taken up to the property, with no small amount of effort. It was reported the material was hauled by wagons to the end of the road, then either snaked up the trail or carried on pack animals a mile and a half to the mine. The importance of the tunnel to Little Cottonwood canyon was never more obvious. During that summer a wagon road was built from Alta to the tunnel site. A boarding house and blacksmith shop were erected under the face of a high boulder, providing shelter from snow avalanches. Supplies were taken in for the winter and the work of driving the tunnel began. By the end of the year it was in a distance of 175 feet, much of that through loose material that required close timbering. Work continued throughout the winter and by early spring the tunnel was 270 feet long, close to the boundary of the Tunnel claim.



Fig. 3. Timbers at the portal of the collapsed Tarbet tunnel show the fine woodworking that went into mine timbering.



Fig. 4. A large mine dump on the Pioneer No.5 claim is seen on a foot trail about a tenth of a mile from the Tarbet tunnel site.

heavy timbers survive to bear testimony to the careful work that had taken place nearly a century ago. Whereas the trail between the tunnel site and the Cecret Lake trail shows obvious evidence of once having been a wagon road, the trail that continues toward the east now takes on the character of a footpath. About a tenth of a mile in the easterly direction another large dump is found. This is on the Pioneer No.5 claim. When that claim was surveyed in 1904 the tunnel that provided the waste rock for this dump was not mentioned, implying it was worked after that time. About two-tenths of a mile past this large dump there is a junction, the main trail heading northerly, while the other branch goes up the slope to the south. A short way up this trail a number of cuts and shallow shafts can be seen. These were the workings that justified the patent being issued for Pioneer No.5. The trail continues up onto the talus slopes below the cliffs where the faint remnants of an unidentified tunnel can be found.

Heading north from the junction a short distance, only about 300 feet, what appears to be a large mine dump can be seen in the middle of a meadow below the trail. This is the remains of the workings in the Good Hope tunnel, whose portal is directly below the trail. A long track and trestle allowed the waste rock to be dumped from a point higher than the surrounding surface. The Good Hope claim dates back to 1871, but never received its own patent. Today it provides culinary water for the adjacent Albion Alps subdivision of summer cabins.

In another tenth of a mile the trail joins the Alta Ski area's Point Supreme road, which can be followed down through the camp ground and back to the parking area, ending a pleasant loop of about two miles.



Fig. 5. The waste rock dump from the Good Hope tunnel remains in a meadow on the west side of the trail.