

Dixie Day Speech Recalls Early Beginning of Area from 1860's to Present

EDITOR'S NOTE: Much activity was in evidence in Dixie in days of old, as evidenced by this article sent to us by Cathy Nelson, our Dixie Correspondent. It came from the Aug. 30, 1911 edition of the Free Press, headlined "Large Crowd of Miners, Prospectors, and Mountain People Gathered at Dixie Last Thursday to Celebrate Anniversary of Discovery."

DIXIE, August 30.—Fine weather, immense enthusiasm, a large crowd and a creditable celebration marked the first observance of "Dixie Days," last Thursday, August 24th. The day before visitors were coming into the camp from surrounding mining districts, and Thursday morning saw the biggest crowd ever assembled in the camp. Elk City sent the largest delegation, but from Orogrande, Ten Mile, Ramey Ridge and Big Creek many came.

The program in the morning, which is given below, was carried out in a creditable manner and at the suggestion of President Gayton of the Dixie Chamber of Commerce, Messrs. Horn, Schissler, Basskett, Scott and Hye of Elk City; Cosgrove of Orogrande; and Wallis of Ramey Ridge, were called upon and responded in a cheerful spirit on separate subjects, but all touching on the great future that awaits the development of the mining camps of Central Idaho. The ball game in the afternoon and the horse racing in the evening were the principal sports of the day. Dixie won by a close score from their old rivals,

the Elk boys in the ball game, but in the horse racing, Elk City won all the purses. The dance in the evening at the Hotel Dixie, was the most enjoyable social event of that kind ever held in the camp. That this little camp with her "Dixie Day" celebration, "made good" to her guests of that day, is cheerfully acknowledged by all who attended, at her next observance of this day, which is to be celebrated each year, it will be the earnest endeavor of her citizens to sustain the good impression that was made in her initial celebration of the discovery of the Dixie mining camp.

The orator of the day, Judge Henry Hazlitt, in his address on the "Pioneer Days at Dixie," which is printed in full, was at his best, and at the close of his remarks, the entire audience gave him a vote of thanks. The following program was given:

Singing of "America," by audience.

Musical Duet
Oration, "Pioneer Days of Dixie," Judge Henry S. Hazlitt.

Musical Duet.
Recitation, "I Remember, I Remember," Miss Marvel Trader.

Patriotic Song, George Yahrus.

Singing, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," by audience.

Recitation, "The Ball Game," Joseph McKnight.
Song, "Rings on Your Fingers," Dixie Baseball Team.

Violin Solo, Wm. Tate.

Pioneer Days of Dixie.
Delivered by Judge Henry

S. Hazlitt, at Dixie, Idaho, August 24, 1911.

Mr. Chairman, Visitors and Fellow Townsman: To me has been accorded the honor of addressing you upon this occasion, and on behalf of the people of Dixie, I bid you visitors welcome to our town and extend to you the freedom of the city, and I assure you that the people of Dixie will leave nothing undone upon their part to make this an event long to be remembered. Of course, when the ballgame begins this afternoon, "Friendship ceases" and Dixie will root for the Dixie team and see that it gives the Elk City aggregation a run for its money.

The subject assigned to me by the Committee on Arrangements for this occasion is the Pioneer Days of Dixie. The early history of Dixie is so interwoven with that of Florence and Elk City that it is difficult to speak of Dixie prior to 1893 as a separate community. Well do I remember the rush to the Northern mines, as they were called in the mining camps of California and southern Oregon. All through the winter of 1861-62, wherever the miners congregated, Salmon River, Orofino, Bannack, Elk City, John Day and Powder River were names to conjure with; in fact, there were but two topics of conversation, the Northern Mines and the war. When Salmon River (now Florence) Orofino and Elk City were struck, Fort Sumpter had been fired upon; Bull Run was history. From the Mississippi to the Pacific the country was ablaze with Indian hostilities, with all their attendant barbarities. On every hand, throughout the nation was heard the call to arms. The first mining done in what is now Dixie mining district, was in 1862, in Dixie Gulch by two prospectors whose names I have never learned, who had come over the divide from Elk City. These men worked awhile and running short of grub,

one of the partners took what gold dust they had taken out, some \$750.00 and started to Elk City for supplies. At the crossing of Red River, where the bridge now is, he was killed by ambushed Indians, who robbed the body and hid it in the willows. His partner, becoming uneasy, because of his failure to return as anticipated, struck out after him, and between the crossing of Red River and Elk City, he met a company of Volunteers from Elk City on an Idaho scout. Upon inquiry, he was told that his partner had not reached Elk City; that he had probably been killed by an Indian war party which had been seen on the meadows.

When the Volunteers reached the ford, a short search found the body in the willows. Times being troublous, because of the Indian hostilities, the surviving partner abandoned Dixie Gulch. In 1862, during the Buffalo Hump excitement, a party of which Bill Terman was a member, came over the divide between Crooked Creek and Big Creek onto Nugget Gulch where they sunk a hole and found coarse gold. It was from these little nuggets that Nugget Gulch got its name. This party also sunk a lot of holes between the Hump and Nugget Gulch. P.S. Prichard thinks it was on the head of Boulder Creek Gulch in the vicinity of the Robinson and Cox claims. In fact, the Terman party did not know where it was, it was lost and did not get its bearings until it struck the Indian trail from Red River to Salmon. (The old Dixie and Elk trail.) In 1864, a party from Elk City came over the divide on a prospecting trip. Sam Dillinger was, I think in this party. They found the abandoned diggings on Dixie Gulch which they staked. They also prospected Crooked Creek. One of their holes is yet to be seen at the mouth of Dixie Gulch near Larson's Arastra. In 1865,

Andy Taylor came and bought into the Dillinger company. This company gradually acquired water rights and ditches in the basin, and for 10 or 12 years there were no other miners in the district. One season, 1892, I think, Sam Dillinger was the sole inhabitant of Dixie.

In 1885, George Blaine staked the Crooked Creek placer and the Ontario mine. These were the first claims in the district that were staked in conformity with the requirements of the mining laws of the United States. Blaine left the country for a couple of years, and in 1884 P.S. Prichard, Walter Stanley and Jack Boyer came in and staked the Crooked Creek placer. Blaine came back and Prichard & Co. gave him an interest. Stanley left the country and A.H. Cummings bought Boyer's interest. About this time Walter and Wells Clark bought the Leach and Taylor interest in Dillinger & Co., and worked that property until 1892, when it passed into the hands of E.F. Milhoan & Co. In 1893, Sam Dillinger struck the Dillinger mine. This was followed by a quartz excitement; when the prospectors organized Dixie Mining District, and elected Wells M. Clark district recorder. Clark, selling out his interests, turned the records over to Tom Bollman, who held the office until 1902. Because of the hard times of that year, nothing in the way of work was done in the district in 1894. In 1895, Sam Dillinger built his arastra on Rhett Creek and had it running when my partner, Z.H. Fairchild and I got here, (August 2, of that year). Blaine & Co., had their ditch completed and their sawmill up and were cutting lumber for their flume.

I had just got to Elk City and T.X. Ratcliff had written B.B. Stuart about the discovery of the Comstock by Thompson and Youngberg. Mr. Fairchild

was an oldtimer in Elk City who had come back to prospect for quartz on Gold Hill. When he arrived there he found the ground he wanted located and being worked by a man by the name of Leslie. Being an old acquaintance of B.B. Stuart's, Mr. Stuart had told him of the Comstock and advised him to go to Dixie. The Elk City wagon road had just been completed, and I think I drove the first buggy over it. The first vehicles over the road, other than the wagons with the construction gang, were driven by B.B. Stuart and Jim Nash. My partnership with Mr. Fairchild was a typical pioneer partnership. We first saw each other as we rolled out of our blankets July 30th. That night we had agreed to go to Dixie together. When we got to Dixie we went into camp where the Hall cabin now is. In 4 or 5 days we went down to the Idaho Reef and prospected for the west extension of the Comstock. Mr. Fairchild, the second, brought in a very rich piece of float that he had picked up in the gulch just below Larson's tunnels on the Gold Hill. That day we moved to the spring this side and prospected the dike but could not find the vein from which our float had come. I think that I stuck the first pick in the ground on what is now known as the dike. From there we went down to Sams Creek, and located the Ironsides group now owned by myself and Mr. and Mrs. Tgader. Just before we went out Tommy Prichard had begun to build his arastra. While we were camped at Boulder Gulch, Rory Buekd and Andy Taylor came up from the Dillinger neighborhood and went into camp above us. A few days afterwards, N.B. Pettibone and S.F. Bradford came in to examine the Comstock for which Thompson and Youngberg asked \$20,000, also a party of prospectors came in from Montana. These men located a placer

claim on Long Tom Gulch. They put in a long Tom to work the ground which gave the gulch its name. Including the transient prospectors, there were about 25 men in the district that year, of whom only 7 remain. George Blaine, P.S. Prichard, Thos. Prichard, J.T. Reser, Rory Burke, Sam Myers and myself.

When I got back in June 1896, W.H. Phelps had started up the Comstock. Thomas Prichard was running his arastra and Blaine & Co. and E.F. Milhoan & Co., had just closed down for the season. That year Mrs. Milhoan and daughter were in camp. Bollman and Turner were placer mining in Olive Gulch. That fall Turner's family came in and he and Bollman built the Hotel Dixie and started their store. Dixie postoffice was established that fall with J.P. Turner as postmaster, the mail being carried by private carrier from Raymond, or as we spoke of it, Reynolds, which prior to that time had been our post office. The mail carrier was Charley Smith who came here from Warrens. In 1897 we built the wagon road in from Elk City which marks the close of the pioneer days.

From its discovery in 1862 to the present time, the output of gold in what is now Dixie mining district is about \$300,000. When I came here I was impressed by the richness of the float, the great vein system and the profound fissures with their clean-cut smooth walls, which indicate great depth. I believed then, and do now that no gold field had out a better promise to the conservative and intelligent mining man than Central Idaho. What the country needs are men like Tommy Cruise, who hand and work with a definite end in view. Men who have courage. These are the men that develop mining camps and build up great enterprises. And last but not least, the people must wake up to the

fact that it is only by united effort that this section can be made to take its place as one of the great gold fields of the world. And the claim owners want to exercise the Ghost of a Base Ore; a Bogle, that does more than any one other thing to retard the development of our country. They want to realize the fact, that the science of metallurgy has advanced until it is now possible to treat base ores as cheaply as was to mill the so-called free milling ores, 25 or 30 years ago.

I feel it is fitting that I close this address with a tribute to that army of restless spirits who came North in 1862, lured on by the hope of striking millions, with no fear of the ambushed savage, nor premonition of the civilization that was destined to follow their trails may lay firm and deep the foundation of great states. An army around whose campfires were heard the battle songs of the Union. An army who poured into the business channels of the nation the millions of gold and silver from the treasure vaults of the West thereby sustaining the credit of the nation and enabling President Lincoln to keep his armies in the field until victory was won upon the Union arms. Soldiers of the Great West, truly as those who wore the blue. And I have stood by graves of those who fell by the savage bullet, and read the inscription on the rude head board: "Killed by Indians" there came to my mind the benediction from Sir Walter Scott:

"Soldier rest thy war faro'er,
Sleep the sleep that knows no waking,
Dream of battle fields no more,
Days of danger, nights of waking."

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