

FAIRVIEW

By Michael M. Koroscil,

Ph.D. Simon Fraser University (Geography) - OHS - 5:15 12:59

21:95 27:75 32:53 48:86f 51:56 62:122

Large scale gold mining in the South Okanagan Valley began in 1887 when Frederick Gwatkins and George Sheehan staked the Stemwinder property that came to be known as the discovery claim. In the same year George Wilkinson and Joseph Bromley secured the Brown Bear claim and over the next decade a number of other valuable claims would be staked in an area known as Camp Fairview. The camp was located 2.5 miles west of present-day Oliver on the east flank of a low range of mountains separating the Okanagan and Similkameen Valleys, 500 feet above the Okanagan River.

Throughout the 1890s Camp Fairview acted as a magnet for all types of individuals, partners and syndicates who would not only stake their claims and establish mining companies with hopes of gaining a profit, but who would also invest in building and promoting a townsite.

In 1892 the Strathyre Mining Company was established after G.A. Attwood and E. D. Reynolds were sent out from London, England, on behalf of a syndicate to examine the claims at Camp Fairview. The resulting good assays prompted the syndicate to raise \$125,000 in capital stock and the following year capitalization was raised to \$500,000. The company, with Charles Tupper, the Canadian High Commissioner in London and future Prime Minister of Canada (1 May 1896 - 8 July 1896) and Thomas George Shaughnessy, Vice-President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, as directors, was able to raise the necessary capital with ease. Undoubtedly, these two notable individuals, especially Tupper, played a major role in influencing potential British investors.

In 1893 the Strathyre Mining Company was very aggressive and its directors purchased five claims that included the Rattler claim and its mill site. Prices for claims at this time varied from \$3,000 to \$25,000. In total, the company spent \$112,000 purchasing claims, property, developing the mines and constructing a new 10-stamp quartz mill, an assay office, dwelling and boarding houses and the construction of branch roads to the workings. The Strathyre Company was the most dominant player during this period of

mining activity, although two other reported claims, the Morning Star, owned by Steven Mangott and Daniel McEachern, and the Victoria, owned by George Wilkinson and D.A. Carmichael, were in operation.

The second peak period....



CHARLES TUPPER, a director of the Strathyre Mining Company at Fairview, was the Canadian High Commissioner in London who went on to become Canada's.....

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GOLD SCALES AND WEIGHTS FROM CAMP MCKINNEY

This disassembled scale was used at Camp McKinney where in 1876 there was a famous gold brick robbery. All evidence pointed out to Matt Roderick who was subsequently shot and found to be wearing a canvas harness with two gold brick-sized pockets under his coat. His death was deemed "justifiable homicide".

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