

Ross Thompson

Ronald A. Shearer

For someone widely revered as the father of Rossland, surprisingly little is known about Ross Thompson. The published commentaries on his life of which I am aware repeat the same few stories and are almost silent on the later years of his life. This is my attempt to enrich -- but, unfortunately, not complete -- the narrative. Because of the scarcity of reliable information, what follows is rife with unanswered questions and speculations. The questions must remain unanswered unless further evidence is discovered, but I propose the speculations as plausible in the circumstances and not pure fantasy. In any case, they are clearly identified and can be rejected or ignored.

Ross Thompson was born on a farm in Bruce County, Ontario, on January 29, 1866, in the family of Geddis (or Gaddis?) and Mary Jane Thompson, protestant, Irish immigrants.¹ When Ross was a child -- probably in 1875² -- the family moved to a farm at Portage La Prairie, Manitoba. He left home, either in 1882,³ at the age of 16, or in 1883,⁴ when he was 17, and began wandering though Alberta, southern British Columbia and the northwestern United States -- a young man in search of opportunity. It is difficult to trace his travels; the legends are several, some conflicting. However, a talk that he gave in Rossland in 1946, as a warm-up for the celebration of the city's 50th anniversary, provides considerable (but far from complete and not always accurate) guidance.⁵

After leaving home Thompson crossed the prairies, stayed for a couple of years with his sister and brother-in-law near Calgary⁶ and worked on construction in Calgary, Banff and Canmore, Alberta.⁷ In the 1946 talk he said that he then went to Vancouver,⁸ but it seems more likely that he travelled in the northwestern states.⁹ In any case, he was in Vancouver in 1889, where he cut trees, helping clear a heavily forested section of what was then called East End Park (now Hastings Park, home of the Pacific National Exhibition). In preparation for the construction of a horse racing track, the crew "slashed a clearing just about the same size as the oval is today" (i.e. as it was in 1938).^a From Vancouver he went to Seattle. According to one story, he "worked in a livery stable and on steamboats"¹⁰ in Seattle, but it is not clear if it was on this occasion, or earlier. After "several months" he was in Montana, "following the mining booms." In his "First History of Rossland," Kingsmill's offers a more expansive if somewhat romantic version, stating that he spent "a number of years in prospecting, mining and other ventures" at various places in Idaho, Montana and Washington, enabling him "to witness the birth and rapid growth of mining towns."¹¹ By implication, the insights gained were put to use in establishing Rossland. If Kingsmill is correct, to have occurred over "a number of years," some of these travels must have been before his

^a [Province, 1938a, Pioneer Notices Many Differences]. In his 1946 talk Thompson suggested that he went directly from Canmore to Vancouver. In this 1938 interview, Thompson gave a different version of his arrival in Vancouver. He stated "I'd come up to Canada from Nevada." Apparently he was slightly off in his memory of the date. He implies that the work was done in 1889, but the contract for clearing the land was not let until late January, 1890 [World, 1890b, Civic Legislature].

visits to Vancouver and Seattle. The final American stop on his pre-Kootenay travels was in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Kingsmill had a rather dramatic interpretation of his visit there, reporting that he was “Driven out (of town) through the arbitrary rulings and decisions of that town’s chief justice.”¹² Apparently the dispute related to work that he had done on a sawmill, but I have found no details.

Thompson himself told a more benign, but not necessarily inconsistent, story. He reported that he had met up with some friends and based on stories they had heard about the discoveries on Toad Mountain, they decided to go to Nelson to stake claims. Bonners Ferry was the crossing point on the Kootenay River commonly taken by travellers to the Kootenays, so they passed through there on their way to Nelson. Did he stop and work there, as Kingsmill suggested? Thompson did not say. He went on to Nelson, but did not find a suitable claim on Toad Mountain. However, he reported that in Nelson he met Joe Bourgeois, the discoverer of the original claims on Red Mountain, who persuaded him to try his luck at the Trail Creek camp.¹³

Rossland

Some reports state that Thompson arrived at the Trail Creek mining camp in 1890¹⁴; but given the other stories of his travels, that seems improbable. More persuasive is a story in the *Rossland Miner* in 1895 that dated his arrival as 1891¹⁵. He may have worked at the Le Roi for a time and he may have prospected on his own.^b He would then have been in his mid-twenties.

When Thompson preempted the homestead that became the townsite of Rossland, he was within the letter, but probably not the spirit of the law. A change in the law just before he staked his land claim made it impossible for him to buy crown land outright. The only way he could obtain the land for his townsite was through preemption. The preemption provisions of the land act were intended to facilitate the settlement of farmers on potential agricultural land. Although there are hints to the contrary,¹⁶ it seems unlikely that Thompson ever planned to farm his homestead. The site he chose was not exactly prime farmland. I am almost certain that a townsite was his intention from the outset; indeed, he hinted at this in his 1946 talk.¹⁷ To get title to the land he had to jump through bureaucratic and financial hoops, but by law he had to wait two years before he could complete the process (and had up to five years to do so). As a result, although he preempted the land in 1892, he could not get title and hence survey the townsite until 1894. He acted as soon as he could. The accepted story is that he planned to call his new town Thompson and for a short time it was referred to as Thompson. However, apparently the post office objected because there was another Thompson in BC; Thompson Landing on the Arrow Lakes. At the suggestion of a female friend that the name should include the word “Ross.” Rossland was adopted.¹⁸

Thompson was very popular -- gregarious, generous, friendly -- and his cabin became in effect a social centre and a refuge for hangers-on that gathered around him. It was a place of friendship and fun. But apparently all was not joy and entertainment. In 1893 he had a housekeeper, Mrs. Cosgrove, who

^b However, one story, probably apocryphal, asserted that he “eked out a bare living trapping and would have nothing to do with the mining development...” [Lethbridge Herald, 1935a, What’s in the Name of Canadian Cities and Towns: Rossland, British Columbia].

may have lived with him. It is reported that when they parted company in early July, she left behind her sewing machine and some furniture. When she returned to reclaim her possessions, for whatever reason Thompson resisted. Mrs. Cosgrove left empty handed, but returned with her husband and friends. Mr. Cosgrove had a gun and threatened to shoot Thompson. A scuffle ensued during which Thompson managed to gain possession of the weapon, but Cosgrove had another gun. He shot Thompson twice, one bullet grazing his head and the other lodging in his shoulder.¹⁹ Some days later, a constable and deputies arrived from Sayward (now Columbia Gardens, on the east side of the Columbia River, south of Trail) to investigate, but apparently the alleged shooters had escaped to Northport, Washington, "helped out of the country by people at Trail Creek."²⁰ Shooting a man in a dispute over some furniture seems like an extreme measure. It is true that Rossland was populated by people from the mining camps of the American west who were inured to guns and gun violence, for whom shooting might have been an instinctive reaction, but I wonder if the dispute was less about furniture and more about Thompson's attentions to Mrs. Cosgrove.

There was no physician in the camp so how or if Thompson received medical attention is not known.^c If the story that a bullet lodged in his shoulder is correct, presumably it had to be removed. The consequences could have been serious, particularly if an infection had set in. Indeed, because of this incident Rossland very nearly had a different beginning -- when he was shot, Ross Thompson had not completed the requirements to obtain ownership of the homestead and had not yet platted the townsite. Had he died, the city would have developed without him, of course, but perhaps in a different pattern and almost certainly with a different name -- perhaps Dundee (Charles Dundee had a (contested) homestead north of Thompson's) or Corbin (through his railway Corbin claimed the surface rights to most of the area that became Rossland).

The story of the shooting appears to be true. Two phases of it were reported independently by two newspapers, the story of the shooting by the *Spokane Chronicle* and the police search for the culprits by the *Victoria Colonist*.²¹ It is interesting that the shooting has not formed part of the Thompson legend. In the few, brief biographical sketches available, the shooting is not mentioned and it did not receive wide publicity in contemporary newspapers. In 1893, Trail Creek was still just another interesting mining camp with a couple of very promising mines and many prospects. A minor shooting in a remote, unregulated mining community may not have been an attention-grabbing event. There was no resident justice system in the camp. W M Newton, the camp's first resident justice of the peace, had not yet arrived, and Jack Kirkup, who would later establish his famous law and order regime, was almost two years away. As yet, the camp had no local newspaper to report on events and gossip and the mining camp had not yet achieved the boomtown status that would eventually attract a regular stream of correspondents from outside newspapers. Thompson, himself, was not yet a celebrity. Although he had staked his homestead, he was still just another itinerant prospector, of no particular interest to the world at large.

^c There were no physicians in the camp, but apparently one visited regularly from Colville to attend to the medical needs of the miner [Nelson Miner, 1895t, *The Week's Mining News: Rossland*]. Perhaps he attended to Thompson. There were also physicians in Nelson, but to get there was a significant trip at the time.

This would soon change. As soon as he platted the townsite and placed lots on the market, Ross Thompson became very well-known -- indeed, the centre of attention. He was an active participant in community affairs. At times he was touted as a candidate for mayor, but decided not to run. However, he became a determined critic of Rossland's first mayor, Robert Scott, and was the principal in a lawsuit that quashed a bylaw that had authorized the dubious sale of debentures, effectively ending Scott's chances of repeating as mayor. After his encounter with Scott, Thompson served as alderman in Rossland's second and third councils (1898-99)²². He was also active in Conservative politics at the provincial level; in 1898 he was first vice-president of the Rossland Conservatives.²³ His deep commitment to mining led him to become involved in the organization of the provincial mining association,²⁴ the first Rossland School of Mines (he was a trustee) and the Miners and Prospectors Exchange. Moreover, as one distinguished citizen emphasized when looking back on the early days, "Mr. Thompson was a banker ...(financing) ... many of the early-day enterprises."²⁵ He was also known as a "soft touch" for prospectors needing a "grub stake"²⁶ -- in most, if not all, cases an act of generous charity rather than a carefully considered investment. He also lent his name to a very controversial project for the mining industry. He became the head of a private militia organized by the major mine owners during the dispute over the eight-hour day for underground mine workers.²⁷ The purpose was to protect their mine properties from a dangerous "Coeur d'Alene spirit" allegedly "rife among the miners," incited by advocates of violent action recently arrived from the Idaho mining area. He was particularly interested in anything that affected the townsite, its viability and value. Thus, he was a member of a Spokane-based company that provided water and electricity to Rossland until its water works were bought by the city and its electrical system pushed aside by the West Kootenay Power and Light Company.²⁸ On a rather different plane, when an international semi-professional baseball league was organized in 1897 (Rossland, Spokane, Nelson, Kaslo), Thompson was elected president of the league and supported the Rossland club financially at considerable cost.²⁹ He was also an avid outdoorsman, but, if it is not a typical hunter's exaggeration, there was one experience that must have kept him awake some nights. On a hunting trip to the Flathead region of the East Kootenays with a group of friends, a grizzly bear, with cubs, was spotted in the distance. Members of the party shot, but only wounded, the bear. It attacked, charging toward the hunters, who continued to pepper it with shots -- apparently missing more frequently than hitting. The bear collapsed two feet from Ross and his friends. It was said that 75 shots were discharged. Some hunters!

Ross Thompson was Rossland's first true celebrity. In 1899, the president of the Canadian Pacific Railway toured the Boundary region. It was like a visit of Royalty. It is an indicator of the status that Thompson had achieved that he was invited to join the small, select party of dignitaries on the tour.³⁰

In recounting some of Thompson's activities, Kingsmill observed -- probably with reason -- "It is said of him that he is connected with and an officer in more companies and enterprises than any other man in British Columbia."³¹ Some of his identifiable investments are listed in an Addendum (see below p.

23). The most important one -- the one that changed his life -- was the Oro Denero mine in the Boundary Region. .

Oro Denero (Denoro) Mine

A true believer in the mineral wealth of the southeastern interior of British Columbia, Thompson was an inveterate speculator in mining properties, buying and selling claims and shares of mining companies, not only around Rossland but also in the Slocan³², Lardeau³³, Boundary and Republic³⁴ (Washington State) regions. He always had several widely-scattered projects on the go at the same time and frequently travelled around the region, visiting his properties. He was not a particularly astute investor, however. Many of his prospects were never heard of again; he must have lost money on most, if not all, of them. However, some were important ventures. One that absorbed much of his attention and money was in the Boundary region -- sometimes called the Oro Denero and sometimes the Oro Denoro. It was one of a group of properties that made up the so-called Summit Mining Camp, two miles south of the village of Eholt, then an important railway junction at the summit on the CPR line between Grand Forks and Greenwood (now little more than a wide spot on highway 3).³⁵ While Thompson's financial affairs remain obscure, it was probably his involvement with the Oro Denero that was his financial downfall.

The Oro Denero claim was originally staked in 1893 by a prospector, W. A. Corbett, who, by July 1896, had done sufficient development work to obtain a crown grant of the property. Thompson's Oro Denero adventure began soon after when he and "other Rosslanders" -- including Smith Curtis,^d a lawyer and the local MLA, and Angus MacNish,^e Curtis' law partner -- paid "a very large sum" to Corbett for a bond on the prospect.³⁶ The financial contribution of each partner is not known, but Thompson's

^d Smith Curtis was born in Leeds County, in southeastern Ontario, on November 16, 1855, so he was about ten years older than Ross Thompson [Canada, 1901a, Census of Canada, 1901, Rossland, British Columbia]. Curtis briefly taught school in Ottawa before moving to Portage La Prairie, Manitoba, probably in 1881 [Canada, 1881c, Census of Canada, 1881, Ottawa, Ontario]. He was well established in Portage in 1882, where, in December, he was elected secretary-treasurer of the Literary and Debating Society [wfp, 1882a, Portage La Prairie]. He must have obtained his legal training in Portage, where he was called to the bar in 1885 and became the legal partner of Joe Martin. Martin was active in reform politics in Manitoba (and later in BC; see above, p. 92) and Curtis was active in his election campaign [Brandon, 1891a, The Portage Election]. When Martin was briefly Premier of British Columbia, Curtis was his Minister of Mines. That Curtis and Ross Thompson knew each other in Portage, is a reasonable presumption, despite the age difference. I don't know when Curtis arrived in Rossland -- probably in 1895. After the Oro Denero adventure, he moved to Kamloops, where he practiced law and died in 1949 [British Columbia, 1949a, Registration of Death: Smith Curtis (August 28, 1949)].

^e Angus MacNish (or McNish) was born at Vankleek Hill, Prescott County, Ontario, in 1860 or 1861. In 1881 he was a school teacher, but at some point he enrolled in the University of Toronto where he studied law. Between 1890 and 1895 he practiced law at Glencoe, Ontario, a small town west of London, where he was involved in Liberal-Reform politics. His political leanings must have created an affinity between him and Smith Curtis with whom he became a law partner. Apparently he came to Rossland in 1895 or 1896. A March, 1896, story reports that he was then involved in organizing the Columbia Telephone-Telegraph Company and an April, 1897, story lists him as an organizer of the Grand Union Mining and Development Company with residence in Rossland [World, 1896d, Local Gossip, Nelson Miner, 1897f, New Mining Companies]. His name first appeared in the Rossland Directory for 1898 as Smith Curtis' law partner. This entry was repeated in 1899/1900, but in the 1900/1901 Directory he was listed as a "mining operator," not as a barrister and solicitor. He was not listed in the 1900 Canadian Law List as a member of the British Columbia bar. In 1900 he returned to his birth-home, Vankleek Hill, to be married. He settled down there as a small town lawyer and raised a family, while continuing to be involved with Oro Denero [Pioneer, 1904a, New Oro Denoro Officers]. He died in Ontario in 1936.

must have been substantial. The bond was a contract permitting the Rosslanders to explore, develop and operate the property for two years with the option of then purchasing it for a specified price.^f

The Oro Denero was thought to be a valuable property. Indeed, one prominent Rossland mining broker and operator predicted that “it had the makings of a great mine.”³⁷ The early development work revealed a large body of ore of that, like most Rossland ores, was of relatively low grade, but was marketable. Moreover, it was easy for smelters to handle and, indeed, had some characteristics (iron content) that made it useful to add to the mix when smelting copper ores from other mines³⁸ -- indeed, one smelter found the ore so useful that, for a short time, it smelted it without charge.³⁹ However, the assays also revealed that the Oro Denero ores, unlike Rossland ores, contained little gold.⁴⁰ For revenue, the developers would have to rely heavily on returns from selling copper; it was better described as a copper mine with some gold, rather than a copper-gold mine. Nonetheless, it was widely agreed that the Oro Denero had great potential.

As a result, always lurking in the background and affecting the development process was the price of copper, which, unlike the price of gold, was highly unstable (Figure 1, p. 7). When Corbett staked the Oro Denero claim, the price of copper had been steadily falling, hardly an auspicious sign for a new copper mine. When they bonded the property, the Rosslanders must have been heartened that the price had stabilized and was beginning to rise. This must have reinforced their enthusiasm for the project.

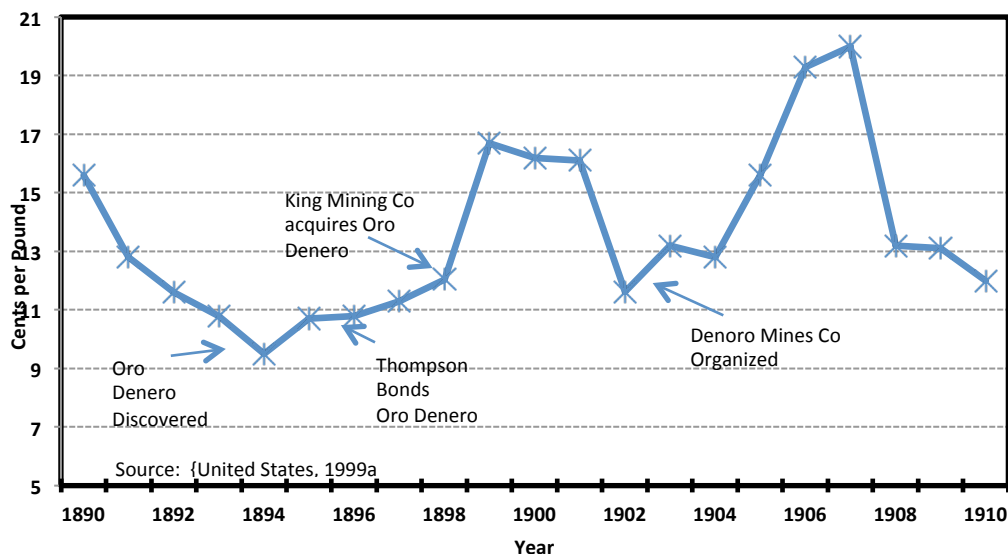
Thompson apparently thought that with several productive mines, the Summit Camp would be a new Rossland and, perhaps, that with its vast ore bed the Oro Denero would be a new Le Roi. In his enthusiasm he acquired land adjacent to the mine and had a townsite surveyed, which he called Denero (or Denoro), leading one newspaper reporter to label him “Townsite Thompson.”^g Houses and commercial buildings were built, hotels received liquor licenses and perhaps a post office was established.^h However, he may have overdone it. The Summit Camp was moderately productive for a few years, but never attained the status of Rossland or of the major mining spots in the Boundary region -- and there was already a townsite in the camp, Summit City. I don’t know if he made money or lost money on his new townsite, but the Oro Denero mine did not live up to Thompson’s hopes and it certainly was no Le Roi.

^f It is not clear what the “very large sum” was. According to the *Victoria Colonist*, the terms of the bond were: payments of \$100 on June 4, \$200 on July 4 and on August 4, and \$100 per month for the following 19 months. If the option was exerted, there would be a final lump sum payment of \$30,000, making a total of \$32,200. This would have been partly offset by the value of any ore shipped and sold [*Colonist*, 1896e, Midway]. Essentially the same was reported by the *Vancouver World*, which placed the value of the bond at \$32,400 [*World*, 1896b, Where Mines Yield Gold]. By contrast, the *Spokesman Review* of Spokane, Washington, quoted a price of \$80,000 [*Spokesman Review*, 1898a, Boundary Creek Claims].

^g [Post Intelligencer, 1900a, Tips About Mining Men]. The Denero was not Thompson’s only-post Rossland townsite project, but perhaps the only one to reach fruition. He had earlier applied to purchase 360 acres in a mining area at Christina Lake, near Grand Forks, planning to develop a townsite. He made a deposit on the land, but did not complete the purchase [*Cascade Record*, 1898a, Ross Thompson’s Townsite, G F Miner, 1899, Notice, *Cascade Record*, 1899b, Townsite Restaked].

^h A newspaper story indicates that a post office was to be opened in mid-November, 1903, with E Bunting as postmaster [*World*, 1903b, Denoro City]. However, according to the Post Office website, the Post Office at Denero was not established until May 1, 1908, with William Phillips as postmaster, an opening also reported in the press [*Pioneer*, 1908b, Boundary Side Lights]. Apparently, the 1903 opening was aborted.

Figure 1
Average Annual Price of Copper, 1890-1910



As the expiration of the bond approached, there had been no production of marketable ore and hence no earnings and the partners had been counting on revenue from shipments of ore to help pay the cost of the bond on the property.⁴¹ Having spent heavily on digging the shaft, apparently they lacked the means, to purchase the property when the bond expired. The bond was extended, but the Oro Denero remained the property of W.A. Corbett. Capital was needed to acquire the property and further develop it. The development of a major mine by an unincorporated syndicate was unusual. Raising funds from outsiders for development work was difficult, if not impossible, without ceding control over the claim. Normally the promoters would form a corporation, in which they would retain a controlling interest, and then, with the assistance of friendly brokers, they would cultivate a market and sell shares to raise capital. Incorporation could be the answer to the Rosslanders' financial woes. However, rather than forming a new corporation to develop the mine, they appropriated an existing one in which they were already controlling shareholders.

The King Mining Company

The King Mining Company had been incorporated in February, 1897 for the purpose of acquiring two prospects on Lake Mountain, across the valley from Rossland.⁴² Thompson was vice president and manager of the company, Curtis was treasurer and MacNish secretary.⁴³ The president was G.R. Maxwell, for many years a Presbyterian minister in Vancouver until he was elected Liberal Member of Parliament for the Burrard riding in the administration of Wilfred Laurier. Maxwell was a much loved pastor and a well-known, highly-regarded Member of Parliament. Although he was president, there is no evidence that he was active in the management of the company. I am sure he was a figurehead, probably recruited by Curtis (both were active Liberal politicians, one federal and the other provincial) to

lend his name and reputation to the company in order to instill confidence among potential shareholders and so help to sell shares.ⁱ Ross Thompson was said to be its “largest individual stockholder.”⁴⁴ He became the manager and effective head of the company. However, the Curtis-MacNish combination was a formidable presence that would eventually come to dominate the Oro Denero enterprise.

Neither of the claims on Lake Mountain proved productive. Rather than letting the company slowly die, at a meeting in September, 1898, Thompson and friends increased the nominal capitalization from \$1 million to \$2 million, permitting them to place up to a million new shares on the market. At the same time, Corbett transferred ownership of the Oro Denero to the company in exchange for a large block of shares and a seat on the Board of Directors.⁴⁵ What Thompson, Curtis and MacNish received in compensation for the time and money they had devoted to the early development of the claim was not reported, but, if anything, it was probably an allotment of the new shares. The King Mining Company was to become the vehicle for developing the Oro Denero mine, but first shares had to be sold to finance further development.

Selling the Shares: Waldemar Wallach

Some shares could be sold locally, but the real money was in the east. What was needed was something that would attract widespread interest in the mine and the company's shares. That something was not a startlingly rich find in the mine shaft; it was provided by a Montreal journalist turned mining broker named Waldemar Wallach.^j A popular, successful journalist, he had been the financial editor of the *Montreal Star* and then was to have been the founding editor of the *Daily Financial and Shipping Gazette*.⁴⁶ That venture may have foundered, but in any case he soon purchased and edited the *Metropolitan*, touted as “Montreal's society newspaper,”⁴⁷ a weekly publication that was said to have a large circulation in Toronto.⁴⁸ Then, in September, 1898, Wallach sold the *Metropolitan*^k and left Montreal to set up a mining brokerage in Rossland. As a result of his journalistic activities, he was well known to wealthy investors in Montreal, other major Quebec centres and Toronto. He also had connections in Scotland, particularly in the south-west, where he was born and raised, and he would use his Scottish connections to turn the funding of the King Mining Company into an international affair.

ⁱ Maxwell was a Scot, born in 1857 in South Lanarkshire. He became minister of the Presbyterian Church in Vancouver in 1891, following similar service in Scotland, Ontario and Quebec. Elected to parliament in the great Liberal sweep of 1896, he was re-elected in 1900. Maxwell's only known involvement with Rossland was in his dedication of the new Presbyterian Church there in September, 1898, after he had been designated president of King Mining Company. Maxwell died of cancer in Vancouver in November, 1902. In March, 1900, he owned 12,000 shares in the company, probably given to him as reward for lending his name to the enterprise.

^j Wallach was born in Kirkcudbright, Scotland in December, 1865, the son of a German father and a Scottish mother. I know nothing about his education and little about his activities before he left Scotland. In the 1881 census, the 16-year-old Waldemar Wallach stated his occupation as “compositor” -- he was in the publishing industry, but not yet on the journalistic side. It was later reported that he had extensive experience in journalism in Scotland and that he was a graduate of the University of Edinburgh. However, his name is not among the list of graduates of the university and I have been unable to verify his involvement in journalism [Edinburgh, 1889, Alphabetical List of Graduates of the University of Edinburgh From 1859 to 1888]. He emigrated to Canada as a 21-year old in 1886, strangely listing his occupation as “lab(ourer).” Whatever his background, he must have had talents in writing and persuasion. In Montreal he joined the staff of the *Montreal Star* where he became the financial editor, the position that launched his brief career in Rossland and his involvement with Ross Thompson's enterprises. .

^k [Globe, 1898d, Provincial Synod]. Wallach sold the *Metropolitan* to Colonel J.B. MacLean who would, a few years later, found MacLean's Magazine.

Indeed, in some advertisements he gave the impression that his firm was a large, international enterprise, making the dubious assertion that he had offices in Montreal, Toronto, Greenwood, Grand Forks, Spokane, Glasgow, Scotland, and London, England.^l Clearly impressed with Wallach and his connections, the directors retained him as broker for the King Mining Company. Curtis, MacNish and Wallach headed for Montreal in mid-February, 1899. There Wallach sold a reported 100,000 shares to his friends and admirers at 12¢ per share, raising \$12,000, less commission and expenses.⁴⁹ The sale of shares in Montreal was the special development that the King Mining Company needed.

There had been some activity in the market for shares of the King Mining Company following its acquisition of the Oro Denero mine.⁵⁰ In the background, a sharp increase in the price of copper (Figure 1, p. 7) must have encouraged potential investors, but it was the Montreal transactions that excited the market, in part because the Montrealers were regarded as astute investors who already had substantial investments in the area and so were thought to be particularly knowledgeable. Carefully orchestrated publicity about the sale immediately induced interest in the shares in Rossland and the Boundary District as well as in Montreal, Toronto and elsewhere in Quebec.⁵¹ Soon after the Montreal sales, Wallach announced that shares from the company's treasury would henceforth be sold at 25¢, more than double the original price.⁵² More shares were soon sold at this price and it was announced that the price of treasury shares would be increased to 50¢,⁵³ but that seems to have been an unrealistic aspiration. I have found no evidence that any transactions ever occurred at this price. Wallach then returned to Montreal to sell more shares and finally went to Scotland for a five month visit, where again he sold shares.⁵⁴ Funds were rolling into the King company's treasury.

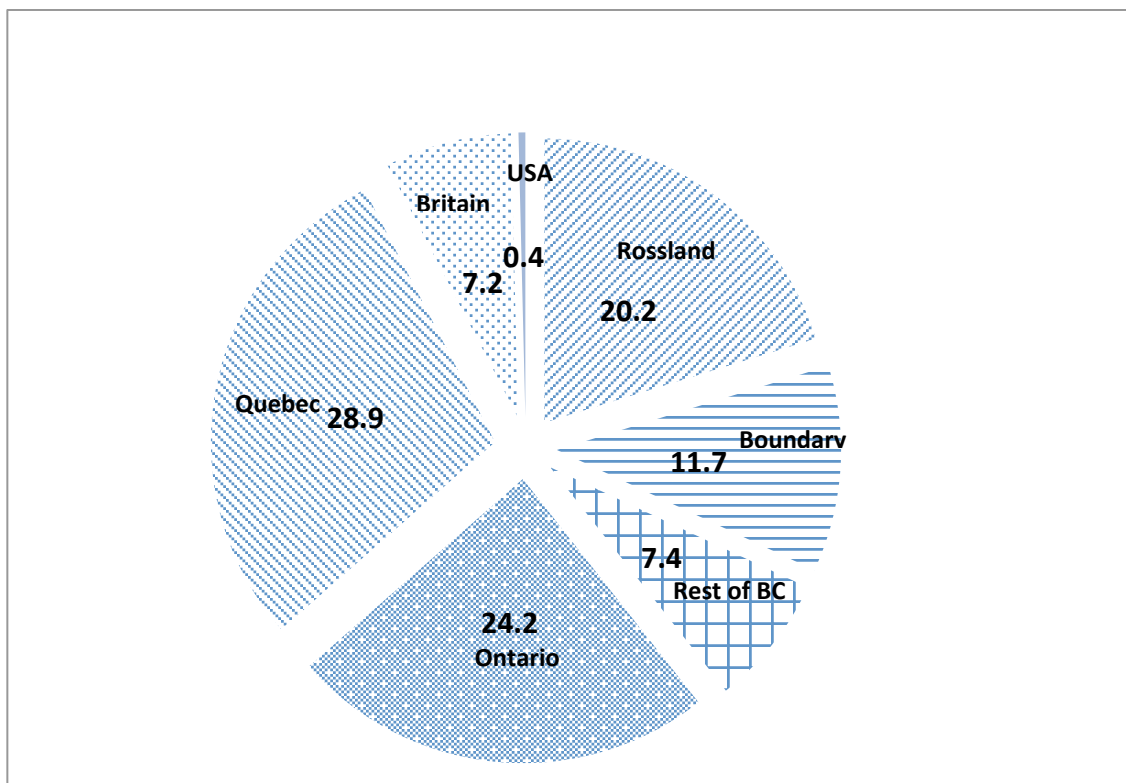
To illustrate the importance of out-of-province sales, Figure 2 (p.10) shows the geographical distribution of holdings of King Mining shares on March 31, 1900, omitting holdings by directors.^m Directors' shares are omitted because by and large the issuance of these shares did not provide money to the company. Almost all of the directors' shares were given as compensation for services rendered -- although, in some cases, those services were minimal. Moreover, a substantial portion of the directors' shares were acquired before the reformulation of the King company. The big exception was the block of shares received by Corbett, and they were in compensation for transferring title to the Oro Denero. They did not provide cash for development of the mine. However, we can be confident that the shares held outside the province were purchased as a result of the Wallach sales campaign and so provided cash to the treasury. This probably also applies to most of the shares held in the Boundary district. However,

^l [Boundary Times, 1899f, Waldemar Wallach & Co. (Advert.)]. The claim was dubious because it seems unlikely that a small, new brokerage would have opened branch offices in all of these places. At best, he may have had correspondent relations with a broker in some, if not all, of them. In any case, I could not find a listing for Wallach or a Wallach brokerage office in city directories for Greenwood, Toronto, or Glasgow at this time. I did not have access to London or Spokane directories for 1898-1900 (but he was not listed in Spokane in 1901).

^m The underlying data are from a report submitted to the provincial Attorney General as required by a revision of the Companies Act in 1897. The report is in the company's file in the British Columbia Archives. It lists all shareholders as of March 31, 1900, showing their locations and occupations together with the number of shares held. I have been unable to fully reconcile the detail in the report with the reported total of shares outstanding, but the differences are slight. The chart is based on my calculations. I have included shares held by J C S Fraser as "directors' shares" for reasons explained below.

some of the shares held by non-directors in Rossland and perhaps in Vancouver would have been issued before the 1898 reformulation of the King company, but that simply reinforces the message given by Figure 2. Unfortunately, the underlying data show only the number of shares held. They do not reveal the price at which they were sold or the amount of money raised by each issue. Nonetheless, the message is clear. Well over half of the funding for the development of the Oro Denero mine, as of March 31, 1900, was raised out of the province. Sales in Quebec (primarily Montreal) and Ontario (primarily Toronto) accounted for 53% of the shares issued by March, 1900, and in Britain (overwhelmingly Scotland), an additional 7%.

Figure 2.
King Mining Company, Location of Shareholdings, Percentage of Total Shares Outstanding (Excluding Directors' Shares), March, 1900.



The Wallach campaign to sell shares was successful in that it raised money to reopen the mine (how much is not known). Then, serendipity! The proposed route for the Canadian Pacific Railway's branch line from Eholt to the booming mountain-top mining community of Phoenix was across the northern part of the Oro Denero property. In late July, 1899, and again in September, the excavation of the railway bed revealed a body of marketable ore just under the surface.⁵⁵ With the construction of a

couple of short spur lines, the ore could be taken from open pits and loaded directly on railway cars for shipment to a smelter at relatively low cost -- much lower cost than was possible with underground mining. They had to wait until the track for the Phoenix line was laid and made operational. This was done by late 1899 and on December 16, 1899, as an experiment, two carloads, about 24 tons, were sent to the Trail smelter, paying a good return to the company.⁵⁶ The Oro Denero was now considered a mine rather than a prospect and it had the distinction of being the first mine in the camp to ship ore by rail. All prior shipments (from other mines) had been by the slow and relatively expensive means of wagons, hauled by horses or mules over rough roads. Men were hired to increase the mining effort on the Oro Denero. With an exposed body of ore that could be extracted by open-pit mining and a relatively inexpensive means of transport at hand, the future of the Oro Denero looked rosy -- but it was not to be.

Although the experimental shipments were considered a singular success, the company did not follow through and establish a steady flow of shipments. Why did they not ship more ore to smelters? Part of the reason may have been that despite Wallach's fund raising, money was not really abundant. To exploit the ores near the surface they had to build one or two short railway lines into the potential quarries. That required a diversion of funds from the digging of the shaft and tunnels -- a change in the development plan. Apparently they were unwilling to do so. The Superintendent and by implication Thompson as manager were fixated on underground mining. Indeed, in a surprising move, the company borrowed \$15,000 from the Bank of Montreal to purchase additional equipment, a large compressor that would permit them to increase the number of drills in operation and hence accelerate the digging.⁵⁷

Funding inherently risky mining explorations with borrowed money was unusual and for a bank to lend to a speculative mining company with no record of production and a shaky financial situation was even more unusual. It would be interesting to know how the partners persuaded the bank to lend. I don't know the answer, but I have a theory. There is evidence that the manager of the Rossland branch of the Bank of Montreal, J. S. C. Fraser was a particular friend of Ross Thompson. They visited Halcyon Hot Springs Resort together in 1897⁵⁸ and later that year, after Fraser had spent some time at the hot springs for relief from his rheumatism; Thompson was one of a party of three close friends who greeted him at the train station on his return to Rossland.⁵⁹ When Fraser went on a trip to the Boundary country in 1898, to scout for locations for a new bank office, Ross Thompson accompanied him.⁶⁰ They extended the trip to visit various mining properties in which Thompson was interested, including some in the Republic area of Washington State. Fraser had been involved in speculations on mining properties for some time. His name appeared frequently in newspaper reports of transactions in claims. I suspect that it did not take much persuasion for Thompson to induce Fraser to involve the Bank of Montreal in his speculations by lending money to the King Mining Company.

That Fraser was a shareholder in King Mining is not surprising given his friendship with Thompson. What is curious is the magnitude of his shareholding. On March 31, 1900, he held 90,000 shares -- far more than any other non-director shareholder. The next largest shareholding was 30,200. Of course, Fraser could have purchased the shares and a holding of that magnitude would have given him a strong

incentive to approve the loan. However, I wonder if the shares were given to him as an inducement to approve the loan. I suspect the answer is yes -- but there is no evidence. In any case, he soon became even more directly involved with the Oro Denero mining venture.

The decision not to divert funds to the development of open pit mines would prove to be fateful. By April or May, 1901, the company was again out of funds; development of the mine was suspended.⁶¹ It sat idle for almost two years. What had happened? They had been successful in selling shares. Where had the money gone?

When they first took a bond on the Oro Denero claim, Thompson and partners hired a superintendent and workers, chose a high spot on the property and began to dig a shaft. The plan was to tap the mineral deposit with underground tunnels fanning out from the shaft at several depths and in various directions once the shaft had been sunk to a depth of about 200 feet. This was achieved by mid-October, 1899.⁶² They were then ready to proceed with underground tunneling. A consultant, Neil Cochrane, was hired to advise them on how to proceed. His advice was not welcome. In effect, he told them that they had been wasting time and money digging a deep shaft. Digging a shaft was the conventional approach to developing a mineralized lode. However, Cochrane argued that it was inappropriate in this case.⁶³ The claim was situated on the side of a mountain and the mineralization was not in a single lode that could be effectively mined from a shaft, but several distinct, almost parallel veins along the mountainside, some distance apart. In his opinion, a more efficient approach was to dig tunnels from the surface (in mining jargon, adits) part way down the hillside and across the several veins. Initially, Cochrane's advice was rejected, but in November, 1899, he was hired as superintendent of the mine.⁶⁴ He set men to work digging adits.

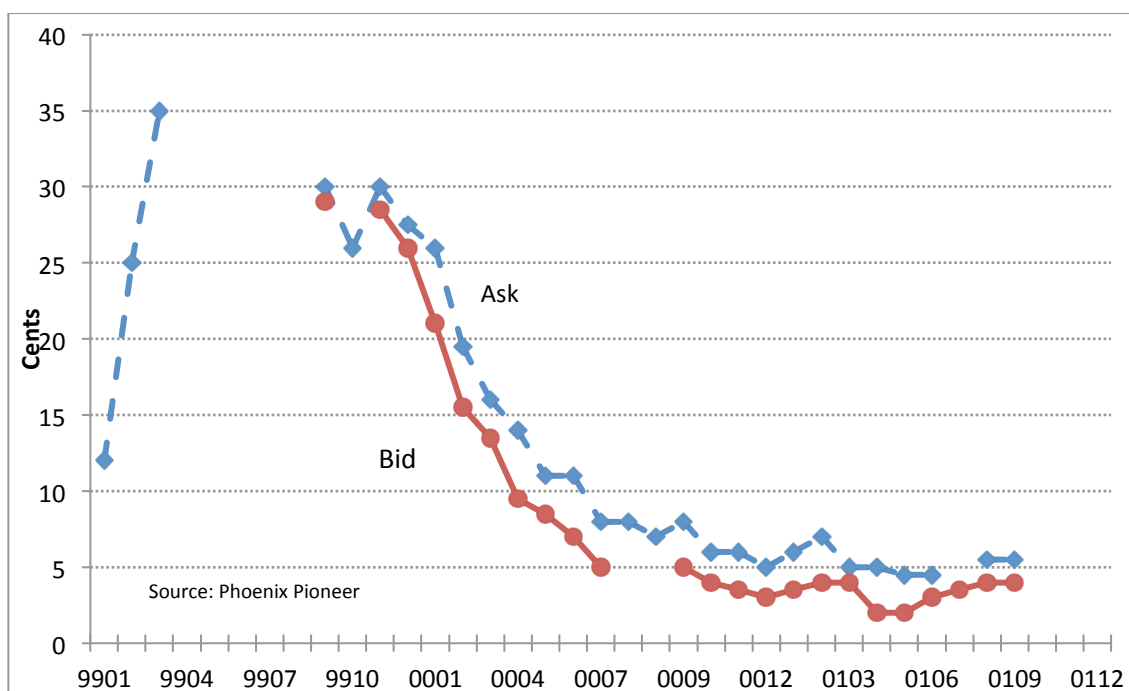
In effect, the new superintendent began development of the mine afresh. Some underground tunnels were dug from the shaft, but he also started three new adits from the surface. By the end of March, 1900, 25 men were employed⁶⁵ where earlier five or six was the norm. Cochrane must have been spending money as fast -- perhaps faster -- than Wallach was raising it. By May, 1900, the company was out of money -- and still no ore had been shipped to smelters.⁶⁶ All development activity stopped. The mine sat idle for two years.

King Mining in the Stock Market

The stock market then took charge of the company. In the months following Wallach's mission to Montreal, shares were fed into the market, with the issue price rising in response to strong demand. It was reported in Greenwood that there was strong demand for the shares, but those owning shares preferred to hold them rather than sell. Strangely, I find no evidence of trading in the open market until September 1900. Then the price of a share in Montreal, Toronto and Rossland settled down to the range 25¢ - 30¢ (Figure 3, p. 13). The company continued to spend on development -- but there was no production after the two-car shipment of December, 1899. There is no obvious explanation why, but apparently the new superintendent -- with the agreement of Thompson, the manager of the operation -- was adamant about his theory of the appropriate attack on the ore beds and would not divert workers to

preparing ore for shipment, repeatedly promising “soon.” The stock market reacted. By January, 1900, the price was in the vicinity of 20¢. The fall was not in principle a disaster, but momentum was building. By February the price was 15¢; by April, under 10¢; and by July, 4¢. Any hope of selling additional shares to fund the continuation of work was gone in a demoralized market. Out of money, the mine sat idle for two years. After operations were suspended, the shares would have been essentially unmarketable; I have found no price quotations. What was left of Ross Thompson’s fortune was evaporating.

Figure 3
King Mining Company, Share Prices, Monthly, 1899-1901



In the middle of Wallach’s sales campaign, although agreeing that “the future of the ‘King Mining Co. is all right”, the Montreal stock exchange newsletter, the *Exchange News*, published a biting denunciation of his sales methods.⁶⁷ It noted that shares had been sold to friends in different places at different prices while assuring all that “they are being let in on the ground floor.” As a result, when word got around, many of his “eastern friends ... are so disgusted with Mr. Wallach’s methods of doing business that they have not only lost confidence in him, but in the stock he sold them, and are quietly unloading.” When the share price collapsed and the shares became unsaleable, Wallach must have lost all credibility and many friends and colleagues. In late August, 1900, when the share price was near rock bottom, Wallach returned to Montreal suffering from “serious illness.” The nature of the illness was not noted, but shortly before he left Rossland the *Rossland Miner* reported “Mr. Waldemar Wallach is

suffering from an attack of nervous prostration, and is confined to his room.”⁶⁸ Apparently he was experiencing a severe psychological reaction to the collapse of the financial escapade that had compromised his reputation and ended his career as a mining broker. I could not find his name in the Montreal city directories from 1902-1905, but at the 1901 census he and his wife, Jessie, were living in Montreal with his widowed mother-in-law.⁶⁹ He then left Canada for the United States, perhaps in 1906,⁷⁰ settling in Indiana at his old career as a journalist.⁷¹ He had been married in Montreal in 1893,⁷² but apparently that marriage ended. Did his wife die? Were they divorced? I have not found reports of either event. In responding to the 1910 US census he reported his marital status as single⁷³ -- not widower or divorced. He married again in Indiana in 1911⁷⁴ and died there in 1945.⁷⁵

Denoro Mines Ltd.

Although the directors must have agreed to the plan, as manager of the project for King Mining Ross Thompson was directly responsible for the intensive digging and tunnelling approach to the development of the Oro Denero mine that had exhausted the finances of the company without producing any revenue -- and hence, by implication, for the plunging value of the shares. Perhaps that is the reason he stepped set aside when the project was revived in 1903. Offers were made by outside interests to purchase the mine, but Thompson and his partners still had faith in their ability to operate it. All offers were rejected.⁷⁶ However, a new face and a new approach were needed if the project was to attract outside funding. A new company was formed in January, 1903, Denoro Mines Ltd., with nominal capital of \$1,500,000 in non-assessable shares of a nominal value of \$1.ⁿ Thompson was one of five *pro forma* founding directors, each of whom subscribed for one share and applied for the corporate charter, but then he faded into the background. Smith Curtis took charge; he became the managing director and manager of the mine, promising a very different approach, concentrating on immediate production rather than underground development.

By virtue of his shares in King Mining, Ross Thompson was a major shareholder in Denoro Mines, but he was neither an officer nor a director.⁷⁷ Indeed, the Board of Directors was almost entirely recast, presenting an impressive new face to potential investors. With the exception of Curtis, who was secretary-treasurer and managing director, all of the directors were new, with wide geographic representation and high social status. The vice-president was Aulay Morrison, a New Westminster lawyer and influential Member of Parliament for that city. Like Smith Curtis, he was a Liberal politician. He had not been a shareholder in the King company (at least as of March 31, 1900), but like Maxwell before him, he was presumably recruited by Curtis to add a gloss of respectability to the company. Another new director was Henry Hart, a capitalist from Three Rivers, Quebec. His appointment was presumably a

ⁿ Because the shares were non-assessable (meaning that people who purchased shares from the company at a fraction of their nominal par value could not be required to pay in additional funds at the call of the directors, even in the case of insolvency) the par value of the shares was meaningless except in the sense that it determined how many shares the company could issue given its approved capitalization. There was another implication of the non-assessable status of the shares that is important for students of the industry. Mining companies were seldom formally dissolved. Receivers were not appointed, the books were not scrutinized by a court and no financial records were left for posterity. Those involved just walked away, leaving the company as a hollow shell until the Registrar struck it from the corporate register for failure to submit required reports.

gesture to the eastern financial interests, an assertion that the company would not be managed in the interests of a small Rossland clique. A fourth director, Charles R Hamilton, was a Rossland lawyer of sterling reputation and one of the foremost citizens to the city.^o He served as an alderman 1900-1902 and 1904 and as mayor in 1905. Hamilton was not a King Mining shareholder on March 31, 1900. Like Morrison's, his name was an adornment to the directorate; was he given shares to join?

What is fascinating is that the fifth director and president of Denoro Mines was J S C Fraser, the manager of the Rossland branch of the Bank of Montreal. Like Morrison and Hart, his name was decorative, helping give the company an aura of respectability. Did he also have a special purpose in accepting the position -- to ensure, as a priority, that the bank's loan to King Mining was repaid? It may have been a coincidence, but when that was accomplished, he stepped down as president.⁷⁸ In his final speech to the shareholders, he pointedly emphasized that all of the liabilities inherited from the King Mining Company had been retired. Perhaps he regarded this as the signal accomplishment of his regime; perhaps he was simply attempting to reassure the stock market that the company was in sound financial condition (he also announced that the company "had a substantial cash on hand"⁷⁹).

The company was organized, but money had to be raised. At the first meeting of the shareholders, Curtis and MacNish were offered the option of acting as dealers in the company's shares, purchasing all of the unallocated shares in Denoro Mines for \$45,000 less the standard broker's commission of 10%, payable in monthly instalments over two years.⁸⁰ Such an agreement would have created a powerful incentive for Curtis and MacNish to sell the shares to meet their monthly obligation and hopefully make a profit. It is not clear if the option was taken, however. Some stories imply that it was, others hint that it was not. In any case, fund raising had to be a major priority if the venture was to succeed. As a start, for every three shares that they held, shareholders were given the option of purchasing one additional share at 8¢. I have found no evidence of how much money this offer raised, but obtaining sufficient funding depended on cultivating a broader market. Even before the company was legally organized, Curtis went east on a six-week-long scouting trip, starting in Chicago, seeking financial support.⁸¹ What promises he garnered was not reported. Soon after the organizational meeting, Curtis made other trips to eastern Canada and New York, seeking funding.⁸² Again, his success was not reported, but in April, 1903, he was quoted as saying that he

*.... is confident that he can finance the company until such time as regular shipments will be commenced when in all probability the mine will take care of itself.*⁸³

Everything then rested on extracting ore quickly and selling it to a smelter. In late June he made yet another trip east in his quest for funding.⁸⁴ Unfortunately, the Denoro Mines company did not comply with the statutory requirement to submit a list of shareholders to the government --- at least, there is no such

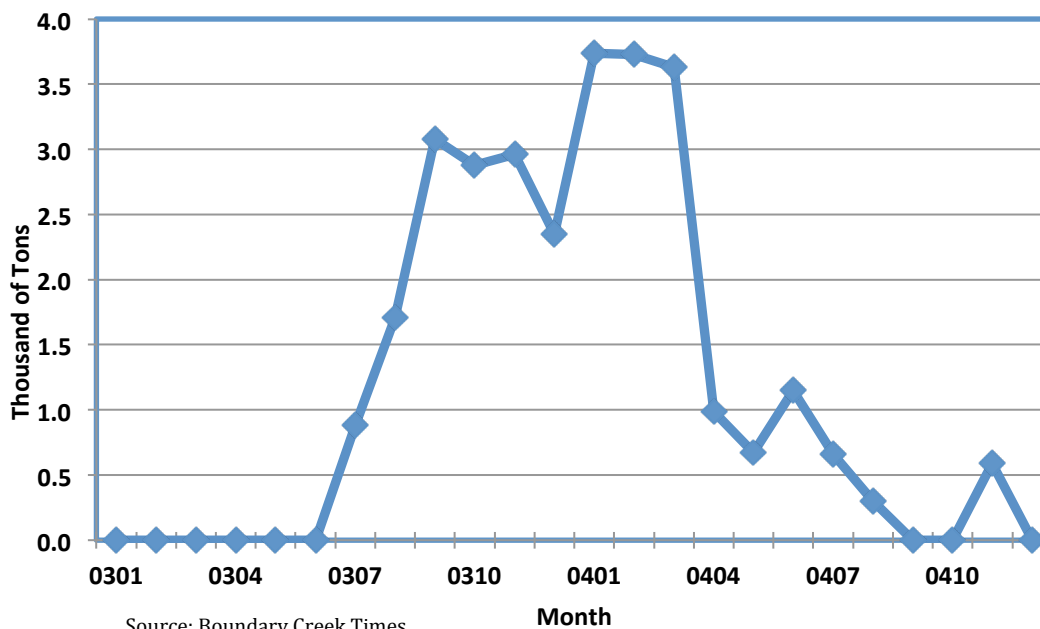
^o Born in Quebec City, son of an Anglican Bishop, Hamilton was educated at Oxford. He was one of the early lawyers in Rossland, practicing law in 1896 and perhaps earlier. He appeared, either as prosecutor or defence attorney, in many prominent cases and regularly served as "judge" of the Court of Revision and Appeal for municipal property assessments in the district. Hamilton was active in civic government, as alderman (4 terms) and mayor (1 term). As the mining boom died and legal work in Rossland shrank, he moved to Nelson in October 1910 where he continued a long and distinguished career. He died in Victoria in April, 1938.

document in the company's files in the provincial archives -- so we do not know the distribution of share ownership or how successful the eastern trips were.

At the mine, two locations were selected for quarries and when the snow melted five or six men were employed to prepare the sites and build short spur lines to connect the pits with the CPR track.⁸⁵ In June, a contract was made with the Sunset Smelter, a small smelter at Boundary Falls, between Greenwood and Midway, to smelt the ore.⁸⁶ The first shipments occurred in mid-July, 1903 and then rose sharply (see Figure 4, p. 17). Unfortunately, the Sunset Smelter closed at the end of December, 1903. Perhaps that was not a major concern because it was thought that the Sunset Smelter was too small; that the Oro Denero "needs a great smelting plant that will treat thousands of tons."⁸⁷ Curtis quickly made a deal with the much larger Granby Smelter in Grand Forks that included not only smelting of the ore, but also a large investment by Granby in Denero Mines' shares (the proceeds of which were used in part to pay off the loan from the Bank of Montreal).⁸⁸ When shipments surged to a peak in the first quarter of 1904, the Oro Denero was briefly the largest producer in the Summit Camp and because of the low costs of extraction and transport, the shipments were very profitable. There was speculation that Denoro Mines would soon be able to pay dividends to its shareholders.⁸⁹ From July, 1903 through March, 1904 the mine shipped almost 27,000 tons of ore. Although far below the big leagues -- over the same period, the Mother Lode mine, in the nearby Deadwood camp, shipped 135,000 tons and there were mines in Phoenix that produced even more -- this was a respectable output that placed the Oro Denero among the important mines of the region.

Where was Ross Thompson while the resurgence of the Oro Denero mine was unfolding? For months he was nowhere to be seen; his name does not appear in any press stories about the Denoro Mines until July 24, 1904, when he reappeared as a member of a three person committee (the others were the president, Fraser, and the managing director, Curtis) negotiating with the Great Northern Railway for a right of way across the lower part of the company's property.⁹⁰ Clearly, Thompson was still an important presence in the company, although mostly in the background. For the Great Northern the most direct route for their new line to Phoenix was across Denoro Mines land. For the mining company this route had the great advantage of putting railway tracks right on the doorstep of the three adits that had been dug deep into the mountain to tap the veins of ore, but were still unused and unproductive. However, the railway line would run over potentially valuable minerals making them inaccessible for mining. The directors thought they saw an opportunity. Claiming a loss of potential revenue from the minerals under the railway track, they sought "some thousands of dollars" in compensation from the railway. The Great Northern balked and began to survey an alternate route, skirting the Denoro property. Thompson and his colleagues scrambled to save the easy access to their adits and backed down. The railway was built as originally planned. Thus, Ross Thompson's only known involvement in the management of Denoro Mines to that point was unsuccessful.

Figure 4 Shipments of Ore by the Oro Denero Mine, Monthly, 1903-1904



However, Ross Thompson was not quite done with the mine that he had begun working eight years earlier. In September, 1904, at the regular annual meeting, two of the decorative directors resigned their positions -- the president, J. S. C. Fraser and the eastern director Henry Hart. Ross Thompson was returned to the directorate along with a newcomer, a Vancouver physician and city health officer, J. A. L. McAlpine.⁹¹ However, Thompson could not have played a significant role in the affairs of the company. By then, he must have been concentrating on his impending departure from Rossland.

Although he was not active in management of the company during the 1903-04 upsurge in output, for Ross Thompson it was great news. At the outset, shares in Denoro Mines had been offered to King Mining shareholders at 8¢. In September, 1903, a broker in Phoenix was advertising them at 15¢⁹² and another in Vancouver at 25¢.⁹³ For a time, a Phoenix newspaper published a table of "Latest Mining Stock Quotations" with ask and bid prices, presumably provided by a Phoenix broker. In early January 1904 the paper was quoting prices of 25¢ and 20¢, but the range soon dropped to 22¢ and 20¢⁹⁴. Thompson's investment in the Oro Denero was being restored.

Then disaster! In April, shipments from the mine dropped and continued dropping until September and October, when no shipments were made. At the peak, Denoro Mines had thirty workers on the ground. By mid-summer that number was down to six.⁹⁵ This drop in production was precipitous. What

had happened?^P It seems unlikely that the company was short of money. They had begun acquiring other mining properties and at the annual meetings in September, 1904, and July, 1906, they announced substantial cash in the treasury.⁹⁶ Had they extracted all of the readily available ore and so had to devote time to further development? Were there problems at the smelter that was to receive and process the shipments? Were there problems with the availability of railway cars to move the ore to the smelter? I have found no explanation, but whatever the reason, the result was devastating for Ross Thompson.

I have been unable to develop a usable series of market prices of Denoro Mines shares. They were not listed on stock exchanges in Rossland, Montreal or Toronto and I have not found them quoted among prices for unlisted stocks. However, as noted above, ask and bid prices were quoted in a table published irregularly by the Phoenix *Pioneer* newspaper. This evidence is puzzling. Following the collapse of production, prices of 22¢ and 20¢ were reported week after week, with no variation. The repetitiveness of the quotations is probably evidence that the market was unreliable and the broker did not have a good fix on the value of the shares -- that these prices were meaningless nominal quotations, unrelated to any activity in the markets. Finally, starting in mid-September, 1904, although the table continued to have a line for Denoro shares, no price was quoted, a clear indication that there was no market for the shares. Ross Thompson's shares had become unsaleable. He must have lost heavily on his last remaining major investment. Is this what kicked him over the edge to leave Rossland?

The Oro Denero mine continued to ship ore in desultory fashion through 1905, but the market for Denoro Mines' shares did not recover. Finally, in 1906 Smith Curtis gave up. In February, 1906, he met with executives of the B C Copper Company, a large firm that already had producing properties in the Summit Camp.⁹⁷ B C Copper soon began exploratory work to assess the Oro Denero mine⁹⁸ and, anticipating the sale of the mine, the share price of Denoro Mines rebounded, but only to a relatively modest level. The mine, but not the Denoro Mines company, was sold to the B C Copper Company. Under B C Copper management, the mine prospered for a few years, extracting ore from quarries and from the underground tunnels. A considerable amount of ore was shipped until 1916 when production fell to a very low level. The mine closed for good in 1918⁹⁹. The Denoro Mines company, however, continued to operate for a short time, working its other smaller properties, particularly the Hungry Man claim south of Nelson. The Hungry Man never developed into a producing mine.

Nevada

I have no evidence about Thompson's personal wealth. Rumour suggested that at its height he was a millionaire.¹⁰⁰ Perhaps -- but it seems unlikely. In any case, his fortune was tied up in mining companies, speculative claims and associated land and prices of these assets were unstable. He made some profitable investment decisions, like his involvement in the Great Western mine (see below, p. 24) and the Evening-Eureka Group (noted below). He made many unfortunate ones. Apart from the Oro Denero, I don't know which mining ventures went sour on him but he lost heavily on many of them and by

^P The mine closed at the beginning of April to install some new equipment, but that closure was only for a week.

1905 it was reported that he was “broke.”¹⁰¹ I suspect that is a considerable exaggeration. He still had mining properties that must have had some value. For example, when he was in Nevada, much was made of his extensive holdings of coal and oil lands in the Crows Nest Pass area acquired in 1902.¹⁰² It was also reported that in the fall of 1904 four claims on Red Mountain called the Evening-Eureka group, said to be owned by Ross Thompson, was bonded to the Le Roi 2 company for \$175,000.¹⁰³ I don’t know if the option to purchase was ever invoked, but in any case Thompson would have received periodic payments during the life of the bond. At the end of 1904, his shares in the Denoro Mines company were essentially unsaleable. He may have received some money after the Oro Denoro mine was sold to BC Copper in late 1905, after he had left Rossland, but it is uncertain whether any distribution was made to the shareholders. In any case, he was undoubtedly in much reduced financial circumstances when he left Rossland at the end of 1904 or early in 1905⁹. From Victoria he took the steam ship City of Puebla to San Francisco on February 2, 1905, with a through ticket to Nevada.¹⁰⁴ He was off chasing another rainbow, seeking another pot of gold.

When he left Rossland, Thompson’s intended destination was Tonopah, Nevada, a mining camp opened in 1900 that for several years had been attracting much attention and a rush of prospectors.¹⁰⁵ Some well-known Rosslanders had joined the rush earlier, including two for whom Thompson claimed to have provided financial support, Dr. Edward Bowes, a physician who had practiced and operated a hospital in Rossland for some years, served as city coroner and was a very prominent and active member of the community, and John McKane, a well-known miner and broker.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps it was the presence of these Rosslanders, who were reported to have done very well financially, that attracted Thompson to this particular mining boom. Information about his success at Tonopah is sketchy, but there are reports that he struck a rich vein soon after he arrived and did well¹⁰⁷. There are hints that he then spent some time in Seattle, perhaps acting as a mining broker. If so he returned to Nevada about 1906 or early 1907 and at a place called Yerington, in association with a group of other mining men, in 1907 he made a rich find.¹⁰⁸ It is reported that Thompson had been discouraged from prospecting the site with assertions that it was known to be barren, but he doggedly persisted -- with success. He was in Seattle when the 1910 census was taken,¹⁰⁹ but he was back in Nevada in 1912¹¹⁰. At the 1920 census he was still in Nevada, at a place called Spragg, near Yerington.¹¹¹

I don’t know how wealthy he was when he left Nevada, but one report states that in his lifetime he lost two fortunes. One was in Rossland and if the story is true the other must have been in Nevada. As is discussed below, the limited evidence available suggests that he lived in relatively humble quarters after he returned to Vancouver.

Marital Status

One of the puzzles about Ross Thompson relates to his marital status. On August 24, 1897, he married Katherine (Katie) Alta Watson, daughter of the operator of the Pacific Hotel in Rossland.¹¹² He

⁹ He was still in Rossland on December 13, 1904, when he was interviewed by the Rossland Miner about the demolition of his cabin [Miner, 1904c, Old Lanmark Gone].

was 31; she was 19. The Watsons were Irish Catholics; Thompson, whose forebears were Irish Protestants, professed Methodism. There were both Methodist and Catholic churches and clergy in Rossland, but neither was involved in the wedding. Although neither party was of his congregation, the ceremony was conducted by Henry Irwin, an Anglican minister -- the legendary and much beloved Father Pat -- before a small number of intimate friends at the Pacific Hotel. I don't know how religiously committed either party was, but having Father Pat conduct the ceremony may have provided a bridge between the Roman Catholicism of the Watsons and the Methodist Protestantism of Thompson. But perhaps religion was not an issue. Perhaps, like many Rosslanders, the Watsons and Thompson simply had a respectful reverence for Father Pat. Another strong, emotional reason for having him conduct the ceremony may have been that, like the Watson and Thompson families, Father Pat was an Irishman. Ross and Katie departed for the coast soon after the ceremony, but I am sure there must have been a real Irish wedding party at the Pacific Hotel that evening. I have not discovered any offspring from the union of Ross and Katherine.

Katherine was born in San Francisco in 1878. The family had hopped, skipped and jumped across the country after immigrating from Ireland. Katherine had a brother and two sisters, each of whom was born in a different state -- Ohio (1873), Illinois (1875) and California (1880). In the 1880 census John gave his occupation as "miner," but an 1897 story placed him in Seattle in the 1890s, "... runn(ing) a steamboat between Seattle, Everett and Whatcom"¹¹³ (perhaps it was a Watson steam boat on which Thompson worked). I don't know when or how Watson got into the hotel business, but the same story about the steamboat reported that when he went to Rossland, he was "pretty low down financially."¹¹⁴ Like many bright people at the time, without education or a profession, he had to be adaptable, willing to take on any employment that offered a living for him and his family. Managing a hotel in Rossland may have been a providential opportunity at a difficult time.

Without access to personal papers we cannot know how deep were the religious commitments of Ross and Katherine, or the extent to which religious differences, the age disparity or the failure to have children contributed to the deterioration of the marriage -- or something completely different and more personal. I suspect, however, that an important factor was Thompson's proclivity to be out in the field at mining camps for extended periods. Whatever the reason, the marriage was not a happy one. It may be coincidental, but Katherine spent the summer of 1904 in Victoria, visiting old Rossland friends, while Ross was in Rossland, wrestling with the disintegration of his Oro Denero mining ventures and his looming financial problems. It is not clear if she followed him to Nevada in 1905 (she was not a passenger on the ship to San Francisco). However, Ross and Katherine were together in Seattle in 1910 and 1911 when he reported his occupation alternately as "broker: mines and mining" (1910 Census) and "Miner" (1911 Seattle directory). He may have shuttled between Seattle and Nevada, tending to his affairs in both places. By 1912 he was back in Nevada and in the news with another big find.¹¹⁵

If Katherine accompanied Ross to Nevada in 1911 or 1912, she soon returned to Seattle. In 1913 she was living alone in an apartment on North Howard Street and in the following three years she lived

there supporting herself as a teacher. At what level she was teaching (presumably primary) or how (or if) she obtained teaching credentials, I don't know. In 1917 she became manager of the apartment building in which she lived.

At some point, Ross and Katherine divorced. Katherine then established a relationship with an electrician, John R Jewett and they were married in Seattle on January 6, 1917. They were still living together in Seattle at census time in 1920 and they were still a couple when the 1928 Seattle city directory was compiled. However, they were not together in 1929 and Jewett soon had another wife. He and Katherine must have divorced in 1928. In the 1930 census Katherine was recorded as divorced and living with her widowed mother.^f

As far as Ross Thompson was concerned, Katherine was as good as dead. Thus, he reported his marital status to the 1920 United States census as "widowed."^g However, Katherine was alive and, in fact, outlived him. She was still living in Seattle in 1940¹¹⁶ and died there in 1954.¹¹⁷

Vancouver

Ross Thompson was still in Nevada in 1920, but what happened next is a mystery. His name disappeared from news reports on mining in Nevada. In the story about him in the Historical Edition of the *Rossland Miner* it was reported that he returned to Vancouver in April, 1925.¹¹⁸ However, an article about him in the *Cominco* magazine dated the return as 1929^h and his obituary in the *Province* noted that "he returned to B.C. about 20 years ago," which is to say in the early 1930s.¹¹⁹ The first record of him that I have found in the Vancouver City Directory is in 1930,^u when "Ross Thompson, miner" was living at 780 Dunsmuir Street, the address of the Angelus Hotel, which operated as a rooming house.¹²⁰ His name does not appear in the directory again until 1940 when "Ross Thompson, retired" was recorded at 1423 Howe Street (near False Creek). Had Thompson lived at the Angelus Hotel for the decade of the 1930s (perhaps since 1925) without being tabulated by the compilers of the city directory? It is possible that the compilers of the directory considered the Angelus to be a hotel and the occupants to be transients rather than residents and so did not record them. The *Historical Edition* of the *Miner* published in 1938 also tells us that Thompson "still finds the energy to go forth for weeks at a time into the hills prospecting,"¹²¹ although where he went and with what success is not noted. By contrast, in providing information for his death registration his close friend, Frank Woodside, stated that he had last worked as a miner in 1930.¹²² Perhaps his prospecting was more in the nature of a hobby. The available information on his years in Vancouver is so sketchy that in the story of Ross Thompson there are 20 or 25 lost years.

^f I have been unable to find a record of any of these divorces. Official records of divorces in Washington State are fragmented and reports of proceedings in divorce courts published in Seattle newspapers are incomplete.

^g [United States, 1920a, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920 (Spragg Precint, Mason Town, Arizona)]. Curiously, when he provided personal information about Thompson for his death registration, his friend (and ex-Rosslander) Frank Woodside reported that at the time of his death Ross was still married and that his wife was still alive (but he did not know Katherine's maiden name). [British Columbia, 1951a, Registration of Death: Ross Thompson (March 19, 1951)]

^h [Cominco, 1946, Ross Thompson Comes Home Again] I am grateful to Greg Nesteroff for drawing this article to my attention.

^u There was another Ross Thompson in the Vancouver City Directory, living on Nelson Street. He was an engineer, employed by the City of Vancouver as an inspector. He died in 1954.

Thompson's final address, 1423 Howe Street, was not in a salubrious neighbourhood. He lived in a two-story rooming house, one of a group of three such buildings, in the midst of a commercial district between Beach and Pacific Avenues, in the shadow of the Granville Street bridge and overlooking the industrialized banks of False Creek. On both sides of the small housing complex were vacant lots and beyond these and across the street were businesses, the nature of which changed occasionally, but in the 1940s included a large gas station and garage, a neon light fabricator, an automobile paint shop, a tire and battery distributor, a large laundry and a fuel wood yard. This was far from skid row, but it must have been relatively low cost housing and unlike the Angelus Hotel it was not close to downtown Vancouver. Thompson was still living at this address when he died.¹²³ That he was living in very tight financial circumstances is confirmed by Warren Crowe's visit with him in Vancouver in 1946 as recorded in Robert Budd's book, *Echoes of British Columbia*.^v Crowe reports that after spending some time talking to Thompson, he invited him to dinner at a restaurant of his choice, but was brusquely refused. Thompson's close friend, Frank Woodside, later explained that Thompson was embarrassed because he was not in a position to reciprocate. That Thompson was far from a wealthy man in his final years is further suggested by the fact that he did not leave a will and no Letter of Administration was issued by the Vancouver court for his estate as would be required for someone to deal with his assets if he died intestate. Apparently he did not have any significant assets to be disposed of.

Ross Thompson died in Vancouver on March 19, 1951, from pneumonia. He was just over 85 years old.

Who Was Ross Thompson?

How does one summarily characterize Ross Thompson?

He was an adventurous man with boundless energy, willing to take risks while relentlessly seeking a fortune deeply buried in the ground. He was a friendly, kind person, generous to a fault, who made some wise investment decisions, twice accumulating a sizable fortune, but who also made some unfortunate ones, as he dissipated both fortunes. He believed in the fantasy that induced the speculative frenzy in the Kootenay-Boundary area in the late 1890s and behaved accordingly. He was, in a sense, correct about the potential of the Oro Denero, the mine that was his undoing, but he made unfortunate choices while managing the venture and lost much of what remained of his personal fortune. Although the evidence is less compelling because it is so incomplete, he seems to have done something similar in Nevada.

Ross Thompson is often said to have been "the father of Rossland." In a sense that is true, but it is also a considerable exaggeration. Many others played far more important roles in the establishment and early development of the community, the city and its institutions. Nonetheless, quite apart from platting

^v [Crowe, 2014, *I Can Go To My Grave A Contented Man*]. The book is a collection of transcripts of interviews with British Columbia old timers, conducted between 1959 and 1966 by Imbert Orchard. A recording of the Crowe interview is in the British Columbia Archives and is on a compact disk included in the book. Warren Crowe came to Rossland as a child in 1899 and, apart from service in World War I (when he was seriously wounded), lived here all his life. He organized Ross Thompson's visit to Rossland in 1947. I am grateful to Greg Nesteroff of Nelson for drawing this book to my attention.

the townsite, he was very important to the city. He took a leading role in the ousting of the first mayor, served one term as an alderman, was active in several institutions including acting as head of a baseball league, was involved in the backrooms of Conservative politics and served in various capacities in mining organizations. He invested in many mining ventures, many of them elsewhere than Rossland, but on balance he did not make a notable contribution to the early development of mining in the immediate area. His contribution to the history of the Rossland was different. By platting the townsite, he provided a framework for the spatial development of the city (and made a lot of money doing so). His 160-acre townsite was only a fraction of the 1,920 acres included in the city when it was incorporated, but the pattern of streets and avenues laid out in the old townsite was extended to the new additions, with some adaptations as concessions to geography. However, apart from Columbia Avenue, the commercial heart of the city, I would argue that the Thompson townsite was not the most important part of the city as it developed over the years. The area above Columbia Avenue soon became the dominant residential area. Although what Thompson did was very important to the orderly development of the city, some type of urban complex would have emerged from the original mining camp if he had not settled in the Trail Creek Mining Camp.

Beyond all of this, whatever his strengths and his flaws, Ross Thompson gave his name to the city and was Rossland's first, perhaps its foremost and certainly its most celebrated celebrity. As such, he contributed immensely to the legends of Rossland.

Addendum: Ross Thompson's Investments

I do not have a complete list of Ross Thompson's investments, but this is a list of those that I noticed in news stories. In most cases, I don't know how much he invested or how long he held each investment.

American Eagle Gold Mining Co. 1897.¹²⁴ Thompson was a director.

Arlington Mine, Slocan. 1898.¹²⁵ Thompson acquired a mortgage.

Boundary Creek Mining and Milling Co. Greenwood. Thompson was part owner.

Delcola Mine. Monte Christo Mountain, Rossland. 1896.¹²⁶ Thompson was treasurer.

Denero Mines Limited. See above, p. 5

Eureka Consolidated Mining Company. 1895. Incorporated in Washington State, but also had properties in Rossland, including the Thomson on the western side of Red Mountain¹²⁷ and the Colonna and Silverine on Monte Christo Mountain. Thompson was a founding director, treasurer and manager.¹²⁸

Eureka North Star Mining Company. Washington State. 1898.¹²⁹ Thompson was a director. Had properties at Republic.

Evening-Eureka Group. Four claims on Red Mountain. Bonded to the Le Roi 2 company in 1904.¹³⁰

Fisher Maiden Mining Company. Slocan (1896).¹³¹ Thompson was one of the incorporators.

Great Western. One of the major properties in Rossland. Thompson's holding was large enough that his presence was noted at the shareholders meeting when the mine was sold to the British America Company.¹³²

Homestake Mines Ltd. 1898.¹³³ Thompson was a director.

Kettle River Mines Limited. 1900. Thompson was president.¹³⁴

King Mining Company Limited. See above, p. 5

Kingston Group of claims in the Lardeau (Beatrice, Mohawk, Nettie L. and others). 1899. Thompson was part owner.¹³⁵

Okanagan Free Gold Mines Ltd. 1898.¹³⁶ Thompson was vice President.

Old Flag mining claim. Rossland. Acquired in October, 1898, at Sheriff's sale for \$500.

Royal Five Gold Mining Co. 1896.¹³⁷ 5 claims between Robson and the Lower Arrow Lake.

Slocan Silver Lead Syndicate. 1897. Thompson was a director.¹³⁸

Twins mining claim, near Grand Forks. 1898

Undine mining claim, Grand Forks. Certificate of work in October, 1898.

Zala Consolidated Ltd.¹³⁹ Two claims near Republic, Washington. Thompson was president.

Non-Mining Properties

360 acres of crown land at Christina Lake. Down payment made in November, 1898, but the purchase was not completed.

Clifton Hotel. Two-thirds interest in three lots at the corner of Columbia and Spokane Street on which the Clifton Hotel was located.¹⁴⁰ Acquired in 1897. He was said to have built the hotel.

Denoro Townsite, Summit Mining Camp.

Reddin-Jackson Co, Ltd.¹⁴¹ Mining brokers. Thompson was vice-president.

Rosslund Water and Light Company. 1895. Thompson was a part owner

Standard Publish Co.¹⁴² Thompson was part owner.

REFERENCES

- Adams (1898a). Mining Briefs. *Adams County News* (November 30, 1898). Ritzville, Washington *Chronicling America*.
- Ancestry.com. "California Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959. City of Puebla, 5 Feb 1905." Retrieved December 12, 2015, 2014.
- Ancestry.com. "Quebec Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection) 1621-1968: Marriage, Waldemar Wallach and Jessie Louise Grant. October 19, 1893."
- Boundary Times (1898c). King Mining Company *Boundary Creek Times* (September 17, 1898). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1898d). Bank of Montreal *Boundary Creek Times* (August 20, 1898). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899a). Oro Denoro Mine. *Boundary Creek Times* (September 16, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899e). Rossland Mining Man *Boundary Creek Times* (June 10, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899f). Waldemar Wallach & Co. (Advert.) *Boundary Creek Times* (February 22, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899g). A Flurry in Stocks. *Boundary Creek Times* (February 25, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899h). Mining Shares *Boundary Creek Times* (January 21, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1899i). "Mr. Wallach has sold" *Boundary Creek Times* (March 11, 1899). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1902a). Denoro Mines Ltd., Formed. *Boundary Creek Times* (December 26, 1902). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1903b). Work on Oro Denoro. *Boundary Creek Times* (April 10, 1903). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1903c). The Denoro Mines. *Boundary Creek Times* (June 26, 1903). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1903d). Smith Curtis, M.P.P. *Boundary Creek Times* (June 26, 1903). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1903e). "R. H. Anderson, superintendent" *Boundary Creek Times* (June 12, 1903). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1904a). Wise and Otherwise. *Boundary Creek Times* (September 16, 1904). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1904b). Bought the Output. *Boundary Creek Times* (January 29, 1904). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1904c). The Oro Denoro. *Boundary Creek Times* (April 1, 1904). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1905a). Our Mines. *Boundary Creek Times* (February 3, 1905). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1906c). At the Emma Mine. *Boundary Creek Times* (February 23, 1906). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1906d). Deal by the B. C. Copper. *Boundary Creek Times* (March 31, 1906). Greenwood.
- Boundary Times (1909a). A Second Fortune. *Boundary Creek Times* (December 10, 1909). Greenwood.
- Brandon (1891a). The Portage Election. *Brandon Mail* (April 2, 1891). Brandon, Manitoba, Peel Prairies Provinces
- British Columbia (1897j). Marriage Registration: Ross Thompson (August 24, 1897) British Columbia Archives Microfilm reel B11386; Reg. Number 1897-09-165121.
- British Columbia (1949a). Registration of Death: Smith Curtis (August 28, 1949) R. N.-.-. BC Archives. Victoria.
- British Columbia (1951a). Registration of Death: Ross Thompson (March 19, 1951) R. N.-.-. BC Archives. Victoria.
- British Columbia (2015a). Minfile: Oro Denoro (082ES ED63). M. a. N. G. BC Ministry of Energy. Victoria.
- Canada. (1871b). "Census of Canada, 1871, Arran, North Bruce District, Ontario."
- Canada. (1881c). "Census of Canada, 1881, Ottawa, Ontario (Rool C_13229; Page: 16; Family No: 81)." Retrieved December 24, 2015.
- Canada. (1881f). "Census of Canada, 1881, Halifax City, Nova Scotia (Florence Richardson)." Retrieved March 30, 2016.
- Canada. (1901a). "Census of Canada, 1901, Rossland, British Columbia." Retrieved March 25, 2013, 2013.
- Canada. (1901d). "Census of Canada, 1901, Montreal, Quebec".
- Cascade Record (1898a). Ross Thompson's Townsite. *Cascade Record* (December 3, 1898). Cascade, B C
- Cascade Record (1899a). Mines and Mining *Cascade Record* (June 3, 1899). Cascade, B C
- Cascade Record (1899b). Townsite Restaked. *Cascade Record* (January 14, 1899). Cascade, B C
- Cascade Record (1899d). Boundary Mines *Cascade Record* (September 23, 1899). Cascade, B C
- Cascade Record (1899e). Mines and Mining *Cascade Record* (July 29, 1899). Cascade, B C
- Cascade Record (1900a). General Mining News. *Cascade Record* (January 27, 1900). Cascade, B C
- Colfax Gazette (1902a). British Columbia Colfax *Gazette* (July 25, 1902). Colfax, , *Chronicling America*
- Colonist (1893f). News of the Province: Sayward. *Victoria Colonist* (August 22, 1893). Victoria
- Colonist (1896e). Midway *Victoria Colonist* (June 28, 1896). Victoria
- Colonist (1897f). News of the Province: Rossland *Rossland Miner* (September 3, 1897). Rossland
- Colonist (1904a). A Notorious "Staker". *Victoria Colonist* (October 15, 1904). Victoria
- Colonist (1905ab). Work at Rossland. *Victoria Colonist* (March 8, 1905). Victoria
- Cominco (1946). Ross Thompson Comes Home Again. *Cominco* (November, 1946). Trail, British Columbia
- Crowe, W. (2014). I Can Go To My Grave A Contented Man *Echoes of British Columbia: Voices From The Frontier* R. Budd. Madiera Park, B.C., Harbour Books.
- Edinburgh (1889). *Alphabetical List of Graduates of the University of Edinburgh From 1859 to 1888*. Edinburgh University of Edinburgh (James Thin)
- Exchange News (1899a). News of the Mines. *The Exchange News and Commercial Advertiser* (November 9, 1899). Montreal, Early Canadiana Online.
- G F Miner (1899). Notice *Grand Forks Miner*. G Rand Forks, B C
- Gazette (1897c). "Memorandum of Association of "The King Mining Company, Limited Liability" " *British Columbia Gazette* (February 25, 1897, p. 763).
- Globe (1896d). General City News. *Globe* (November 3, 1896). Toronto
- Globe (1898d). Provincial Synod. *Globe* (September 15, 1898). Toronto
- Globe (1903a). On the Banks of the Kettle *Globe* (September 26, 1903). Toronto
- Grand Forks Miner (1898a). Rossland Men to Operate at Republic. *Grand Forks Miner*. Grand Forks

Grand Forks Miner (1898b). Start a Bank Grand Forks Miner (August 20, 1898). Grand Forks
 Greenwood Miner (1899a). C.P.R. President Greenwood Miner (October 27, 1899). Greenwood, UBC Open Library.
 Greenwood Times (1900a). The Mining Summary. Greenwood Weekly Times (April 14, 1900). Greenwood.
 Greenwood Times (1900b). Latest News of the Mines Greenwood Weekly Times (March 31, 1900). Greenwood.
 Greenwood Times (1900c). Mining Items Concentrated. Greenwood Weekly Times (May 19, 1900). Greenwood.
 Greenwood Times (1900d). City Gleanings Greenwood Weekly Times (November 7, 1900). Greenwood.
 Greenwood Times (1901a). The Mines: Summit Camp. Greenwood Weekly Times (May 16, 1901). Greenwood.
 Henderson (1900b). Henderson's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies.
 Vancouver Henderson Publishing Company
 Kingsmill, H. (1897). First History of Rossland, B.C. Rossland Stunden & Perine.
 Ledge (1910a). Rossland's Name. The Ledge (February 17, 1910). Greenwood.
 Lethbridge Herald (1935a). What's in the Name of Canadian Cities and Towns: Rossland, British Columbia. The Lethbridge Herald (May 28, 1935). Lethbridge, Alberta.
 Logansport Tribune (1955). In The Past. • Logansport Pharos Tribune (March 10, 1955). Logansport, Indiana Find My Past.
 Miner (1895r). Rossland, Past And Present. Rossland Miner (March 2, 1895). Rossland
 Miner (1895s). Light and Water. Rossland Miner (November 9, 1895). Rossland
 Miner (1900b). Personal Rossland Miner (August 12, 1900). Rossland
 Miner (1904c). Old Lanmark Gone. Rossland Miner (December 13, 1904). Rossland
 Miner (1938b). Townsite of Rossland Was Founded by Ross Thompson in 1892 - Built First House. Rossland Miner, Historical Edition (October 11, 1938) Rossland
 Miner (1946a). Oldtimers and Friends Honor Ross Thompson At Dinner Thursday. Rossland Miner (September 5, 1946). Rossland
 Mining Record (1899b). "An occurrence worth noting ..." British Columbia Mining Record (December, 1899) UBC Library, Early Canadiana Online.
 Mining Record (1904a). Rossland. British Columbia Mining Record (October 1904) Victoria and Vancouver.
 Mining Review (1898a). Mining Briefs Mining Review (January 8, 1898).
 Mining Review (1899b). Blood and Thunder. Mining Review (August 26, 1899).
 Montreal Gazette (1899a). The Boundary Country. Montreal Gazette (October 12, 1899). Montreal
 Nelson Miner (1895t). The Week's Mining News: Rossland. Miner (January 12, 1895). Nelson
 Nelson Miner (1896d). An Association Is Formed. Miner (March 21, 1896). Nelson
 Nelson Miner (1897e). Baseball League. Miner (April 17, 1897). Nelson
 Nelson Miner (1897f). New Mining Companies Miner (April 17, 1897). Nelson
 Nelson Miner (1898a). A Popular Banker Nelson Daily News (November 16, 1898). Nelson.
 Nelson Miner (1899a). Mines of the Kootenay Nelson Daily News (February 27, 1899). Nelson.
 Nelson Miner (1901a). Smith Curtis Goes East. Nelson Daily News (December 24, 1901). Nelson.
 Nelson News (1898a). Mining News. Nelson Daily News (March 26, 1898). Nelson.
 Nelson News (1946a). Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland Nelson Daily News (August 31, 1946). Nelson.
 Nesteroff, G. (2014a). Eholt was a busy railway point. Nelson Star (March 2, 2014). Nelson, BC.
 Nesteroff, G. (2014b). The Kootenay Washington League Route 3 (Fall, 2014).
 Nevada Journal (1907a). Rich Gold-Silver Lodes Are Opened Nevada State Journal (March 8, 1907). Reno, Nevada, Newspapers Archive.
 Nevada Journal (1912a). New Mine Is Making Shipments Nevada State Journal (September 16, 1912). Reno, Nevada, Newspapers Archive.
 O'Farrell, P. A. (1896a). Mining at the North. Morning Oregonian (April 6, 1896). Portland, Oregon, Nineteenth Century U S Newspapers.
 O'Farrell, R. A. (1900a). Many Prizes to be Drawn. Helena Independent (June 15, 1900). Helena, Montana.
 Ottawa Journal (1897). Slocan Silver Lead Syndicate (advert.) Ottawa Journal (October 25, 1897). Ottawa, Newspapers.com.
 Pioneer (1900a). Compressor for Oro Denoro. Pioneer (March 17, 1900). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903c). Boundary Mining Notes. Pioneer (September 19, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903d). Boundary Mining Notes. Pioneer (January 10, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903e). Has 100,000 Tons Ready Pioneer (July 4, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903f). Smith Curtis Goes East Pioneer (March 21, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903g). Boundary Mining Notes. Pioneer (April 11, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903h). Boundary Mining Notes. Pioneer (May 9, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903i). Many Men Are Employed. Pioneer (May 15, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903j). Boundary Mining Notes. Pioneer (June 27, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1903k). Last Week (advert.) Pioneer (September 19, 1903). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1904a). New Oro Denoro Officers. Pioneer (September 24, 1904). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1904b). Goes Through Oro Denoro Pioneer (July 23, 1904). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1904c). Latest Mining Stock Quotations Pioneer (January 9, 1904). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1904d). Boundary Mining Notes Pioneer (August 27, 1904). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1906c). Sale of the Oro Denoro Pioneer Phoenix (July 14, 1906).
 Pioneer (1907a). Provincial Pioneer (August 10, 1907). Phoenix.
 Pioneer (1908b). Boundary Side Lights. Pioneer (May 16, 1908). Phoenix
 Pioneer (1908c). Will Retrieve Ill Luck. Pioneer (September 26, 1908). Phoenix
 Post Intelligencer (1896a). Mines and Mining. Seattle Post Intelligencer (October 16, 1896) Seattle.
 Post Intelligencer (1897a). In the Big New Camp. Seattle Post Intelligencer. Seattle.
 Post Intelligencer (1900a). Tips About Mining Men Seattle Post Intelligencer (February 2, 1900). Seattle.
 Post Intelligencer (1900b). In the North-West Camos Seattle Post Intelligencer (January 4, 1900). Seattle.
 Post Intelligencer (1900c). Good Returns of Zella M. . Seattle Post Intelligencer (September 4, 1900). Seattle.

Province (1938a). Pioneer Notices Many Differences. Vancouver Daily Province (September 2, 1938). Vancouver Province (1951a). Rossland Pioneer Dies Here

Vancouver Daily Province (March 20, 1951). Vancouver Record (1897x). Rossland Record (April 19, 1897). Rossland

Revelstoke Herald (1898a). Halcyon Hot Springs Arrivals Revelstoke Herald (October 19, 1898). Revelstoke

Seattle Times (1897a). Ross Thompson in Toronto. Seattle Times (January 1, 1897). Seattle.

Spokane Chronicle (1893b). Shooting at the Le Roi. Spokane Chronicle (July 21, 1893). Spokane.

Spokesman Review (1898a). Boundary Creek Claims. Spokesman Review (August 18, 1898). Spokane.

Toronto Mail (1899a). Fairview Stock Again Advancing. Mail and Empire (November 10, 1899).

Trail Times (1947a). Rossland's 50 Councils Listed -- 1897 to 1947. Trail Daily Times. Trail, B.C.

Tribune (1903b). A Nevada Newspaper. Tribune (January 10, 1903). Nelson.

Trimble, R. (1987). The Thompsons: The Family of Gaddis and Mary Ann Thompson. Claresholm, Alberta Rae Trimble

United States (1910a). Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 (Seattle, King County, Washington), Ancestry.com.

United States (1910b). Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 (South Bend, Indiana), Ancestry.com.

United States (1920a). Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920 (Spragg Precinct, Mason Town, Arizona), Ancestry.com.

United States (1940b). Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940 (Seattle City, King County, Washington).

Washington (1954a). King County Death Records: Katherine Jewett D. A. Washington State Archives.

Weekly Republican (1911). Wallach-Protzman. The Weekly Republican. Plymouth, Indiana, Library of Congress, Chronicling America

wfp (1882a). Portage La Prairie Winnipeg Free Press (December 9, 1882). Winnipeg, NewspaperArchive.

wfp (1894a). Commercial and Shipping Paper. Winnipeg Free Press (April 20, 1894). Winnipeg.

wfp (1900a). Summit Mining Camp, with Grand Forks as the Pivot. Winnipeg Free Press (May 19, 1900). Winnipeg.

World (1890b). Civic Legislature Vancouver Daily World (January 28, 1890). Vancouver

World (1895h). New Mining Companies. Vancouver Daily World (May 7, 1895). Vancouver

World (1896b). Where Mines Yield Gold Vancouver Daily World (June 6, 1896). Vancouver

World (1896c). Mines and Mining Vancouver Daily World (November 28, 1896). Vancouver

World (1896d). Local Gossip. Vancouver Daily World (March 6, 1896). Vancouver

World (1898d). Rossland Conservatives. Vancouver Daily World (November 4, 1898). Vancouver

World (1899b). All Eyes Upon Lardeau. Vancouver Daily World (September 8, 1899). Vancouver

World (1900a). The Nelson Convention Vancouver Daily World (March 20, 1900). Vancouver

World (1903b). Denoro City. Vancouver Daily World (September 24, 1903). Vancouver

World (1903c). Denoro Mines. Vancouver Daily World (September 15, 1903). Vancouver

World (1916c). Angelus Hotel Loses Licence. Vancouver Daily World (February 25, 1916). Vancouver

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Canada, 1871b, Census of Canada, 1871, Arran, North Bruce District, Ontario
- ² Trimble, 1987, The Thompsons: The Family of Gaddis and Mary Ann Thompson, p. 235
- ³ Nelson News, 1946a, Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland
- ⁴ Seattle Times, 1897a, Ross Thompson in Toronto
- ⁵ Nelson News, 1946a, Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland
- ⁶ Trimble, 1987, The Thompsons: The Family of Gaddis and Mary Ann Thompson, p. 235
- ⁷ Nelson News, 1946a, Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Province, 1938a, Pioneer Notices Many Differences, Trimble, 1987, The Thompsons: The Family of Gaddis and Mary Ann Thompson, p. 235}
- ¹⁰ Post Intelligencer, 1897a, In the Big New Camp
- ¹¹ Kingsmill, 1897, First History of Rossland, B.C.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Nelson News, 1946a, Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland
- ¹⁴ Kingsmill, 1897, First History of Rossland, B.C, Seattle Times, 1897a, Ross Thompson in Toronto; O'Farrell, 1896a, Mining at the North
- ¹⁵ Miner, 1895r, Rossland, Past And Present; O'Farrell, 1900a, Many Prizes to be Drawn
- ¹⁶ Miner, 1904c, Old Lanmark Gone
- ¹⁷ Nelson News, 1946a, Rossland Townsite Founder Recalls Wanderings, Early Days Of Nelson And Rossland
- ¹⁸ Ledge, 1910a, Rossland's Name
- ¹⁹ Spokane Chronicle, 1893b, Shooting at the Le Roi
- ²⁰ Colonist, 1893f, News of the Province: Sayward
- ²¹ Spokane Chronicle, 1893b, Shooting at the Le Roi, Colonist, 1893f, News of the Province: Sayward
- ²² Trail Times, 1947a, Rossland's 50 Councils Listed -- 1897 to 1947
- ²³ World, 1898d, Rossland Conservatives, World, 1900a, The Nelson Convention
- ²⁴ Nelson Miner, 1896d, An Association Is Formed
- ²⁵ Miner, 1946a, Oldtimers and Friends Honor Ross Thompson At Dinner Thursday
- ²⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁷ Mining Review, 1899b, Blood and Thunder
- ²⁸ Miner, 1895s, Light and Water
- ²⁹ Nelson Miner, 1897e, Baseball League, Nesteroff, 2014b, The Kootenay Washington League

- ³⁰ Greenwood Miner, 1899a, C.P.R. President
³¹ Kingsmill, 1897, First History of Rosslund, B.C.
³² Ottawa Journal, 1897, Slocan Silver Lead Syndicate (advert.)
³³ World, 1899b, All Eyes Upon Lardeau
³⁴ Nelson News, 1898a, Mining News
³⁵ World, 1896b, Where Mines Yield Gold , Greenwood Times, 1901a, The Mines: Summit Camp, Nesteroff, 2014a, Eholt was a busy railway point
³⁶ Colonist, 1896e, Midway , Spokesman Review, 1898a, Boundary Creek Claims, Boundary Times, 1898c, King Mining Company
³⁷ Boundary Times, 1899e, Rosslund Mining Man
³⁸ Pioneer, 1903d, Boundary Mining Notes
³⁹ Pioneer, 1903c, Boundary Mining Notes
⁴⁰ Boundary Times, 1898c, King Mining Company
⁴¹ Colonist, 1896e, Midway
⁴² Gazette, 1897c, Memorandum of Association of "The King Mining Company, Limited Liability"
⁴³ Boundary Times, 1898c, King Mining Company
⁴⁴ Cascade Record, 1899a, Mines and Mining
⁴⁵ Boundary Times, 1898c, King Mining Company
⁴⁶ wfp, 1894a, Commercial and Shipping Paper
⁴⁷ Globe, 1896d, General City News
⁴⁸ Ibid.
⁴⁹ Nelson Miner, 1899a, Mines of the Kootenay , Boundary Times, 1899g, A Flurry in Stocks
⁵⁰ Boundary Times, 1899h, Mining Shares
⁵¹ Boundary Times, 1899g, A Flurry in Stocks
⁵² Boundary Times, 1899f, Waldemar Wallach & Co. (Advert.)
⁵³ Boundary Times, 1899i, "Mr. Wallach has sold"
⁵⁴ Boundary Times, 1899a, Oro Denoro Mine, Exchange News, 1899a, News of the Mines, Toronto Mail, 1899a, Fairview
Stock Again Advancing
⁵⁵ Cascade Record, 1899d, Boundary Mines , Cascade Record, 1899e, Mines and Mining
⁵⁶ Mining Record, 1899b, "An occurrence worth noting ...", Cascade Record, 1900a, General Mining News
⁵⁷ Greenwood Times, 1900a, The Mining Summary, Pioneer, 1900a, Compressor for Oro Denoro
⁵⁸ Revelstoke Herald, 1898a, Halcyon Hot Springs Arrivals
⁵⁹ Nelson Miner, 1898a, A Popular Banker
⁶⁰ Grand Forks Miner, 1898b, Start a Bank , Boundary Times, 1898d, Bank of Montreal
⁶¹ Greenwood Times, 1901a, The Mines: Summit Camp
⁶² Montreal Gazette, 1899a, The Boundary Country
⁶³ wfp, 1900a, Summit Mining Camp, with Grand Forks as the Pivot
⁶⁴ Ibid.
⁶⁵ Greenwood Times, 1900b, Latest News of the Mines
⁶⁶ Greenwood Times, 1900c, Mining Items Concentrated, Greenwood Times, 1900d, City Gleanings , Greenwood Times,
1901a, The Mines: Summit Camp
⁶⁷ Exchange News, 1899a, News of the Mines
⁶⁸ Miner, 1900b, Personal
⁶⁹ Canada, 1901d, Census of Canada, 1901, Montreal, Quebec
⁷⁰ United States, 1910b, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 (South Bend, Indiana)
⁷¹ Ibid.
⁷² Ancestry.com, Quebec Vital and Church Records (Drouin Collection) 1621-1968: Marriage, Waldemar Wallach and Jessie Louise Grant. October 19, 1893
⁷³ United States, 1910b, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 (South Bend, Indiana)
⁷⁴ Weekly Republican, 1911, Wallach-Protzman
⁷⁵ Logansport Tribune, 1955, In The Past
⁷⁶ Greenwood Times, 1901a, The Mines: Summit Camp, Boundary Times, 1902a, Denoro Mines Ltd., Formed
⁷⁷ Boundary Times, 1902a, Denoro Mines Ltd., Formed, Pioneer, 1903e, Has 100,000 Tons Ready
⁷⁸ Boundary Times, 1904a, Wise and Otherwise
⁷⁹ Ibid.
⁸⁰ Boundary Times, 1902a, Denoro Mines Ltd., Formed
⁸¹ Nelson Miner, 1901a, Smith Curtis Goes East
⁸² Pioneer, 1903f, Smith Curtis Goes East , Pioneer, 1903g, Boundary Mining Notes
⁸³ Boundary Times, 1903b, Work on Oro Denoro
⁸⁴ Boundary Times, 1903c, The Denoro Mines, Boundary Times, 1903d, Smith Curtis, M.P.P.
⁸⁵ Boundary Times, 1903c, The Denoro Mines, Boundary Times, 1903e, "R. H. Anderson, superintendent ...", Pioneer,
1903h, Boundary Mining Notes, Pioneer, 1903i, Many Men Are Employed
⁸⁶ Pioneer, 1903j, Boundary Mining Notes
⁸⁷ Globe, 1903a, On the Banks of the Kettle
⁸⁸ Boundary Times, 1904b, Bought the Output
⁸⁹ Boundary Times, 1904c, The Oro Denoro
⁹⁰ Pioneer, 1904b, Goes Through Oro Denoro
⁹¹ Pioneer, 1904a, New Oro Denoro Officers
⁹² Pioneer, 1903k, Last Week (advert.)

-
- ⁹³ World, 1903c, Denoro Mines
⁹⁴ Pioneer, 1904c, Latest Mining Stock Quotations
⁹⁵ Pioneer, 1904d, Boundary Mining Notes
⁹⁶ Pioneer, 1904a, New Oro Denoro Officers, Pioneer, 1906c, Sale of the Oro Denoro
⁹⁷ Boundary Times, 1906c, At the Emma Mine
⁹⁸ Boundary Times, 1906d, Deal by the B. C. Copper
⁹⁹ British Columbia, 2015a, Minfile: Oro Denoro (082ES ED63)
¹⁰⁰ Pioneer, 1908c, Will Retrieve Ill Luck, Boundary Times, 1909a, A Second Fortune, Trimble, 1987, The Thompsons: The Family of Gaddis and Mary Ann Thompson
¹⁰¹ Pioneer, 1907a, Provincial
¹⁰² Colfax Gazette, 1902a, British Columbia , Colonist, 1904a, A Notorious "Staker", Nevada Journal, 1907a, Rich Gold-Silver Lodes Are Opened
¹⁰³ Mining Record, 1904a, Rossland, Colonist, 1905ab, Work at Rossland
¹⁰⁴ Ancestry.com, California Passenger and Crew Lists, 1882-1959. City of Puebla, 5 Feb 1905
¹⁰⁵ Boundary Times, 1905a, Our Mines
¹⁰⁶ Tribune, 1903b, A Nevada Newspaper
¹⁰⁷ {Canadian Mining Review, 1905a #1072;Colonist, 1905a #1073
¹⁰⁸ {Nevada Journal, 1907a #1049;Nevada Journal, 1909a #1050;Moyie, 1907a #1059;Boundary Times, 1909a #1061;Salt Lake, 1909a #1194}
¹⁰⁹ United States, 1910a, Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910 (Seattle, King County, Washington)
¹¹⁰ Nevada Journal, 1912a, New Mine Is Making Shipments
¹¹¹ United States, 1920a, Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920 (Spragg Precint, Mason Town, Arizona)
¹¹² Colonist, 1897f, News of the Province: Rossland , British Columbia, 1897j, Marriage Registration: Ross Thompson (August 24, 1897)
¹¹³ Post Intelligencer, 1897a, In the Big New Camp
¹¹⁴ Ibid.
¹¹⁵ Nevada Journal, 1912a, New Mine Is Making Shipments
¹¹⁶ United States, 1940b, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940 (Seattle City, King County, Washington)
¹¹⁷ Washington, 1954a, King County Death Records: Katherine Jewett
¹¹⁸ Miner, 1938b, Townsite of Rossland Was Founded by Ross Thompson in 1892 - Built First House
¹¹⁹ Province, 1951a, Rossland Pioneer Dies Here
¹²⁰ World, 1916c, Angelus Hotel Loses Licence
¹²¹ Miner, 1938b, Townsite of Rossland Was Founded by Ross Thompson in 1892 - Built First House
¹²² British Columbia, 1951a, Regisration of Death: Ross Thompson (March 19, 1951)
¹²³ Ibid.
¹²⁴ Henderson, 1900b, Hendersons's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies
¹²⁵ Adams, 1898a, Mining Briefs
¹²⁶ Post Intelligencer, 1896a, Mines and Mining
¹²⁷ World, 1896b, Where Mines Yield Gold
¹²⁸ World, 1895h, New Mining Companies
¹²⁹ Grand Forks Miner, 1898a, Rossland Men to Operate at Republic
¹³⁰ Mining Record, 1904a, Rossland, Colonist, 1905ab, Work at Rossland
¹³¹ World, 1896c, Mines and Mining
¹³² Mining Review, 1898a, Mining Briefs
¹³³ Henderson, 1900b, Hendersons's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies
¹³⁴ Post Intelligencer, 1900b, In the North-West Camos
¹³⁵ World, 1899b, All Eyes Upon Lardeau
¹³⁶ Henderson, 1900b, Hendersons's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies
¹³⁷ Ibid.
¹³⁸ Ottawa Journal, 1897, Slocan Silver Lead Syndicate (advert.)
¹³⁹ Henderson, 1900b, Hendersons's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies, Post Intelligencer, 1900c, Good Returns of Zella M.
¹⁴⁰ Record, 1897x,
¹⁴¹ Henderson, 1900b, Hendersons's British Columbia Gazeteer and Directory for 1899-1900: Directory of Mining Companies
¹⁴² Ibid.