An aerial photograph of a city, likely Douglas, Arizona, showing a large university building with a prominent tower in the foreground. The city is densely packed with buildings and trees, and the overall tone is a warm, reddish-brown color.

Cochise College
Learning Resources Center
Douglas, Arizona 85607

**THE
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH

BISBEE, ARIZONA



A Publication of the Cochise County Historical and
Archaeological Society
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Douglas, Arizona 85607



Castle Rock

THE HISTORY OF BISBEE

By Earl Simmons

As the earth cooled in the ages-ago during the process of creation, gas, in its escape from within brought with it molten metal. This poured out into veins. In the process of erosion, ledges broke from the main lodes and were buried. This is what was discovered by early prospectors in Bisbee.

Bisbee was a rough, tough settlement in its early years.¹ Prospectors, saloon-keepers, tough hombres and gunslingers fought with Apaches to keep trouble stirring. Whiskey, or "bug juice," as it was called, was responsible for much disorder. Lynch laws sometimes prevailed.

The ore in "Mule Pass" was discovered by Jack Dunn, a soldier looking for water.² Not far from where Lts. Dunn and Rucker had pitched their tents he saw something shining. He investigated and found it to be silver. There they staked a claim and called it "The Rucker Claim" because Lt. Dunn had staked a claim in California. It was filed August 2, 1877.

The soldiers returned to Fort Bowie hoping to get an honorable discharge, but for two years the Apaches kept the soldiers so busy they could not return to work their claim in the canyon. One morning a ragged man stopped at the Fort asking for food and water. He said his name was George Warren and that he was a prospector. When Lts. Dunn and Rucker heard this they went to Warren and asked him if he would go into a certain canyon and work their claim. Warren gave them his word.

The next day Warren set off to the canyon with two burros, supplies, and a map of the claim, but when Warren reached Tombstone he sold all his supplies and got drunk. He not only told two men about the claim, but he showed them the map. The two men became partners with Warren and the three of them went to "Mule Pass." Warren did not work the "Rucker Claim," but staked fifteen claims of his own in the heart of the canyon where the richest ores were found.³

Jack Dunn, after his honorable discharge, came back to the canyon. When he entered the canyon he found nine men locating claims. He was shocked and disgusted with the man that was so dishonest.

1 Fireman, Bert M., ARIZONA PAGEANT, pg 147

2 Burgess, Opie Rundle, BISBEE NOT SO LONG AGO, pg 70

3 IBID, pg 71

Dunn sold the "Rucker Claim" for \$4,000.00 and returned to his old home in Connecticut, never once telling how he was cheated from his share of the fabulous wealth he had discovered in Bisbee Canyon.⁴

Bisbee was diminished in the summer of 1882 when typhoid fever hit Bisbee. They had a drought and the epidemic could not be stopped because there was no water for sewage or cleaning. Garbage had to be dumped in the gulches which provided a perfect breeding place for flies. There was no hospital in Bisbee at the time so the doctor ordered a mining tunnel to be cleared for a hospital.

Bisbee had a contract to keep so the men that were well had to work night and day which made them more susceptible to the fever. Finally one summer evening it started to rain. In just a few days the epidemic was over.

Bisbee almost became a ghost town in the years 1884-1885, when no new ore veins were discovered. Men were losing their jobs and people were leaving on every stagecoach. Only the faithful people remained. The mine had almost totally shut down. The foreman, Wes Howell, went to New York pleading for more time and money. Howell pleaded till he got the money. In the next few weeks things got worse. Then one day when he knew that the day was near for the camp to close, he ordered a few men to drill six holes seven feet apart and fill them with dynamite. After the blast Howell picked up a hand full of dirt, leaned against the side of the mountain and said, "We've struck it rich, boys." That night the little mining camp had the biggest celebration it had ever known.

In the year 1892 Phelps Dodge watched copper prices drop to below ten cents a pound. Realizing the situation Dr. Douglas went to Europe to study modern ways to smelt ore. By reducing slag loss, they increased the yield of copper. That savings alone amounted to several thousands of dollars each year.⁵

The new smelter had only one bad effect; its fumes spread discomfort through the canyon. Every flower and shrub in the canyon had died before something could be done to bring back some of Bisbee's sweet mountain air. The smelter then was moved to Douglas. In January of 1889, at the cost of four hundred thousand dollars, the railroad from the Bisbee mine to the Douglas smelter was completed.

In the year 1911 Oliver Brown was watching two boys play with a coaster car. This gave him the idea of having competition on the fourth of July. For the past sixty-five years this has been a Bisbee tradition.

4 IBID, pg 72

5 Cox, BISBEE, pg 54

In the early years of the 20th century, streets were paved, churches, schools, fire departments, and even newspapers were established. The first school in Bisbee was taught by Miss Clara J. Stillman in 1881. The school's first enrollment was only five pupils. There was no floor and no doors or windows. The teacher's desk was an old water barrel turned upside down.

Bisbee's first fire department, which was made up of a few volunteers depended on natural water supply and buckets until it was reorganized on October 1, 1894.⁶ W. B. Norton was Bisbee's first fire chief. In 1908 when the fire department had a cart and hose, a destructive fire swept the business section. Many homes were burned, others were blown up while trying to stop the spread of the fire. The fire was finally stopped at a large space cleared by dynamite. The estimated loss was five hundred thousand dollars.

The Bisbee Democrat, a weekly paper, edited by Frank Delbridge, was the first newspaper published in Bisbee.⁷ Its first issue appeared August 9, 1888. For lack of business the paper failed in six months.

Bisbee has come a long way since the 1860s and '70s. The first way of hauling ore was manpower, today it is sixty-five-ton trucks that do the job. Today Bisbee is a settled town of about 8,300 people.

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⁶ Cox, Annie M., HISTORY OF BISBEE 1877 to 1937, pg 123

⁷ IBID, pg 134



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF OLD BISBEE

From high atop "B" Hill, Bisbee presents an interesting panorama. From such an elevated viewpoint, the old town almost looks like it is on flat ground.

Running across the lower part of the picture is Brewery Gulch. Going from right to left, it is the lowest point, topographically speaking, in the entire photo. Near the left side of the picture, is its confluence with Tombstone Canyon.

The Mule Mountains form a beautiful, bowl-like setting for the century-old mining camp that was one of the major, all-time copper producers of the world. Located slightly more than a mile above sea level, Bisbee has one of the finest year-around climates in the world.

There was great concern when first the Lavender Pit mine closed in December 1974 and the underground mining halted the following June that Bisbee would become a ghost town. Interestingly, most of those fears came from outside, while the residents for the most part figured it would survive.

Now, five years later, the years of crisis and transition are behind. The town sagged for awhile after the mines closed—only natural when employment in the mines dropped from 1,700 to a little over 100. But the worst is over and the town is coming back. Population is higher than before and all economic indicators are on the plus side—so there's no doubt Bisbee will be around for a long time to come.

Many prominent buildings can be seen in the photo. On the left, the old Phelps Dodge Mercantile store and the post office with

the old high school—the only four-story school building in the United States with a ground level entrance for every floor!

Halfway between it and the bottom of the photo is old Central School. To the left and slightly below it are Covenant Presbyterian Church, Copper Queen Hotel and the YWCA.

Bisbee's quite an old town and, happily, we are able to say we are sure it is going to be around for a long time to come!



A QUIET DAY IN OLD BISBEE

Downtown Bisbee was a busy and crowded place when this picture of the Copper Queen Plaza was taken along about World War I. The demand and price for copper were good and the treasure-trove beneath the Mule Mountain was yielding a veritable flood of the red metal.

In the center one of the cars on the street car line that ran from the upper end of Tombstone Canyon down through Bisbee, Lowell and other residential areas to the lower end of Warren is seen negotiating the S curve from the end of Main Street around the Copper Queen Mercantile.

On the left is the end of the post office building, with the upstairs occupied by the Copper Queen Library, both located in the same structure to this day.

Beyond the street car is the marble front of The Bank of Bisbee, the pioneer banking business of the community. The marble is still there, but gone are the gold letters spelling out the name of the bank.

In later years, name of the business was changed to the Bank of Douglas, reflecting the interest of the Douglas family in the community. Dr. James Douglas was instrumental in bringing Phelps Dodge to Bisbee, where it got into the copper mining and processing business for the first time, and served many years as general manager of western operations. Still later, as the bank expanded into other areas of the state, its name was changed to The Arizona Bank, under which it currently operates.

On the right is the huge store of the Copper Queen Mercantile, with its wide porch that looked over the plaza. It was a time of change, with a team and wagon tied at one spot and an early-model touring car parked nearby.

Visible just to the right of and beyond the bank building is a pointed-roofed portion of the large home built by the mining company for Dr. Douglas. A larger home was built a short time later at the upper end of the Vista Park in Warren and used by the family for a number of years. Still later, the site of the Douglas home shown here was used for the Copper Queen Hospital.

Reaching into the sky above a corner of the mercantile is the spire of Covenant Presbyterian Church, still a landmark in Bisbee and one of the prettiest churches in this part of the country. It was constructed of a hard-fired red brick that still is in sound condition.

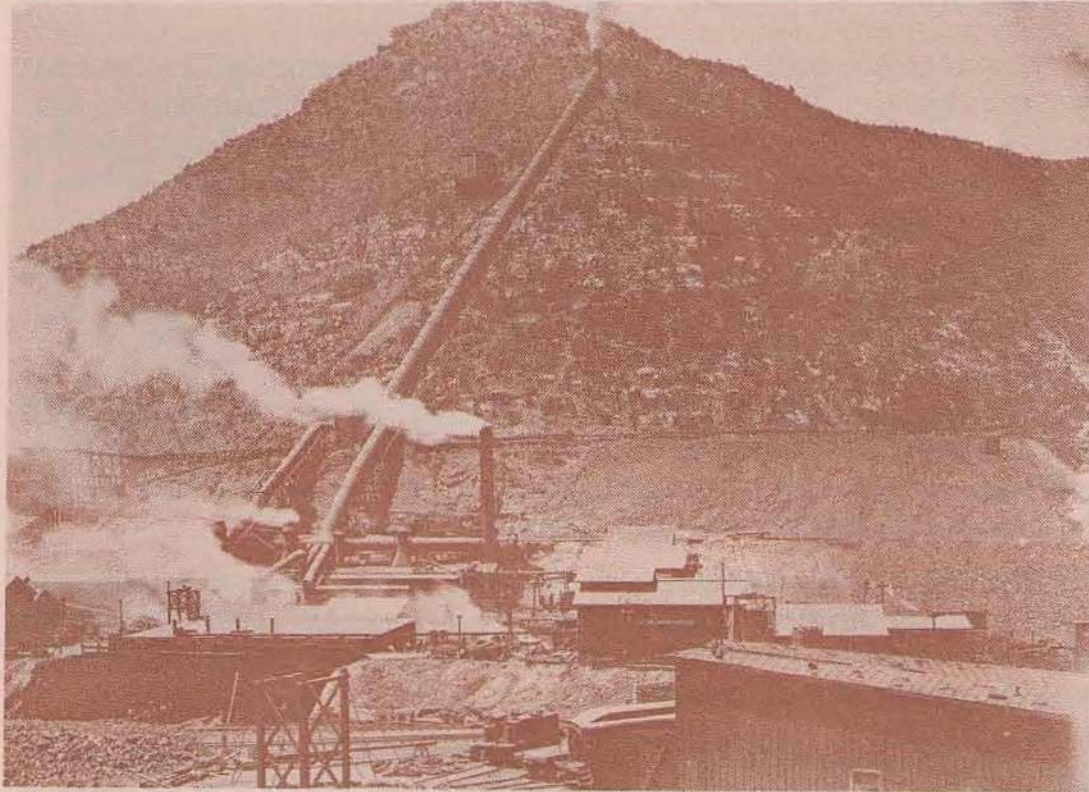
To the right of the church and behind the flagpole on the roof of the mercantile can be seen a portion of the roof of the world-famous Copper Queen Hotel.

Bisbee's population was on the decline at the time the picture was taken, not because of a reduction in mining activity, but due to the arrival of mechanization in the mines. Mining had always required a great deal of hand work, with shafts sunk and drifts driven with holes for explosives punched by hand-held drill steel and swinging hammers. Ore was dug by hand, shoveled into small cars and rolled to the shafts.

But times were changing and the machine age was dawning. Along came the pneumatic drill that punched the powder holes with great speed. Compressed air and electric motors were utilized to perform many tasks. As a result, fewer men were required to do the same amount of work. The mines in Bisbee kept on producing the same amount of ore, perhaps even more, but it took far fewer men to get the job done.

Mechanization of mining received even greater impetus during World War I when manpower simply was not available. The trend has continued over the years until mines today are highly mechanized, but the miners employed are paid high wages and enjoy more fringe benefits than ever before.

But at the time the picture was taken living was easy and quiet in the years before the first World War in the famed copper mining camp way off on the far western frontier. The copper was feeding the seemingly insatiable demands of the expanding electrical age. It was a great time, a peaceful era that was soon to disappear.



BISBEE SMELTER AND "LYING DOWN" SMOKESTACK

A rather unique feature of the old Copper Queen copper smelter in Bisbee was the "lying down" smokestack that ran up the slope of Bucky O'Neill Hill.

The stack was an unsuccessful effort to get a better draught for the furnaces of the smelter, located in the bottom of the narrow canyon. It did help to get some of the smoke out of the canyon, but from the standpoint of the reason it was built it was not a success.

In its early years the smelter itself worked fairly well in the canyon. But as the years passed the smelter was continuously expanded to increase production to meet ever increasing demand for copper by the electrical and industrial age. As the size and number of furnaces were increased, the problems grew in like measure.

Hidden behind the complex of piping in the smelter was the adit leading to the workings of the Copper Queen mine, one of the

richest copper producers the world has ever known. The smelter site is now the location of the building for the underground mine tour.

According to the notation on the margin of this picture, it was taken in 1896. By this time, the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining Co., the subsidiary through what is now known as Phelps Dodge Corp. operated, had already decided to build a newer and much larger smelter at another location.

The location of this smelter was simply too cramped to permit any meaningful expansion, to say nothing of the problem of sufficient draught for the furnaces. After considerable search and evaluation of a number of possible sites, the company picked a location nearly 25 miles to the east along the Mexican border.

Plenty of inexpensive land was available, the land for miles around was level, a tall brick stack would draw well and there was an abundance of groundwater close to the surface.

Thus came into being the town of Douglas, platted, subdivided and brought into being by another subsidiary of the company—and named in honor of the guiding light of the early years of the local mining operations—Dr. James Douglas.

On the western outskirts of the new community, the company built a large smelter incorporating the largest, latest and most efficient machinery to turn Bisbee's rich ores into millions of pounds of copper a month.

The company also built a railroad from Bisbee to Douglas and the smelter, providing fast, economical transportation for ore to the smelter and blister copper from the smelter to refineries and the waiting markets on the East Coast.

The new smelter was blown in 1903. As it went into production, the fires went out in the plant in Bisbee. Few tears were shed, for the acrid smoke had been a bothersome thing to live with in the narrow canyon. At Douglas, the smoke was carried high aloft and dissipated.

In the foreground in the picture can be seen the railroad roundhouse on the right and the turntable on the left where the small engines of the Arizona & Eastern could be turned around. In later years, the railroad's name was changed to El Paso & SouthWestern.

Over a period of years after it was closed, the old smelter was gradually torn down. In many instances different parts were dismantled to salvage steel and other materials for new construction projects.

Old timers have told us that the big pipe up the slope remained

for many years. A favorite sport of kids, when they could avoid the watchman, was to climb to the upper end, then slide down the inside on a piece of sheetmetal fashioned into a crude sled. It was a lot of fun, they said, but it was sure a noisy ride.

The upper end of the pipe and the short stack above it was built on a base fashioned from rocks cemented together. That base is still there today, enjoying a sense of importance each December when the strings of colored lights mounted on a pipe frame that it supports are turned on and become Bisbee's Christmas tree floating high in the winter-time sky.



THUNDERSTORMS MESSED UP BREWERY GULCH

There was always one thing you could count on in old Bisbee years ago—when the summer thunderstorm came you were bound to get a hell of a mess at the foot of Brewery Gulch.

A mountain of rock and dirt, with all kinds of junk stirred in to give it flavor, invariably piled up at the spot above. Roaring down Brewery Gulch, the flood waters poured out onto the flat and relatively level area in the foreground.

Thunderstorms can be vicious and mighty wet in old Bisbee. When they pass over an area such as Bisbee it is not a bit unusual for them to drop from one to three inches of water in 30 minutes to an hour. In this mountainous country, that means the water will pour down a creek bed or two as the rainfall from several square miles comes piling down the limited number of outlets.

After the water went down, the city would put a crew of men to work with pick and shovel, cleaning up the mess and hauling it away. The floods were a bit of a bonanza to otherwise unemployed men, putting them on the city work force, providing them with an opportunity to make a few bucks. Some of the bigger boys in the community also would have an opportunity to earn some spending money.

Sometimes, just after the city had finished cleaning up the mess, here would come another storm and they would have to start all over again. Before the rainy season was over, the temporary employees would have earned enough to carry them through the winter.

Date of the picture is not known, but it is believed to have been taken between 1910 and 1915. The building that dominates the center of the photo is still standing today, although it was extensively rebuilt a few years ago. The lower floor was the Miner's Store, while upstairs there were offices for a firm selling mining machinery and a dentist's office. The space is still being used by dentists.

On the far left can be seen part of the Orpheum Theatre built in the center of the entrance to Brewery Gulch. Over the roof of the Miner's Store can be seen the clock tower of the Knights of Pythias lodge. The building still stands, but the clock has been inoperative for years.

The danger of such floods was reduced substantially in the depths of the Depression years of the 1930s when the C. C. C., better known as the Civilian Conservation Corps, built a series of small check dams up the canyon. These have helped a lot.

The good old days? That pile of rock doesn't look all that inviting, especially when it was remembered that was in the days before power shovels, front-end loaders, etc. and all the digging had to be done by hand.

This photo is one of a number of old Bisbee pictures brought to the Gazette last week by Ben Galuska of Phoenix, an old-time local resident who was in town for the reunion of graduates of Bisbee High School during the Roaring 20s. We are delighted by his generosity and will be printing many of them in the weeks ahead, sharing his generosity with our readers.



A FLOOD IN OLD BREWERY GULCH

About every time there was a cloudburst in old Bisbee, the waters could be counted upon to make a mess of Brewery Gulch.

The headwaters of the Gulch cover quite an area and all the drainage has to come through the narrow confines of the canyon just before it joins Tombstone Canyon. When there was a real cloudburst up the Gulch it didn't take but a few minutes until there was a raging torrent in the Gulch, sometimes of frightening proportions.

The auto in the foreground is certainly mired deep in mud and gravel deposited to a depth of several feet by the raging water. After it was extricated, it probably was overhauled and put back on the road. The old cars were pretty sturdy but I don't imagine they took kindly to such treatment.

In the far left background a group of men is gathered around another car stuck in the mud and debris, at just about the same spot where the Gulch presently empties into the underground drainage ditch.

In the center an old Model T Ford negotiates a cleared path over and through the debris, passing a row of wagons and light trucks parked near the old General Office building of the mining company.

In the background looms a massive wall of the warehouse of Phelps Dodge Mercantile, a building torn down many years ago. In the early days shipments of merchandise into Bisbee were slow and at times uncertain. So, the Merc always kept a large stock on hand to make sure it didn't run out—hence the large warehouse.

After one of those floods roared down Brewery Gulch, city crews would spend several days cleaning up and hauling away the muck. At times, big kids of the district could always earn some extra spending money by showing up at city hall at the right time.

Often, after the mess had been cleaned up here would come another storm and the whole thing had to be cleaned up again. Some of those kids, as well as several adults, would earn quite a bit of money before the summer was over.

We don't know the date the picture was taken, but we place it between 1910 and 1914. Judging by the beer sign on the right, it had to be no later than the summer of 1914. This because Arizona voted for prohibition in 1914, to be effective Jan. 1, 1915.

During the Depression of the 1930's, members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (C. C. C.) built a number of small dams in Brewery Gulch and the canyons feeding into it. Since then, the water they hold back is usually enough to greatly alleviate flooding in Brewery Gulch.

Floods in Brewery Gulch may not be what they used to be, but they can still give a bad time. Besides, one never knows when the next storm might be that super-duper that will raise all kinds of hell. Then it's best to head for the hills!



BREWERY GULCH ABOUT 1905

Old Brewery Gulch was once a beehive of activity.

We aren't sure about the date, but judging by some of the buildings we would guess the picture was pretty close to 1905.

At any rate, it was indeed a busy place, with many business establishments and a lot of people on the go all the time. The mines were working around the clock, the saloons never closed their doors and people were coming and going all the time. The mine shifts changed at different times, so there were always miners going to work or coming off shift.

The view is up the main part of the Gulch from near its confluence with Tombstone Canyon. The power pole and the steps in the right foreground mark the beginning of the wooden building shown from a side view in the Gazette several weeks ago.

Partially visible beyond is the sign for The Brewery Saloon. This was to be torn down in the near future and replaced by the three-story brick structure that still stands to this day. The Brewery, operated by old Joseph Muheim, Sr., was destined to become the finest watering hole between New Orleans and San Francisco, frequented by the prominent citizens and business leaders of the booming mining camp.

The second building on the left housed the meat market of E. A. Tovrea & Co. and was the foundation upon which was built one of the largest fortunes in the state, developed from interests in meat packing and retail and wholesale meat trade, cattle ranching, a packing plant and real estate.

E. A. Tovrea started this market in Brewery Gulch. As the camp expanded, he opened several other meat markets in town. Not satisfied with some of the meat he was getting, he built a packing plant on the outskirts of town, in an area that came to be known as Tovreaville. The site is presently occupied by the city pound and the county juvenile center.

Then Tovrea became dissatisfied with the quality of beef cattle he could buy, so it was only natural that he went into the ranching business. It wasn't long until he had several huge spreads operating in Cochise County, taking advantage of the thick and abundant grass.

About the time of World War I, he sold out here and moved to Phoenix and set up a cattle feeding operation and built a slaughterhouse. He did very well with it, too, but the best was still to come.

As the years rolled by, Phoenix grew and expanded—and the best way was to the east, right into the Tovrea holdings. His land eventually became solidly built with residences and commercial developments and he made money hand over fist from real estate.

In the area now known as Papago Park, he built a mansion on the side of a hill overlooking Phoenix and his holdings. It was a peculiar looking house and due to its fortress-like appearance quickly became known as the Tovrea Castle.

His widow lived there the rest of her life, but came to a tragic end. Advanced in years, she was set upon by burglars in her castle and so badly beaten she died a few days later in a hospital. This happened only several years ago.

His market on Brewery Gulch later became the Palace Market, a general grocery store. It operated until 1961. After being vacant for several years, it is now being used by the Brewery Gulch Gazette for part of its expanding printing facilities.

At one time, old-timers tell us, there were 47 saloons in Brewery Gulch. It began its decline when the state went dry Jan. 1, 1915.

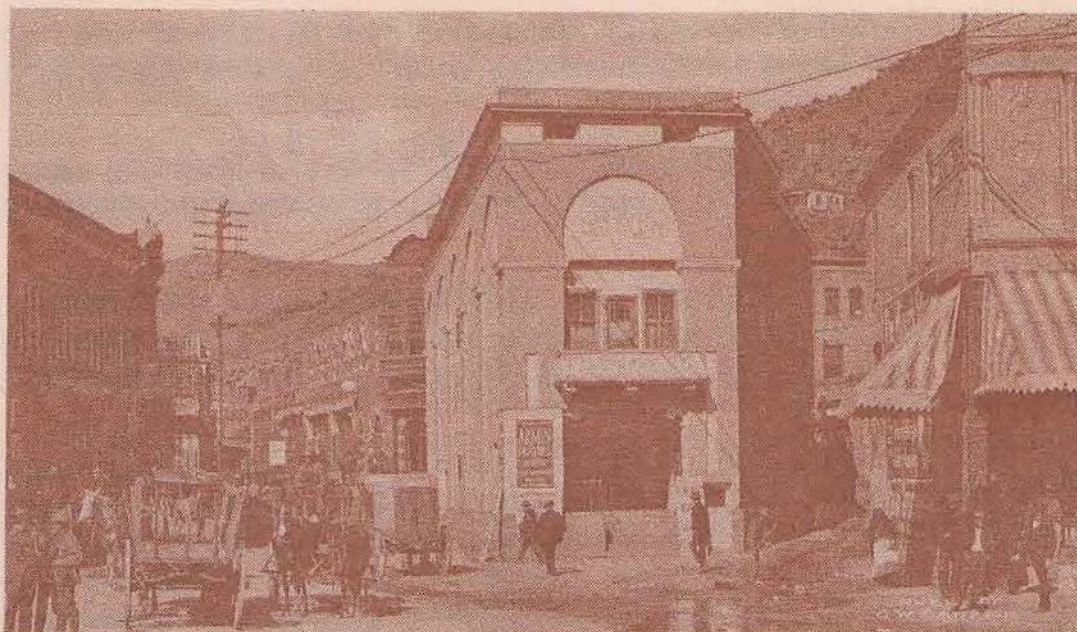
But that was only part of the story. Perhaps even more influential in the decline of the area were several other contributing factors:

1. Mechanization was coming to the mines. Many jobs that were formerly done by hand were done by machinery, principally the compressed air drill for sinking holes for explosives and compressed air and electrical motors for powering locomotives to move ore cars underground, to power slushers, etc. Mine production stayed up—but it didn't take so many men to do it.

2. Decline of the tramp miner. In the early days of the camp most of the men were single and floated from one job and one camp to another. Without families, they socialized in Brewery Gulch. But these were gradually replaced by family men—and Brewery Gulch was not their home.

3. Expansion of the town. When the Warren Townsite was opened and a streetcar system installed, many families moved down there.

The Gulch is still here—but it has seen lot better days.



IMPOSING VIEW OF THE GULCH

The entrance to old Brewery Gulch in its hey-day was quite imposing, especially for a mining town far off on the Southwestern frontier in a day noted for its flimsy frame buildings with their false fronts.

Prosperity was solid in Bisbee. The price of copper was good, the mines were booming and it seemed there was no end to the need for copper as the electrical age boomed and spread across the land.

Date of the picture is not known, but it is believed to have been about the time of World War I—perhaps a bit earlier. But it is certain it was taken sometime after 1909, for that was the year the Muheim Block was completed.

On the left was a horse and buggy belonging to some citizen of more than average means and position—probably a mining official for off to the left, just out of the picture, was the general office of the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining Co. That same building was given by Phelps Dodge to the city of Bisbee a year or two ago—with the understanding it would be made available to Bisbee Council on the Arts and Humanities for development into a civic center—which is being done.

Dominating the center of the view of the Gulch was the Orpheum Theater. It was the cultural and entertainment center of the copper camp, far removed from the likes of such facilities in the big city.

The traveling road shows, featuring the cultural leaders of the day, considered Bisbee a “must” stop. For a long time it was

the largest city between El Paso and San Francisco and the citizens were hungry for these ties with the outside world they once knew.

The Orpheum was the setting for all kinds of things that came along—including boxing matches, musical groups and performing theatrical road shows.

The building also served as the locale for community meetings. These were in the days before radio and tv and it provided much of the entertainment for the miners and their families, and they always turned out for them.

The Orpheum didn't last too long after the war. Along came the silent movies, the copper industry was depressed after the war and the population of the community dropped. During the 1920s the building was converted into a garage—an adjustment in keeping with the arrival of the automobile and its ever-expanding role of providing easy transportation. Today, the structure is used as a repair and storage shop for the equipment of the occupant and his enterprises.

Immediately behind the Orpheum is the Muheim Block, a building that housed The Brewery, a leading saloon of the community and an accommodation known to miners and mining men everywhere.

The saloon occupied the front spot on the main floor. But the building also served the needs of a variety of occupants. In the basement was a restaurant, one of the finest in the entire Southwest. On the same floor as the saloon were two store spaces, while upstairs were offices rented to lawyers, the justice of the peace, brokers for mining properties and all kinds of business endeavors.

The Brewery was a wonderful institution, enjoyed by local residents and the mining men and traveling salesmen who passed through this crossroads of the Southwest. It was the sort of thing that it was hoped would last forever, but it was not to be.

Its demise came from a totally unexpected source—prohibition. Arizona was one of the first states to go dry, sort of an orgiastic exercise in self-improvement. The end came on New Year's Eve of 1914, going out in a blaze of glory as citizens flocked to the dozens of saloons and whooped it up for the last time.

But the real drinkers did not reform—they just had to go at it in a different manner. They could buy a bottle from any one of a number of bootleggers to tide them over, but when they wanted to get down to serious drinking all they had to do was to cross the Mexican border, less than 10 miles away, where a whole new array of drinking emporiums awaited the gringo money.

The first building on the left was a bank. Beyond it were blocks of stores, meat markets, bakeries, etc., along with a generous collection of saloons.

In the right foreground were two of the many transfer wagons that gathered there all the time. The depot of the El Paso & Southwestern Railroad was less than 100 yards to the right of the camera and it was the transfer wagons that picked up the freight and moved it to its destination—along with the baggage of incoming passengers.

The building on the right with part of a sign showing was the Miners Store, featuring a line of general merchandise. Upstairs was an office for dentists, the purpose it continues to serve to this day.

Seen above the roof of the building is the clock tower of the Pythian Castle, serving a large lodge of the Knights of Pythias. The tower and building are still standing, although it has been many a year since the last meeting of the Knights was held there.

Old Brewery Gulch—it was quite a place, the likes of which has never been seen elsewhere and likely never will. She was one of a kind, helping to ease the hard work of wresting the treasure trove of copper from beneath the Mule Mountains.

(The picture is one of a number sent to us by James Evan Wild of Gardena, Calif. We thank him for them. And we will be using more of them from time to time.)



IT TAKES FUEL TO COOK THE BEANS

It has always taken energy to cook the beans, do the laundry and protect from the winter cold—and in the early days of Bisbee wood was the only practical, economic fuel.

When the town first began, Tombstone Canyon was thick with beautiful oak trees and plenty of firewood was easily available for the first few residents. But it soon disappeared under the growing pressure, with the need for wood for the smelter boilers and for timbers in the underground mines.

In a natural response for the need to match the growing demand, believers in the free enterprise system came forth. Many of them were experienced Mexican woodcutters from south of the nearby border. They scoured the mountains for miles around and then drove their patient, sure-footed burros across the deserts and mountains to Bisbee, hawking their wares from door to door.

Here the proprietor of one of Bisbee's many boarding houses—most likely a widow laboring to make a respected living for herself and her children—checks out a load of wood and dickers over the price, while the woodcutter, at the far left, extolls the high quality of his merchandise.

With the coming of the railroad in 1889, the firewood market began to sag. The mining company, which had built the railroad to

make large-scale development of the mines both possible and profitable, began bringing in coal by the trainload.

The copper smelter consumed huge quantities of firewood to create the high temperatures needed to smelt the ore. Literally hundreds of woodcutters, along with numerous large wagons and teams to pull them, were employed in an effort to keep the furnaces roaring.

The Mule Mountains were soon stripped of all wood that would readily burn. The woodcutters fanned out, moving largely to the Huachuca Mountains 30 miles to the west and the Chiricahua Mountains to the east. As the source moved further from the smelter, costs escalated.

Arrival of the railroad solved that problem, among many others, for coal could be hauled, at less cost, from mines hundreds of miles away. The coal burned hotter, thus making it easier to smelt the rich ore, and contained far more usable energy in a given quantity.

Coal also was a much better fuel for all other uses and it wasn't long until it was a stock item offered by a number of local merchants. Many thousands of tons a year were used for domestic heat, cooking and generating electricity.

Coal was in such demand and needed in such large quantities that Phelps Dodge Corp. acquired large coal deposits at Dawson in northern New Mexico, near Raton, and developed a large mining operation. A railroad more than 100 miles long was built to serve the mines. The company not only mined coal for its own extensive requirements, it also sold it to numerous customers, large and small, throughout Arizona, New Mexico and neighboring states.

It is interesting to note here, as an aside from our story, that eventually, after many years of profitable operation, the coal activities fell victim to the growing use of oil and natural gas—even better, cleaner and cheaper fuels. Eventually, the mines at Dawson were closed, the town abandoned and torn down, the tracks pulled up and the railroad abandoned.

But once again the situation is changing. Natural gas and oil are becoming in short supply, prices have skyrocketed and industrial operations—such as copper smelters—cannot project with any degree of certainty what the availability and cost of energy requirements will be a few years down the road.

Interestingly, Phelps Dodge, for one, has an ace in the hole. It retained ownership of its New Mexico coal properties, which still contain large deposits of good-grade coal. The time may come—perhaps not too far off—when it will once again be mining coal to fuel its smelters and other operations. The fuel used to be called

King Coal—it is entirely possible it may once again mount the throne of energy sources.

But to return to our story, it is interesting to note that arrival of the rails and the importation of coal threw hundreds of woodcutters and door-to-door merchandisers of the fuel out of business.

If the liberals in Congress today had been operating then there no doubt would have been special federal assistance programs drawn up and put into operation. There would have been price support payments to keep the woodcutters in business, homeowners would have been given financial incentives and special tax deductions to keep burning wood and government buyers would have moved in to buy large quantities of firewood to keep the woodcutters employed, with the wood stockpiled in anticipation of emergency needs should there suddenly be a shortage of coal.

After a time, the federal government would then have brought in hundreds of social workers and psychologists to counsel the woodcutters and ease them through the mental torments—social adjustments—created by the loss of the need for their skills, their loss of social standing in the community and the traumatic effects of not being able to support themselves and their families.

Special training centers would have been erected and filled with expensive equipment and instructors—all paid for with money extracted from taxpayers across the land—and lengthy training programs would have been set up to train these unfortunate woodcutters in new skills, so they could once again support their families, feel they were part of the mainstream of society and once again productive members of society.

Can't you see it all—the whole nine yards?

But the woodcutters of Bisbee had no need for all these imaginative things, the welfare payments, special assistance programs and food stamps of more recent years. Most of them rolled with the changing times—and went to work for the ice and fuel companies, delivering coal in the winter and ice in the summer—still serving many of their old customers and earning more money than they ever had before!



THE COPPER QUEEN STORE

By the year 1900, the Copper Queen Store, later to become known as Phelps Dodge Mercantile, had become quite an institution in downtown Bisbee.

This rare photo, taken shortly after the third addition had been completed, is a bit fuzzy, having been "lifted" from a collection of souvenir pictures of Bisbee in a booklet bearing a 1900 dateline from the press of the Arizona Graphic in Phoenix.

The original store, built and owned by a Mrs. Crossey, cannot be seen in this picture—because it is below ground level.

The original store was built in a low-lying area of the narrow canyon in the 1880s. The store was bought about 1890 by the Copper Queen Consolidated Mining Co., the subsidiary through which Phelps Dodge interests operated in Bisbee for many years, and became a "company store."

Contrary to the philosophy of many company stores, which was to gouge employees forced to shop in them, the Copper Queen Store was bought and operated by the mining company to assure its employees, and other residents, of quality merchandise at reasonable prices. It set the tone for the business community, resulting in unscrupulous merchants having to go elsewhere for the easy pickings they sought.

Shortly after acquiring the store, the mining company added a second story, levelled the area in front and along the right side,

seen in this photo. The second floor thus became the ground level floor, with the original level becoming a basement warehouse.

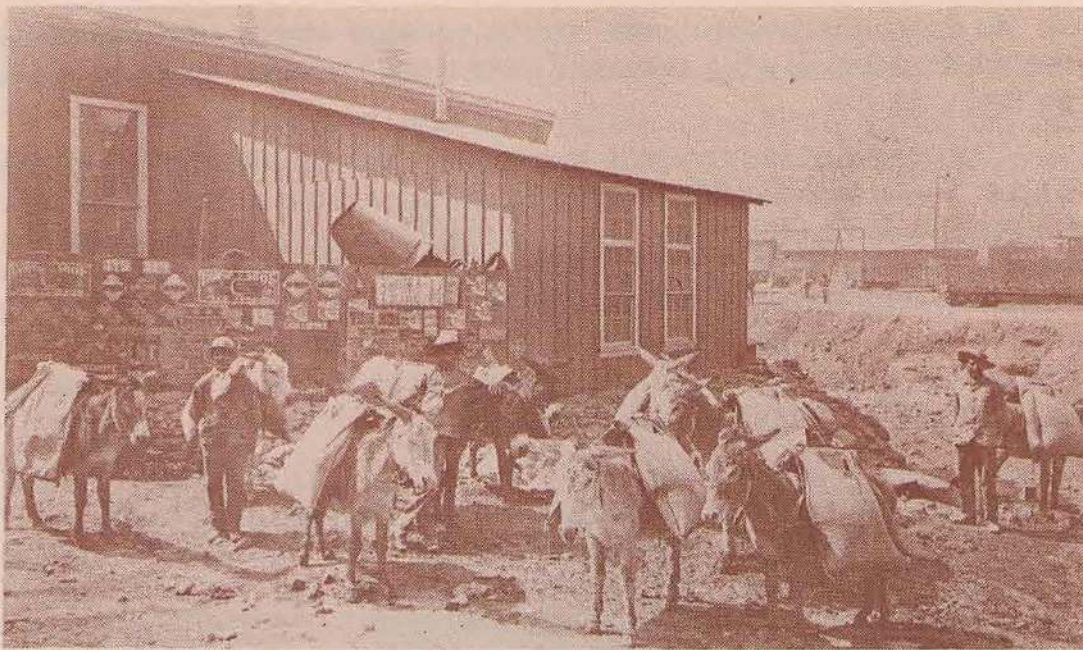
Shortly, a third floor, appearing here to be the second story, was added to keep up with the trade in the booming mining community. Soon, a second building, a two-story unit, was added to the left, with a walkway, visible in the photo, providing easy access between the two buildings.

Space was left open between the two buildings' lower levels because that was where freight cars of merchandise were brought in for unloading, to the first level of either building.

In the years after this picture was taken, a third floor was added to the building on the left, the railroad tracks between the two were removed, the space enclosed and a new facade added completely across the front of all the area so it appeared to be, and in effect was, one big store. As part of that project, the company also added a huge four-story warehouse behind the buildings. From this structure, the mercantile operated its wholesale grocery division that not only served its own stores but any others—and many did—that wished to trade with them at competitive prices.

In 1937, the big mercantile store burned to the ground, creating one of the most spectacular fires ever seen in these parts. The Bisbee store continued to operate in temporarily rented quarters until a new building was built in 1939 on the same location as the original store. The new store operated until the summer of 1976 when it was closed due to a number of factors.

The wholesale grocery division moved its operations and warehouses to a new location in the Bakerville section of Bisbee in the mid-1960s, a move necessitated by removal of the railroad tracks up Tombstone Canyon to Bisbee. The tracks were removed to make way for development of the new Lavender Pit mine.



OLD BISBEE'S WATER "SYSTEM"

Old-timers in Bisbee—as well as many of the residents who have come in recent years but have read up on their local history—will recognize that trains of burros, like the one above, were once a vital segment in the Bisbee water "system."

We aren't sure where this picture was taken but believe it was in Zacatecas Canyon, off the upper end of Brewery Gulch. But wherever it was it was where someone had taken over one of the many springs there used to be around here or who had dug a shallow well.

An iron tank had been installed to collect and store production from the spring or well, which usually was a small flow. Beyond the tank can be seen the living quarters of the owner or caretaker, constructed of canvas stretched over a wooden frame.

The canvas water bags on the burro contained about 25 gallons each and were kept evenly filled so as to balance the load. Water seeped through the canvas and the resulting evaporation kept the water cool.

The enterprising owners of the burros then hauled their loads of water into town, wending their way through the maze of streets, paths and byways to peddle their wares. Most had established routes and customers, having standing orders for deliveries in certain quantities on specified days.

If memory serves us correctly, the water sold for 25 cents a bag. This made expenses for water one of the major items of the household budget, back in the days when miners earned \$3 and \$4 a day.

In turn, the homeowner had to provide storage facilities for the water—usually big urns and pots near the door so as to make delivery easier.

The cost also led to some interesting patterns in the use of the water. We have heard it said that priorities were established. For example, a given quantity of water might be used for washing the dishes, then for some light laundry and then, perhaps, for a series of baths—beginning with the toddlers and working up the line to the old man. By the time it was poured out the back door (there were no sewers in those days) it was almost as thick and black as the soil upon which it was dumped.

It was the expense of water, we understand, that was one of the major reasons leading to establishment of bathing facilities at the mines where the miners could take a shower at the end of the shift and change into clean clothes. There was no shortage of water in the mines—in fact, it had to be pumped out all the time to keep them open—and it was a simple matter to provide some for the showers. We have heard that in the early days there was no provision for heating the water and it was an “invigorating” experience to take a shower—especially after working a long shift in a stope where temperatures were high.

As the town's population grew the need for a better water supply became increasingly acute—for many reasons.

The water from the close-in wells and springs became contaminated—thanks to the outdoor privies provided at every residence. The water soon became a definite health hazard that had to be corrected.

In addition, production from the wells and springs began to drop sharply and there were frequent times when no water was available. This was due to the fact that as the mines were pushed further and deeper into the earth the pumping to keep them dry was draining the supply from the wells and springs.

The solution proved to be difficult and expensive. There was plenty of water available from the mines—but there the great wherewithal for the camp—namely its rich copper ore—proved to be a curse. The water was so loaded with copper solutions it was unfit to drink. In fact, some of the water was so loaded with copper that anything made of iron—say a hammer—left in the running streams for a few days would become encrusted with a build-up of nearly pure metallic copper! (One of these can be seen in a display case at the First National Bank in Bisbee.)

The search for a dependable supply of domestic water eventually took the engineers all the way to Naco, hard by the Mexican border. There, close to Greenbush Draw, they sank wells that reached, at considerable depth, an underground deposit of water that is still adequate and dependable to this day.

BISBEE, Arizona

COPPER CAMP



Post Office Centennial

1880-1980

BISBEE, Arizona

COPPER CAMP

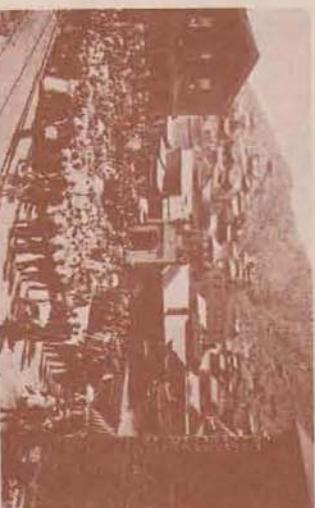


Post Office Centennial

1880-1980

BISBEE, Arizona

COPPER CAMP



Post Office Centennial

1880-1980



BISBEE
POST OFFICE
CENTENNIAL
1880 - 1980



BISBEE POST OFFICE HAS 100TH BIRTHDAY

When Bisbee celebrates its centennial this September 7th, the actual date it will be commemorating is the date of the establishment of a post office here.

To help celebrate the day, the U. S. Postal Service has approved a pictorial one-day-only postal cancellation and the Western Postal History Museum has designed three special cachet covers.

On August 2, 1877, the first mining claim was recorded in the Bisbee area. A city soon sprang up and people and money poured into the area.

As the town grew, a need for a post office was seen. On September 7, 1880, Horace C. Stillman was appointed the first postmaster of Bisbee. The post office was located in the heart of the downtown area.

Due to the terrain of the town, residents have never had the luxury of home delivery.

The old post office suffered the same fate as many other institutions in the city's early days. During the summer of 1908, for example, a flood swept thousands of tons of dirt and debris from the western hillside. The slide burst into the post office, burying fixtures and mail in many feet of mud and debris.

For Bisbee's centennial the Western Postal History Museum, located on North First Avenue in Tucson, has prepared a set of three copper-colored cacheted envelopes.

The Postal Service has approved a cancellation, depicting a miner's pick and shovel and bearing the words "Bisbee Post Office Centennial, 1880-1980."

The artwork for both the cancellation and the cachets was done by Don Bufkin, associate director of the Arizona Historical Society.

The commemorative envelopes will be on sale September 7th at the Mining and Historical Museum from 10 a. m. to 4 p. m. The Postal History Museum also will have an exhibition of both Territorial and Statehood covers and many old post cards with scenes of Bisbee.

The U. S. Postal Service will also be on hand with its Philatelic Sales Department to accommodate those wanting to buy the various commemorative stamps and other items available.

The covers that will be on sale that day each will include one of three cachets:

Main Street, the Pythian Castle and a general scene of the town around 1890. The set of three will sell for \$2 or they will be 75 cents each.

The cachet covers will be regular size envelopes and will be offered only in a limited edition.

The cancellation is available only that day at the museum. Anyone who wishes to have letters stamped with the centennial cancellation can mail the letters from the museum that day. Anyone who wishes the cancellation of an envelope other than the commemorative should bring in that envelope, stamped, on that day.