

Profile of Cypher's Mine

Camp Name: Cypher's Mine

Year: 1910

Theme: Mining Camp in the Cimarroncito District

Historical Significance of Camp Theme to American History:

The gold rushes and mining industry helped to populate the American West with Americans from the eastern states and immigrants from Europe and Latin America.

Characters.

Jennie/Johanna/Gina-John, Johan, Giovanni. His/her dad was an immigrant from Europe (Ireland, Germany and Italy were common in that period.) participated in the Klondike gold rush in 1897. He returned home empty-handed, but full of glorious stories. This inspired his child to head West and look for gold when s/he got older.

Mark/Marcos/Marcelo. Has been out West the longest. Has been working the Contention for 5 or 6 years. Could also be an immigrant -- Ireland, Mexico, Italy.

Lee/Li. Came to New Mexico from San Francisco after the great fire of 1906 -- Chinese, perhaps? Or another national origin if you can make a fit. Adapt the name if need be. .

Hank. Had been working in the Colorado mines and decided to head south for a change of scene and to avoid the conflicts between laborers and management over wages, hours, etc.

Mrs. Forsythe/Claire. Came west with her husband who was to be the assayer at the mine. He passed on of some illness or accident, but she was bit by the mining bug and stayed on.

Ray/Raylene. Grew up on a ranch in southeastern New Mexico but family lost land and herd due to drought, disease and debts. Headed up to the mountains in search of wealth.

Charlie Cyphers is the mine manager and could be in town on a supply run -- strong, tough, stubborn and devoted to the idea that a "bonanza" would come to the Cimarroncito mining district.

Historical Background of Camp:

By 1866 Lucien Maxwell controlled the land in all directions from Cimarron and it was then that gold was found near Baldy Mountain. Consequently, this area became populated with miners and prospectors from all parts of the United States and many new immigrants, especially from Italy, Ireland, Scotland, Spain, Germany and Mexico. Many of the immigrants came with skills and experience in mining from their native countries. Elizabethtown quickly became the largest settlement in the area and had a very diverse population. Mr. Maxwell had mines on the eastern slope of Baldy and made a handsome profit from them and from leases that he made to prospectors on the western slope. In 1869 claims were filed on the Red Jacket and Gray Eagle mines in the Cimarroncito District but were not fully development because of low productivity. In 1881 Knott and Welles (owners of the Blackhorse Mine near Baldytown) filed new claims on these same locations, now known as the Thunder and Contention Mines. These are located at the site we call Cypher's Camp on Philmont Scout Ranch. Unfortunately, the partners lacked the capital needed to develop the mines. Investors from Chicago and Pennsylvania came forward, but it did not take long for the rich ore that had attracted the Eastern money to disappear and with it went the investors. When rock became worth only \$5-\$10 per ton, operations were suspended until 1890. The mines changed hands a couple of times, to the Four Creeks Mining and Milling Company in 1890 and to the Consolidated Verde Mining and Milling Company in 1894 when a vein 35 feet wide was discovered and valued at \$100 per ton. Copper sulphide was the most common mineral but there were also substantial amounts of gold, silver, and iron produced.

In 1902 Charlie Cyphers was hired for the mine manager of the Contention Mine. Residents of Cimarron dubbed him "an old mountain goat" who was known to carry 100 pounds or more of supplies back to the mines from Cimarron on his back. 1902 was an eventful year in the history of mining. It was in 1902 that the United Mine Workers went on strike, and the mine owners refused to recognize the unions. President Roosevelt stepped in and appointed a commission to negotiate the conflicts which had come to violence in many parts of the country and especially in Colorado in the West. The next year the commission to settle the strike recommended shorter hours and a wage increase.

In 1908 the St. Louis and Cimarron Company buys the Contention mine and retained Cyphers, who was convinced that there would someday be a "bonanza" hit in the area, as the manager. In 1906 the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain and Pacific Railroad Company extended from Raton to Cimarron, and in 1908 the Cimarron and Northwestern Railway Company train began running in Ponil Canyon. These advances eased the chronic problem of how to transport ore out of the area, and in 1910 Cypher's and his crew were once again hopeful in its future.

Relevant Dates and Events:

Past.

1849 -- Gold is discovered in California and a rush West begins.

1866 -- Gold is discovered near Baldy Mountain, New Mexico, on Maxwell Land Grant Land.

1867 -- Elizabethtown is founded and grows virtually overnight to be the largest community in Colfax County and the county seat in 1869. Lucien Maxwell begins leasing land to prospectors.

1868 -- 1280 claims had been leased in Baldy district by February. First claims were filed in the Cimarroncito district for the Red Jacket and Grey Eagle quartz mines but were not sufficiently rewarding and were abandoned without development. Henry Lambert -- founder of the St James Hotel in Cimarron -- also claimed and began work on a mine nearby during this time. He was unsuccessful in finding gold, so he began a commissary service to the miners and prospectors in the hills.

1880 -- Thomas Knott and Charles Welles, prospectors and owners of several mines on Baldy, discover gold in the Cimarroncito area.

1897 -- Gold is discovered in the Klondike region of Alaska and Northwestern Canada.

1902 -- Charles Cyphers is hired to manage the Contention Mine, Cimarroncito.

1908 -- St. Louis company buys the Contention and promised great returns soon. President Taft wins the Presidency of the United States and the Model T is introduced.

1909 -- Bakelite is patented. The first "blues" music is written down.

Current.

1910 -- A railroad spur is planned that will travel up into the Cimarroncito district, which would facilitate ore transportation. Investors and workers are hopeful of success. There is conflict in Colorado between miners and management/ mine owners. Labor unions have been organized in places and resistance to them by management is high .. often violent. (Ludlow Massacre only about 100 miles north occurred in 1914, Ludlow, Colorado.)

Future Events/Extra Information:

Once again the productivity of the mine did not match the investor's expectations. The railroad spur never happened and the mines soon closed. In 1922 Waite Phillips bought the land. In 1938 and 1941 the land was given to the BSA. In 1961 the Denver Golden Corporation came in to explore the Contention Mine. They built a new entrance and dug 100 feet back. They reported finding negligible amounts of gold or copper ore. That was the last time this mine was worked.

Costumes/Appearance.

Women: High necked or collared blouses with gored (A-line) or "walking" skirts in heavy, sturdy fabrics with gored petticoat underneath, low-heeled lace-up work shoes; apron for housekeeping and dirty maintenance tasks. Gathered skirts about 3 inches above ankle with aprons only. For blacksmithing and such: men's pants with loose jacket over. For Stomp: Nicer, finer fabrics for blouses and gored skirts, pretty shawl or cape, clean shoes or boots. Colors include lots browns, dark reds, green, navy and denim blue. Prints and simple plaids in a variety of colors especially for work blouses. See photos models with chapter 3 of on line training. .

Accessories include: Shawls, capes and men's jackets, wool for warmth and rain protection; Medium brimmed men's hats for outdoors ; Jewelry, Minimal for these women, but perhaps for the Stomp, a locket, cameo pin; small watches on a chain or pin; Handkerchiefs, plain or print cotton for work; lace or crochet trim for Stomp; Hairpieces and combs of plain tortoise shell; Stockings, black or dark brown opaque tights for day and black or white for Stomp.

Appearance: Orderly even in work clothing; housekeeping is plain but tidy; hairstyles of the period are long hair drawn back into a bun or up on top of the head "Gibson girl" style. No obviously dyed or colored hair.

Men: Henley knit shirts or cotton collarless shirts with fuller button-fly trousers of the period in heavy cottons, twill, denim and wool with button on suspenders and work boots for day. Dark colors top to bottom for work. Some bib overalls without the brand name tags, often worn with a blazer jacket over the top. For Cantina: Nicer cotton shirts with collars, perhaps a wide tie and bowtie or two; pressed looking pants of period; some buttoned vests of wool or leather, rougher, serviceable fabrics and clean shoes or boots. Colors generally darker than the women.

Accessories include: Handkerchiefs, white or subtle print, no bandanas; Pocket watches; Socks, optional colors; Hats, billed caps, period narrow brim and bowler styles but well-worn; Blacksmith apron and jacket or dark shirts. For warmth: Wool jackets and vests. See photo models with Chapter 3 of online training.

Appearance: Orderly as much as possible; dirty only as work has made you; mining equipment and tools, well organized, hairstyles of the period were short -- to the ears and above nape of the neck -- but without "buzzed" or shaved areas. Some could be a little stragglier, but not long hair. No obviously dyed hair colors.

Language:

If immigrant in background, study tapes of good accents for your character and remember to portray respectfully. The economic conditions and educational level of your character are conveyed by the words s/he uses; also the region in which your character grew up. All these are details to decide upon and portray. "Beverly Hillbillies" kind of accents would not be appropriate.

Props:

- Pocket watches for men and women
- Fountain pens or pencils for check in; no contemporary looking pens
- Blacksmithing tools
- Gold panning equipment
- Lanterns for mine tour and possible mystery effects
- Wash tub, wringer and scrub board for laundry

Activities: Mine Tour, Gold Panning, Blacksmithing, Cabin Visit, Stomp

Staff Roles and Responsibilities as Historical Interpreters:

Greeting crews: In character, first person interp

Check-in—Out of character, third person interp

Gold Panning-- In character

Mine Tour-- In character

Blacksmithing-- In character

Stomp -- **Everyone in character** with period appropriate theme (mining), music and entertainments

This list doesn't give much opportunity to relate to campers out of character or give information that would not be appropriate to give "in" character. Cypher's offers a lot of good places to be "in" character. Use them as much as possible realizing that after an "in" character presentation, you can take off a hat, change your demeanor and appear as a Philmont staff person in costume (third person interp) to give the information that you couldn't in character.

Camper Role:

The crews can be treated as new miners, come in to help out and learn. Therefore, we are taking them on a tour and on an orientation.

Positive Values:

- Willingness to work hard for a goal
- Diversity of class, nationality, and ethnicity in the mining camps working as a team
- Perseverance through ups and downs of fortune
- Knowledge and respect of the land, minerals and natural resources
- How music describes different experiences and bridges people's differences
- Respect for one's living conditions, represented by both the way the muckshacks that the campers live in and the fancier staff cabin are kept tidy, though simple

Relationship to the Goals of the BSA:

- Respect for laboring class people, their hard work and contributions to society
- .Emphasis that all people, regardless of birth status, can aspire to become successful through hard work and diligence, despite the separation of social classes that existed at this time in history.
- Knowledge of how the gold rush shaped and changed Western America
- Acknowledging the diversity that has made America the country it is

References:

Philmont -Lawrence R. Murphy

The Cimarroncito Mining District: A Brief History. -Lawrence R. Murphy

Gold Rushes and Mining Camps of the Early American West -Vardis Fisher and Opal Laurel Holmes

This was Mining in the West -David W. Pearson

Days of Gold: Songs of the California Gold Rush -Karen W. Arlen

A Mine of Their Own: Women Prospectors in the American West -Sally Zanjini

Tomboy Bride -Harriet Fish Backus

Music and Stories for Stomp: TAKE CARE TO USE SELECTIONS SPECIFIC TO MINING, 1910 PERIOD AND CHARACTERS. STOMP AT CYPHER'S SHOULD HAVE UNIQUE MATERIAL THAT NO OTHER CAMP USES.