

Thomas J. Doyle

His parents, Sarah And John Doyle, came to the United States from Ireland in the late fifties. They located in Johnstown Pennsylvania, where the subject of this sketch was born on December 29th, 1865. When he was four years old the family moved to Lackawana County. There his mother died, the boy then going to live with the family of Peter Hunt. He attended school, and when he was but 12 years old he entered the employ of the Pennsylvania Coal Company, later working for various other firms.

In '84 the young boy's uncle, Tom Burns, a Colorado miner, visited Pennsylvania, and when he returned home to Robinson, the boy accompanied him. They traveled over the South Park railroad to Leadville then by sleigh to Robinson.

Young Tom soon acquired a large "Dakota" stetson and an immense overcoat, for which he paid \$60. Considering himself a real westerner, he longed mightily to return to Pennsylvania so that he might "snow off" his new rainment. The Robinson smelter was under construction then and the boy found employment there. Later he worked at various jobs for his uncle, who owned an interest in the Robinson Mine.

In '89 the two returned to Pennsylvania, where Tom Burns purchased a flag stone quarry located in Pleasant Valley, which the boy helped to operate for a short while; but the west called to the boy and he returned to Colorado during the summer of '89. At Leadville he entered the employ of Samuel Nickolson at the Wolf Tone Mine, remaining there until the strike of '93. Then, not wanting to be involved in the strike, he departed

for Carbondale, there entering the employ of Jean Grubbs, who was extensively engaged in growing potatoes. Grubbs later became an Agriculturist Lecturer for the Department Of Agriculture, appointed by President Roosevelt.

That fall he returned to Leadville and worked at various jobs, later working at the Cornados Mine. He then joined the rush to Victor in '92, but he was not impressed with the possibilities there so returned to Leadville. He returned to Victor, however, securing work at the Anna Lee Mine, which was owned by a cousin, James J. Doyle, and Jim Burns. During this time the shaft of the mine caved in, killing 8 men. He worked at various mines in this district, later leasing and contracting for himself until the strike in 1904.

He then went to Lead So. Dakota where he worked in the mines until 1906, when he returned to Leadville, going to work there at the Breese No. 1 Mine; later going to the Moyer Mine in Oro Gulch, where he remained until the panic of 1907. He then came to Salida, where he secured work in the shops of the D&RG Railroad.

While there he was offered, and accepted, with the Alloys Company, for whom he went to Placerville, San Miguel county for the purpose of opening a mine. This was a vanadium (Roskalite) producing property, afterwards owned by the Primes Chemical Co.

Having now acquired a good knowledge of vanadium bearing ores, Mr. Doyle went prospecting in the Paradox district of Montrose county. At Union Point, eight miles below Naturitta, he discovered some vanadium and uranium bearing ore and located some claims there.

That fall Thomas F Curran of the General Vanadium Co. of Baltimore, a branch of the International Vanadium Company of England, came to inspect the group of mines. Favorably impressed with the ore, Curran contracted for 400 tons, averaging about \$75 per ton, delivered at Placerville,

which necessitated a wagon-haul of eighty miles. Mr. Curran, however, soon violated the contract, whereupon Mr. Doyle sold the group of mines to the Standard Chemical Company of Pittsburg.

He then went to Sinbad Valley, Mesa County in an attempt to locate mines nearer to a railroad, but he continued on to Grand Junction, however; later going into Utah in his search for vanadium and uranium bearing ores.

In 1914 he returned to Colorado, and at Gateway he discovered and located another group of mines rich in uranium (Carnotite) ore. He sold this group of mines to Dr. McCoy of the University of Chicago.

Prior to the last discovery Colorado had become internationally famous for its uranium deposits which contained radium; and it was not until then that Mr. Doyle became acquainted with the true value of the ore. His discovery at Pinion Point was the first of its kind in the state.

In 1915 he discovered and located in Mesa County the Rexall group of mines, which he had surveyed by Deputy United States Surveyor, James S. James. Thomas F. Curran came from New York to investigate this property, and when he returned to the east, Mr. Doyle accompanied him for the purpose of conferring with some capitalists who were interested in the mines. They were attempting to promote a "Radium Atomizer", and for the purpose needed the uranium ore. No deal was consummated, however, as they wished Mr. Doyle to accept, as part payment for his mines, stock in the "Radium Atomizer" Co.

Mr. Doyle returned to Denver and there met Archie and Fred Corrigan, brothers, with whom he formed a partnership to promote and work the mines. These two men proved to be dishonest, misrepresenting themselves and conditions; the partnership eventually resulting in a lawsuit for possession of the mines. Meanwhile the Corrigans were working the mines and pocketing the entire proceeds.

At the trial it was very evident that the proceedings were not fair and impartial, for, after all the evidence was in and the case given to the jury--whose members afterwards admitted that they had reached a verdict in favor of Mr. Doyle--the Judge stopped proceedings and took the "case under advisement for one year". During this year the Corrigan's worked the mines, retaining the profits for themselves. Later, after he had lost his entire fortune fighting the case, Mr. Doyle lost his interest in the mines.

After the proceeding misfortune he entered the employ of the B&RG Railroad at Salida, working for this Company, in various capacities, until 1930. The following three years he spent prospecting in Chaffee County, during which time he located some fluor-spar claims near Browns Canon. He now makes his home in Salida.

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