

Phoenix Gazette

Saturday Evening, July 18, 1931 – Page 1 and Page 5

RUTH 'LOST MINE' VICTIM

TRAGEDY HAS COME TO ALL WHO LOOKED ON WORKINGS

"GOLDEN FLEECE" MORE THAN LEGEND

Existence Of Treasure House Confirmed By Story Told Gazette

Adolph Ruth, 66-year-old Washington D.C., prospector missing since June 15, is the ninth victim of the spectre of death hovering over the rugged ravines of Superstition range, in whose bosom is hidden the secret of the "Lost Dutchman" mine, according to a story related to the Phoenix Gazette today.

Jacob Walz, "the Dutchman," made a death-bed confession in which he admitted killing six men to capture and retain the mine. George Holmes, 133 West Almeria Street, told a Gazette reporter.

Two other reported "discoverers" were killed soon after finding the shaft, and Mr. Ruth has disappeared into the mountain fastness – never to return.

The strange fate that stalks the steps of men who have seen the "Lost Dutchman" mine appears to have befallen Ruth. There are those who give serious thought to the tradition that no man can see the mine and live.

SILENT SENTINELS

Those who give credence to the legend express the opinion that Adolph Ruth found the "Lost Dutchman" and paid with his life for the discovery.

His rock monuments, located by possemen, are seen as silent sentinels of warning to those who pursue too far in their quest for the legendary treasure of the Superstitions.

Jeff Adams, Maricopa county deputy sheriff, and W. A. "Tex" Barkley, whose cattle range covers a wide area in the Superstitions, have expressed the opinion that Ruth was murdered for maps which he believed would reveal the location of the "Lost Dutchman" mine. Adams and Barkley are now searching the region in which they recently found the first definite traces of the missing prospector. They are not expected to return to Barkley's ranch until late Tuesday afternoon, or possibly later.

MORE THAN LEGEND

Walz, according to the Gazette's informant; made his confession to Mr. Holmes' father, J. R. Holmes, native Arizona pioneer and famous packer for troops during the Indian campaigns, who died here two months ago.

The elder Holmes, his son says, was the only person with Walz when the old Dutchman died at his home in south Phoenix in the winter of 1891-92.

Existence of gold in the Superstition, is more than a legend – it's a fact, according to Mr. Holmes, who told the Gazette that he had a nugget from the "Lost Dutchman" mine, given to his father by Jacob Walz.

The nugget, according to Mr. Holmes, was saved from a box full from which his father recovered more than \$1500 in gold by breaking up the rock by hand.

DEATH-BED STORY

The elder Holmes, born at Fort Whipple in 1865, died in Phoenix two months ago. During the early territorial days he was known as one of the most able of all packers who accompanied soldiers in pursuit of hostile Indians.

While the elder Holmes had known Walz for many years, it was by accident that he was alone with him at the latter's death, according to the story related by his son.

Walz' negro nurse who had cared for the German prospector, during an attack of pneumonia in the winter of 1891-92, realized he was about to die and ran from the house to a doctor's office. On the way she met Mr. Holmes and asked him to go to Walz. Before she returned, the story continues, Walz conscience-stricken, confessed to killing his nephew partner, two soldiers and three Mexicans, and attempted to describe the location of the fabulously rich mine.

Beneath the bed on which Walz died was a candle box filled with ore – almost virgin gold.

"Take it," the old German instructed Holmes. "It is from the mine. There is more, more from where it came....enough to make millionaires of 20 men."

"How wide is the vein?" Mr. Holmes asked.

"It is so..." – (the German raised a pair of feeble hands and spread them 16 inches apart.)

CONSCIENCE STRICKEN

Walz, troubled by conscience as he realized death was hovering near, insisted upon talking more about the six men he said he killed than about the mine from which he had carried the rich nuggets on the floor beneath his bed.

The old German's story, as Mr. Holmes said was related to his father, is substantially as follows:

Jacobs Walz was a miner at the old Silver King near the abandoned town of Pinal, close to the present site of Superior. On a journey from the mine to Fort McDowell he was making camp in the Superstitions when he was jumped by roving Indians. Dodging behind rocks, he saved his life. A few shots sent the Indians scurrying away.

Walz, to make certain the trail was clear, followed some tracks which he supposed were made by the Indians. Instead they led to a mine shaft where three Mexicans were working. The Mexicans told Walz they were going to Fort McDowell in two or three days for supplies so he remained with them. Amazed at the unbelievable richness of the ore the men were taking from the shaft, Walz made his decision.

KILLS THREE MEN

The day before their scheduled departure he killed the three. He filled several sacks of ore and with the dead Mexicans' burros, packed out of the mountains. Safely in Phoenix he sent to Germany for a nephew. The pair then made several trips to the mine. Trouble arose between them over the nephew's insistence that Walz record the claims. The old German steadfastly refused because he feared that making the discovery public would bring relatives of the murdered Mexicans seeking to avenge their deaths.

Walz believed that one of the slain Mexicans was a descendant of Don Pedro Peralta, who once owned a large grant of land in which the Superstition range is situated and whose men were reported to have worked the mine at intervals over a long period of time.

KILLS, BURIES NEPHEW

Finally the story continues. Walz killed his nephew while they were camped near Escondido, about three miles north of the present Mormon flat dam. He dug a shallow grave and buried him. The description of the grave was so perfect that the elder Holmes, in checking Walz's story, found the body and brought the skull to Tempe, giving it to the late Dr. Charles Jones. The younger Holmes said that he had seen the skull and that it has a distinct bullet hole through the forehead.

After killing his nephew, Jacob Walz worked the mine alone. He trusted no man; led a solitary life and shunned companionship. Never would he take the same trail to his treasure.

Known to possess rich nuggets, many men attempted to follow him to the Superstitions, but none succeeded. Once the elder Holmes, experienced in tracking Indians and as keen on a trail as any man in the southwest, tried to follow the old German, but Walz made camp many miles from the suspected location of the mine and spent several weeks idling at placer mining.

MEET TRAGIC ENDS

The mine, according to Walz' story as related to Mr. Holmes, was found three times after the German first saw it. But each discoverer met a tragic end.

Two soldiers once followed Walz to the shaft. Discovering them, the old Dutchman shot them down. Another discoverer was John Pippis, accused by Walz as highgrading while he was absent from the mine. Pippis was soon afterwards killed by a cave-in at Reno Pass, north of Four Peaks.

Still another discoverer was John Deering, who gathered a few chunks of gold and went to Silver King to get his partner to help him work the mine. Going underground at the Silver King, Deering was injured in an accident and soon died.

Walz, discovering that others had found his mine, started removing all surface traces. He put timbers across the collar of the shaft and covered these with dirt and rocks.

Mr. Holmes, who has spent much time in the Superstitions in the last 22 years, believes the "Lost Dutchman" mine will remain undiscovered until the timber placed by Walz across the top of the shaft rot and cave-in reveals it.

LOCATION INDEFINITE

While Jacob Walz tried to describe the location of the mine to the elder Holmes, none of the canyons, peaks or washes was named at that time and the description proved so indefinite that efforts of father and son have been unavailing.

The old Dutchman, whose story has sent hundreds, perhaps thousands, of searchers into the perilous peaks of the Superstitions, is buried in the old cemetery on West Jefferson street.

THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

TUCSON, ARIZONA, WEDNESDAY MORNING - JULY 22, 1931, Page 5

VOICE of the PEOPLE

Letters to the Editor

Florence, Arizona
July 21, 1931
Editor, Tucson Star
Tucson, Arizona
Dear Sir:

In the Phoenix (Arizona) Gazette, under date of July 18, 1931, there appeared what purported to be the true story of the Lost Dutchman mine, at this time a matter of national interest owing to the fact that Adolph Ruth, prospector, recently lost his life in the attempt to locate it. This story is so full of misinformation that I would like to give the readers of Arizona newspapers the real facts in this case as they came to me from first-hand information shortly after the death of the "Dutchman," whose last name, by the way, was Jacobs, not Walz, as erroneously stated in the Gazette story.

This mine was first discovered in 1863 by a Mexican, named Peralta, of Chihuahua City, Mexico. In Tucson, two years after its original discovery, Peralta was making his second trip to the mine when he met a native of Holland, Paul Ludy by name, and struck up a friendship with him which resulted in Ludy being invited to join the party and to share in the profits of the trip. En route to the mine, the party was attacked by Indians and completely routed and Ludy was lost. After several days of hardships, he succeeded in reaching Tucson.

Jacobs, the second Dutchman, was a Confederate soldier under Lieutenant Jack Schwilling and was wounded in the Battle of El Pichacho, the only battle of the Civil war fought on Arizona soil. Left for dead, he later succeeded in reaching Tucson, where during his convalescence he met Ludy, who had just returned from the disastrous mining expedition.

These two men formed a friendship which was destined to be life-long. To Tucson also came Peralta and the rest of the survivors of the ambush and here the expedition was made up for another start. Ludy introduced Jacobs to Peralta, and he was invited to become a member of the new expedition. With the expedition this time went two women, Peralta's niece and the sister of a Yaqui chief, who had accompanied Peralta from Chihuahua. These two had been left in Tucson when the party had left before, but both refused to be left behind this time and Peralta reluctantly agreed to their coming along.

About fifty miles from Tucson, at the junction of the San Pedro and Aravaipa rivers, they were again attacked. This time the situation was partially saved by the reinforcement of a party of prospectors on their way to Yuma with a shipment of gold ore. Only partially, however, for the two girls were captured and carried off by the Apaches. The young chief and a friend followed the band into the Sierra Ancha mountains and the balance of the party pushed on to what is now known as McVey wash, near the Gila river. Camping there that night, they went on the next morning to the Buttes on the Gila, about 13 miles east of the present site of Florence, where

they set about making permanent camp which they intended using as a base of supplies for their trips into the mountains after the gold and also they intended to follow the trail of the raiders in the attempt to rescue the girls as soon as the trailers reported. They built a stone cabin and corral, which still stands, and about the time this was completed the chief and his friend returned with the information that the Apaches had split up into small bands and separated, going in several different directions. They decided to go into the mine and get out a packtrain load of gold ore and then to concentrate their search for the girls. They made a hurried trip in and took out what they could carry. On the way to camp they were attacked at Queen Creek and were forced to abandon a part of the gold on top of the north end of Superstition mountain. This was later discovered by two gold camp followers after the discovery of Goldfield.

The party, having lightened their load, succeeded in reaching camp at Buttes and immediately started south. They were fortunate in their search for the girls, coming on to the band that held them captive on their way to the border to sell them as slaves. They outnumbered this band and succeeded in rescuing the girls, going from there back to Chihuahua. Peralta never returned to the mine. Jacobs being a millwright, he agreed to supervise the erection of a stamping mill in Chihuahua for Peralta, and on its completion, as both he and Ludy wanted to return to the States, he gave them a quit claim to the mine and a map of the same, in recognition of their services rendered and as a mark of esteem and friendship.

The Gazette story to the contrary notwithstanding. The Dutchman came into the possession of the mine legitimately, according to Jacobs own story and not as the result of a triple murder.

Several years after this, I met a Mrs. Thomas, restaurant owner of Phoenix, and boarded with her for some time. We became very friendly and she gave me the following story, much of which I have corroborated and which I have every reason to believe is the true story of the Dutchman. The story follows:

Jacobs came to Phoenix and purchased a house on Jefferson street and boarded with Mrs. Thomas. Her restaurant was mortgaged, and when the note became due, she was unable to take it up and could not get an extension on it. The day before it was to be foreclosed, she told Jacobs the place would not be open for business the following day and why. Jacobs told her if she would stop by his house that evening he would loan her enough to take up the note. She called to see him and he gave her a baking powder can full of nuggets to pay off the mortgage.

In her employ was a young German named Herman Petrie, whom Jacobs took a great liking to. He told Petrie and Mrs. Thomas that he and Ludy had made a trip in and took out a fair fortune, but had run through with it and returned for more. They ran short of provisions and Jacobs went out to Adamsville to get them, Ludy remaining to work the mine. On his return from Adamsville, Jacobs found that Ludy had been attacked by Indians and killed. Taking what gold they had, which was more than enough to last him as long as he could hope to live, he buried his partner and hid all trace of the workings and went to Phoenix. He wanted to take young Petrie and Mrs. Thomas in and show them the location of the mine, but before he could do this his health failed to such an extent that it was impossible for him to make the trip. Learning that Petrie had a father and brother working placer in French Gulch, Montana, Jacobs gave the boy a thousand dollars to send for these two. To them and Mrs. Thomas, he gave a description of

the mine and drew up a map as well as he could from memory, the original map having been lost at the time of Ludy's death.

The elder Petrie and the son who had accompanied him from Montana, always believed that the mine was located in the Superstitions. Mrs. Thomas and Herman Petrie differed with them, believing it lay in another range. Each spent many years and much money trying to find it but failed. The elder Petrie died in the search for it, still believing that the Superstitions, held the secret. His son still seeks it in that range, but not in the neighborhood of Boulder Canyon.

I am eighty-two years old and for sixty-five years have been a prospector. For more than forty consecutive years I have been in Arizona. I have located and sold many rich mines, and have prospected the Superstitions both for the Dutchman and other things. Boulder Canyon and in fact that entire end of the range is the least promising section of the Superstitions, in that it is the least mineralized. While the Dutchman was undoubtedly one of the richest gold deposits ever discovered in Arizona, as a prospector, I earnestly advise against anybody seeking it in the country in which Mr. Ruth lost his life. It certainly does not, lie there. I know Boulder Canyon and Le Barge Canyon as the city dweller knows the streets of his native city. I have prospected those canyons and the maze of gulches and ravines as few others have ever done. Wherever the Dutchman is hidden it is not there. Whether or not there is anything to the legend of the Silent Sentinels, it is a matter of individual belief, but it is certain that in that section of the Superstition range Mr. Ruth never discovered the Lost Dutchman.

In the Gazette story as related by the son of the elder Holmes, his father was born in 1865 and was a packer in the early Territorial days of Arizona! Just when were the "Early Territorial days of Arizona!?" The Dutchman was discovered in 1862, three years before he was born. In all the talks I had with Mrs. Thomas and Herman Petrie, no mention was ever made of anybody by the name of Holmes and according to their story, (which I personally verified), these two were with Jacobs at the time of his death. The "Negro Nurse" of which he speaks was a Creole, native of Louisiana.

I sincerely hope that no one who read the Gazette story will be tempted to search for the mine in the neighborhood of Boulder Canyon. For the benefit of the uninitiated, Boulder Canyon is a gash in the mountains, leading into Le Barge. It is a narrow, boulder strewn canyon with walls sheering up to cloud piercing proportions and is absolutely unmineralized. There is no possibility of any rich deposit being discovered there and it is cut by a maze of gulches and ravines which lead into others just like them and none but an experienced mountaineer may traverse them with safety or with any assurance of finding his way out. Trusting this will help to correct any wrong impressions which any one may have received, and once again strongly advising anyone but an experienced prospector and mountaineer against seeking the Dutchman, especially in that particular section of the Superstitions. I am,

Yours in the interest of truth,

JAMES K. McCARTHY

Garry Cundiff - December 2, 2007