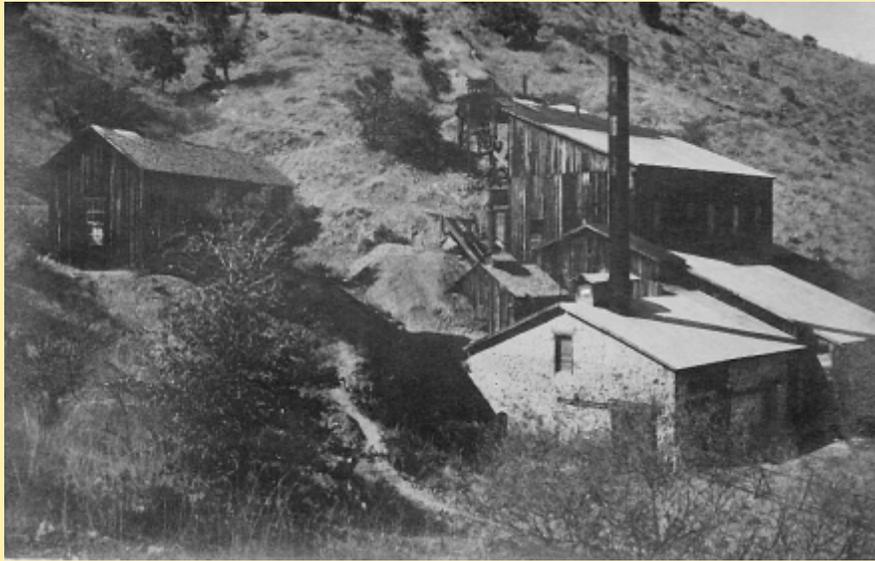


# **THE STORY OF THE OLD GLORY GOLD MINE**

**2001**



**Bob Ring  
4717 N. Rocky Crest Place  
Tucson, Arizona 85750  
520-529-8328  
ringbob1@aol.com**

**Al Ring  
7686 E. Camino Amistoso  
Tucson, Arizona 85750  
520-529-0910  
ringal@comcast.net**

# THE STORY OF THE OLD GLORY GOLD MINE

## Introduction – The Forgotten Gold Mines of Oro Blanco

The seven cities of gold that Coronado searched for in the 1500s never existed. But the gold mines of Oro Blanco did exist, and they were found. They've just been forgotten.

In 1736, a unique silver discovery, Planchas de Plata (Sheets of Silver), was made at Arizonac, just south of the present international boundary with Mexico, and just west of Nogales. Large chunks of almost pure silver were found near the surface of the ground. Thousands of fortune seekers were attracted to the area. Some of the unsuccessful would-be miners came northward and began to settle at Tubac, just north of the mission at Tumacacori.

The Oro Blanco area was located about 20 miles southwest of Tubac, in the Oro Blanco Mountains. Spanish prospectors from Tubac probably first entered the region around 1740. For over a 100 years, mining in Oro Blanco was intermittent and very small scale. In 1821 Mexico achieved its independence from Spain and Oro Blanco became a Mexican property. Finally, in 1853, the Gadsden Purchase was completed. The United States paid Mexico 10 million dollars and annexed the southern Arizona Territory. This annexation brought the Oro Blanco area under United States control.

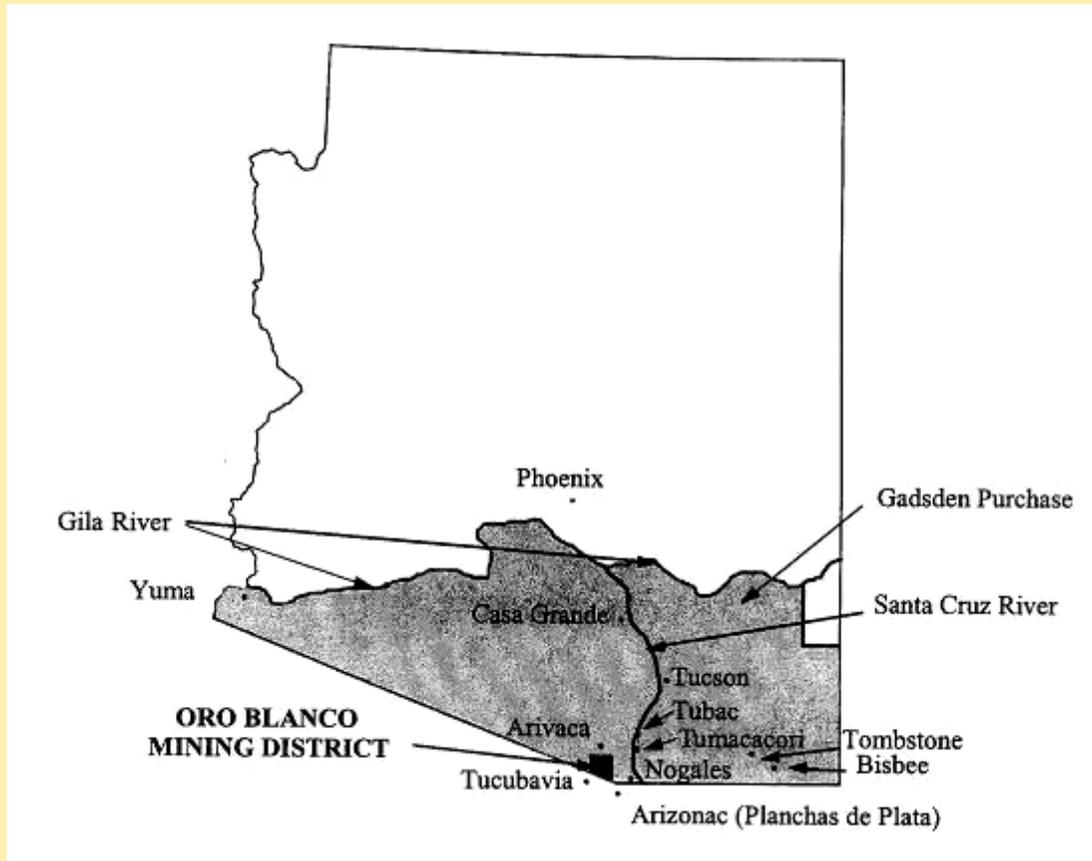
Oro Blanco was a beautiful setting for mining, with mountain valleys covered with rich abundant grasses and live oak forests. The area was named for its characteristically white-colored gold (oro blanco), resulting from significant silver content in the gold.



*Oro Blanco country today – Montana Peak seen from Old Glory gold mine.  
(Courtesy of Bob Ring, 2001)*

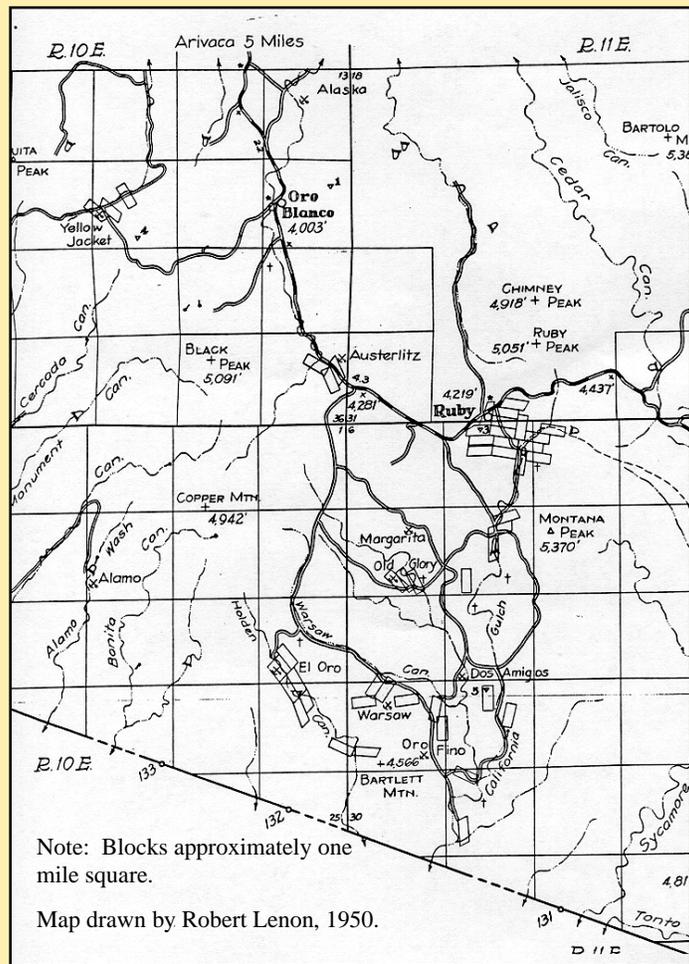
The first American gold mine was located in 1873 and fittingly named the Oro Blanco. Other gold mines were located soon afterwards.

Gold mining in Oro Blanco was a continuing uphill battle. First of all, it was difficult to attract outside capital to develop the mines. The mining booms in Tombstone and Bisbee attracted most of the investors. Moreover, the Oro Blanco ore was generally low grade. Water to process the ore was scarce. Recovery of gold from the ore was inefficient. And the gold that was recovered had to be carried 25 miles by mule or wagon over mountainous trails to the nearest railroad in Nogales. Finally, Indian attacks, fickle U.S. monetary policy, and sensational robberies and murders contributed to on-again/off-again mining operations.



*The Oro Blanco Mining District was located just north of the Mexican border in Territorial Arizona.  
(Courtesy of Al Ring, 2001)*

However, in the face of all of these challenges, gold mining in Oro Blanco stubbornly persisted. Incredibly, between 1873 and 1912, during Arizona’s Territorial period, more than 2,400 gold mines were located in the tiny 10-square mile district. Many mines were worked, abandoned and then reopened later, some several times, and often with a different name. Sometimes a particular mine would go bankrupt and start up again later with new names. The mines were shamefully promoted, beyond actual results achieved. In a constant “shell game,” more money was probably made buying and selling claims than in the actual recovery of gold from the mines.



*Over 2400 gold mines were located in the Oro Blanco Mining District between 1873-1912.*

In addition to the many mining camps, two small villages, Oro Blanco and Montana Camp (later renamed Ruby), emerged to support mining operations in the Oro Blanco Mining District. Ruby was located at the foot of Montana Peak, the area's most recognizable landmark. The village of Oro Blanco was situated in a rolling valley, surrounded on three sides by an amphitheatre of hills and mountains through which the roads from the mining sections, east, south, and west, naturally converged to the valley.

Life in the Oro Blanco mining camps was brutally tough. Yet for the few hundred people who lived in the camps, there were familiar hallmarks of civilization, like stores, post offices, saloons, schools, and cemeteries. Housing ranged from a few crude adobe buildings, to frame buildings, to wooden shacks, and even tents. Some of the larger mining camps had crude boarding houses.

But people came and worked hard, drawn by visions of wealth and the challenge of the mining. They came from Mexico, France, Ireland, England, Japan, China, and of course the U.S. Some of these people were prominent pioneers of early Arizona. The list includes soldiers, Indian fighters, doctors, bankers, cattlemen, teamsters, sheriffs of Pima County, mayors of Tucson, and governors of Arizona. Others, including the authors' grandparents, came not seeking riches, but to work at the mines and do a job. They were not well known people, but worked just as hard under very difficult conditions.

Some of the most successful of the mines were the Austerlitz, Commodore, Gold Boulder, Montana, Old Glory, Oro Blanco, Warsaw, and Yellow Jacket. Colorful names for some of the other mines include Alamo, Albatross, Bee Hive, Black Mask, Bye and Bye, Cow Puncher, Don Juan, Greenback, Lucky Shot, Merry Widow, Monster, Purple Cow, Rough and Ready, Sidewinder, and Tom Sawyer.

By the late 1890s and early 1900s, the district reached a peak of activity. The larger mining camps had populations of up to 50 people.

By 1914, over 1,750 gold mines had been located in the Oro Blanco Mining District. Most production of gold had ceased.

Total gold production from the relatively low-grade gold ores in the district (through 1949) is estimated to be 126,500 oz. (Total value about \$2.5 million at an average price of \$20 per oz.) This is only about one percent of the total gold production in the state of Arizona.

Following the decline of significant gold mining production, the U.S. Forest Service, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, cleared the entire Oro Blanco area of old mining buildings and equipment. Mine shafts were sealed. This controversial action was done for "safety" reasons and to discourage settlement by transients, during America's "hippie" period. Over the years, there was also considerable vandalism of the old mining buildings and theft of equipment.

Montana Camp, renamed Ruby in 1912, has lasted the longest of the Oro Blanco mining camps. With a peak population approaching 1200 people, Ruby turned to lead and zinc mining in the early 1900s, and was worked until 1940. Today, Ruby is owned privately and is fenced and guarded. About a dozen buildings remain. This now rapidly deteriorating ghost town can only be seen by the public on scheduled tours or by special arrangements with the owners or caretaker.

Since the 1980s, several Canadian companies have been doing exploratory work in the OBMD, but no production has resulted.

The years without successful production and the rather dismal forecasts by geologists did not slow the pace of mining claim locations in the OBMD. Incredibly, from 1873 to 2000, wildly optimistic prospectors located a total of almost five thousand mining claims in the tiny 40 square mile district.

Today the population of the Oro Blanco area is sparse. The live oak forests were long ago cleared to supply timber for mine buildings and tunnels, and fuel for steam engines to run the processing mills. The lush, tall grasslands have been replaced by Mesquite trees. Most of the current residents of the former Oro Blanco Mining District live in shacks or trailers, having chosen a life away from civilization.

Unfortunately, this now open country, so near the international border with Mexico, has become a primary U.S. entry corridor for illegal aliens and drugs. The roads that served the miners so well, are still unpaved and not well maintained. The alien and drug problems, along with the poor road conditions, have discouraged visitors to the area.

On a brighter note, the U.S. Forest Service is now devoting new energy to understanding and preserving the history of Oro Blanco mining. However, little remains today to remind us of the tremendously difficult mining efforts and personal sacrifices of the miners and their families.

Who knows? Perhaps "The Forgotten Gold Mines of Oro Blanco" will have a rebirth some day.

## The Old Glory Gold Mine

So here you are standing atop “Red Mountain” in Oro Blanco country. Looking east you can see Montana Peak in the distance, punctuating a beautiful green skyline. You are standing on rocks that once were buried in the mountain. And just below your feet is the now-sealed entrance of the Old Glory Gold Mine, long dead, but once the most successful of the Oro Blanco gold mines.

The mine that would eventually be named Old Glory was first located in 1875 by the Derre-Townsend Syndicate of Arivaca. The syndicate had a lot of properties at the time and wasn’t able to develop all of them. No assessment, improvement, or mining work was done on this particular property within a year, so by the provisions of the Mining Law of 1872, the original location lapsed.

### Key milestones affecting the Old Glory Mine.

Year	Event
1875	Property first located by Derre-Townsend Syndicate of Arivaca. No work done.
187_	Bullion, Confidence, Emma mines located by Amedec Blanc
1883	Esperanza Mine located (formerly Bullion, Confidence, Emma mines) by Hiram Blaisdell for Boston investors
1884	First mill (ten stamps) built and operating at Esperanza. Tram/cable operations from mine to mill. Dam constructed to provide water reservoir.
1886-1888?	Diana mine located (formerly Esperanza), subsequently abandoned
1889	La Francia Mine located (formerly Diana) by Pierre Peyron
1894	Old Glory Mine located (formerly La Francia) by Old Glory Mining and Milling Company of Los Angeles. Two Griffin mills used to process ore. (See AHS photo’s)
1894	Wagon road constructed from Nogales to Old Glory
1894	Start of lengthy court battle over mine mortgage, unpaid bills, inefficient milling. Mining operations cease.
1895	Old Glory Post Office opened
1896	Court order to resume work at Old Glory. Twenty-stamp mill built and operating.
1897	Mill improved from twenty to thirty stamps. Dam enlarged.
1899	Court cases finally settled. Creditors paid.
1898-1902	Mine inactive due to lack of financial backing
1903	Mining resumes. Mill overhauled and refined. (See Spencer photos)
1904-6	Mine owned and operated by Gold Mining Assurance Company of Indiana and Michigan. (See Ring photo’s)
1906-1912	Intermittent mining.
1915	Old Glory Post Office closed
1938	Small-scale mining operations.
1940	Last gold production from Old Glory
1989-	Forest Service starts annual reports of Old Glory site status and condition of ruins. (See Forest Service, Ring photo’s)

A Frenchman named Amedec Blanc relocated the property in the mid 1870s. Blanc dug a few holes over a large area to satisfy himself that he had a paying gold mining proposition and then in 1883 negotiated a sale to a group of Boston investors through agent Hiram Blaisdell, a 32-year old young man from Waltham, Massachusetts. The sale was made only after Blaisdell, who had a degree in Mining Engineering from MIT, had himself made numerous tests of the ore’s quality at the Arivaca mill. At this time the entire property was called the Esperanza (means “hope” in Spanish) Group and included the Bullion, Confidence, and Emma mines.

The Esperanza's gold ore was located atop the southeast end of oblong "Red Mountain" whose crest was 600 feet above a gulch and creek bed below. The top of the mountain was a plateau 200 feet wide and 1300 feet long. The descent to the gulch from the rim of the plateau on the east and southeast was (and still is) very steep.

Mining started at the Esperanza with a ten-stamp mill built near the bottom of the gulch, below the southeast end of the plateau. Soon operations grew to twenty stamps. The "Boss" or continuous system of pulping and amalgamating (using mercury) was used to reduce the ore.

After securing water rights, the Esperanza Company constructed a dam across the gulch upstream from the mill to the north to create a reservoir capable of containing a six-month supply of water to operate the mill. The reservoir was filled by runoff water from local rains and two perennial springs in the drainage area. The dam was a "splendid piece of masonry," 120 feet long, 27 feet high, with a 32-foot base. The upstream side was faced with Portland cement. As a backup the operators hoped to drill an Artesian well in the gulch facing the mill.

(Note: This dam did its' job well for over 20 years. It was maintained and enlarged several times. A smaller dam was built downstream of the mill to the east. The little pond formed by this dam was never dependable and over the years silted up regularly.)

A 20x50 foot dormitory, a boarding house and office, each 20x40 feet, and about a mile of road were built to support Esperanza mining operations.

The dormitory, boarding house, and office were built on a narrow bench, or backbone of a ridge, about 150 feet above the mill. This was the only available spot in the immediate vicinity of the mill. The boarding house was kept by Mr. J. B. Stewart and daughters, and was described as a "credit to the camp."

Initially the mill had ten 850-pound stamps, a rock breaker, five grinding and amalgamating pans, three settlers, and four Frue concentrators. The mill was described in the local press as "one of the finest milling plants ever brought to Arizona." Motive power to run the mill was provided by a steam-powered Brown engine, with water supplied from the reservoir. Red and black piñon wood was brought in by Mexicans on trains of burro's to fuel the steam engine.

The ore was obtained from a cut on the plateau above, in a quarrying operation. Connection between the mine and the mill was made by a 900-foot endless cable with a grade of about 300 feet to the mile, a loaded car down taking an empty one up, and passing each other on a three-rail track, by means of a frog midway between the mill and the mine.

(Note: The Esperanza contained a large body of gold ore, but it was irregular and generally low grade. This remained the case over the life of active mining at the Esperanza and its successor locations.)

On November 2, 1883 Tucson's *Arizona Citizen* reported that, "Everything about the camp wears a come-to-stay look. No cheap, temporary concern finds favor in that place. The accommodations for the men are excellent, the machinery good as made."

For a while, things went very well at the Esperanza. On July 26, 1884, the *Arizona Citizen* reported: "Since the Esperanza started up everything in and about it has worked like a clock. Not one stop or break has occurred. They are crushing 50 tons of ore in every 24 hours." John Bogan was foreman of the mine during that period.

Pedro Aguirre ran a tri-weekly stage via Oro Blanco Village and Arivaca, between the Esperanza and Tucson.

By 1884 mining operations had grown enough for the Esperanza Camp to qualify as a local area voting precinct and to have a Post Office. Hiram Blaisdell was appointed the first postmaster of Esperanza Mining Camp.



*Esperanza Gold Mine*

– 1885. This mine

*became the Old Glory in 1894.*

*Hiram Blaisdell is at left; John Bogan is third from left.*

*(Courtesy of Yuma Arizona Historical Society, Rio Colorado Division)*

After a couple of years of successful operation, the Esperanza ran into trouble. First, the gold recovery process was expensive to run and only recovered about sixty per cent of the gold. (It was even said that cattle roaming about licked the tailings in the pan amalgamators for their salt content, thereby ingesting a considerable amount of gold.) Second, the bane of all miners occurred. They “lost the ledge.”

To make matters worse, just as the mining difficulties came to a head, one of the Esperanza employees, John Shannahan, was killed by Apaches in one the last raids of the Indian wars in July 1886. Shannahan had been working at the Esperanza mill, and had received his wages with which he purchased groceries. On the way home, Shannahan stopped to visit his neighbor John (Yank) Bartlett. The Apaches attacked and quickly killed Shannahan. Meanwhile, having been warned of the raid, Shannahan’s family had fled to the mountains leaving all of their clothes and possessions in the house, which was then visited by the Apache raiders and everything destroyed. So Shannahan left his family (a wife, two daughters, and two sons) destitute. Appeals for charitable donations for the family were made in Oro Blanco Village, Arivaca, and as far as Tucson.

Anyway, in 1886 the owners of the Esperanza, dissatisfied with the results achieved, fired the mine workers, took up their mining plant, and moved to another mine near Yuma, Arizona. Hiram Blaisdell also went to Yuma where he became a most prominent Yuma pioneer. Blaisdell invented a process to clear the mud and silt from the Colorado River. A common saying in those days was that the Colorado River “was too thick to drink and too wet to plow.” Following the success of his water cleaning invention, Blaisdell built two canals and proved that irrigated desert land could grow fruit and vegetables. Next Blaisdell became the first to successfully raise citrus fruit in the desert. In the late 1890s, Blaisdell was one of the directors of the King of Arizona gold mine, one of the richest mines ever discovered in Arizona. Blaisdell completed his career in Yuma county by becoming a land developer and realtor in irrigated lands.

The abandonment of the Esperanza was considered a real black eye for the Oro Blanco Mining District.

After a year of inactivity, the mine was relocated as the Diana, abandoned again and then relocated again in 1889 as the La Francia by a 57-year old Frenchman, Pierre Peyron.

Peyron had bootstrapped himself to prominence in territorial Arizona. He was born in Marseille, France in 1832. As a youngster in 1843, he escaped impressment on a French ship off Vera Cruz, Mexico. Somehow he avoided recapture and made his way to the Guaymas country of Sonora, Mexico. By the early 1870s, family tradition says he was selling house wares from a burro-driven wagon. In 1888 Peyron brought his family to the Oro Blanco country.

Peyron demonstrated that all the good ore had not been taken. He explored in a different direction from the Esperanza miners and found good ore left in great quantities. For four years Peyron worked the ore with three arrastras, with his sons to help him, one a small boy who drove the burros.

(Note: In 1890 Peyron became a U.S. citizen. Besides the La Francia mine, Peyron at one time owned several other mines. In addition to mining, he ran a stage and freight line between the mining camps. He tried the cattle business too, recording his brand with Pima County in 1890. Pierre Peyron died in 1914 at the age of 82. Peyron's great grandsons, Pierre and Albert, live in the Tucson area today.)

In 1894, Peyron sold his interest in the La Francia mine to the Old Glory Mining & Milling Company of Los Angeles.

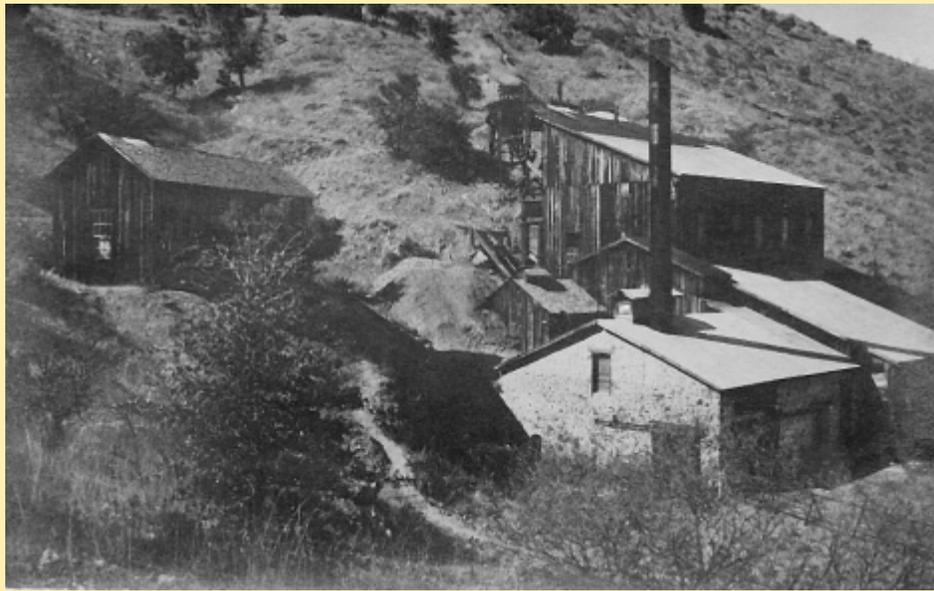
On April 11, 1894, the Old Glory Mine was recorded, with Captain George G. Mullins, a retired U.S. Army officer, made manager. Captain Mullins had a doctorate in Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Metallurgy and had carefully selected the Old Glory mine for the Old Glory Mining and Milling Company after examining properties in California, New Mexico, and Arizona.

Though delayed two months by the combination of a railroad strike and problems with a wagon freight contractor, a period of intense activity soon started. A tunnel was dug to tap the ore body from underneath and two Griffin mills of 35 tons per day capacity were brought in and installed. In addition to the mills, there were six concentrators for the amalgamation process. Ground flat enough for additional buildings near the mill was in short supply, so the mining camp began to expand across the gulch to the east. A store, office, boarding house, saloon, and residences were constructed.

Everything in the mining camp was made first-class, based on the high expectations of mining results. The owners hoped to process up to 100 tons of ore per day.

An Arizona Geological Survey (AGS) report on Old Glory from that period stated that there were newly built houses, one large adobe general office building, one frame building for mill men, and one frame building for assay, retorting and melting, with full equipment. Also mentioned were a large frame store and boarding house, two blacksmith shops, and four cottages. There was a thirty-stamp mill in a very substantial 40 foot by 80 foot frame building.

Mining developments included several open cuts and about 500 feet of underground workings, mostly tunnels. There was a double-track steel rail inclined tram, 850 feet in length, leading downhill from an ore bin at the southeast end of the plateau to the ore bins and automatic ore feeders in the top of the mill below. Along the plateau, there were 1300 feet of steel railway with a dozen self-dumping iron ore cars. The tram was operated by gravity and controlled by an automatic pulley. The powerhouse was a stone structure. Machinery included two rock crushers.



*This early 1900 photo of the Old Glory gold mine shows a tram bringing ore down from the mine at the top of the hill to the mill building below.  
(Courtesy of Connie Kiely)*

The AGS report also described the dam blocking the narrow gulch upstream from the mill. “The dam was built of stone and hydraulic cement and was 20 feet thick, 38 feet high, and 125 feet long. The dam formed a storage reservoir 1,500 feet long, with a capacity of 12,000,000 gallons of water. The local watershed and drainage were such that one rain of a few hours duration would fill the reservoir. The water flowed through steel pipes down to the mill.”

The Old Glory Mining and Milling Company posted a notice on the dam, appropriating all water from local springs and rain runoff collected behind the dam.

At peak activity, the Old Glory treated 35-40 tons of ore daily, well below expectations, but still the largest operation in the district.

The story is told that in 1895 there was a Chinese cook at the Old Glory Mine. One of the miners thought to have some fun so after catching a rat in one of the tunnels, he placed it in his lunch box. When he opened the box in the kitchen, the rat crawled to the top of the Chinaman’s head before being knocked off. The cook, recognizing the box, burst into the dining room wielding a cleaver. The guilty miner, not taking any chances, jumped for the door and was last seen scampering down a hillside trail.

A Post Office was established on January 15, 1895, superceding the post office established at the Esperanza in 1884. For some reason, the postmark was originally “Oldglory” as one word, but was changed to “Old Glory” in 1909.



*This dam at the Old Glory gold mine provided a reservoir of water to run the ore crushing machines – mid 1890's.  
(Courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society, Photo B89321)*

As many as 50 people were now living in the Old Glory mining camp.

The road to Tucson then was a fine country dirt road, although something over 75 miles long. Tri-weekly transport and mail delivery to and from Tucson took over 10 hours by stagecoach, with seven intermediate stops for fresh horses or mules.

Aided by contributions from the people of Nogales, Captain Mullins built a wagon road extending 28 miles from Old Glory to Calabasas, Nogales on the railroad. This dirt road was built over steep mountain trails by 100 men in just over two months. The new road cut freighting costs in half. Tri-weekly mail was also carried over the new road in a buckboard stage, the non-stop trip requiring six hours.

But the Old Glory mining operations did not continue to go well. The ore was so hard that the Griffin mills were hardly suitable for handling it. The ore was pulverized so irregularly and unevenly that part was slime and much a gravel in grains as large as rice – most unfavorable for amalgamation and concentration. A disappointingly low percentage of the gold was recovered. Also, the steel shoes and dies were very expensive and wore out rapidly. A new set was required every two weeks. This added unplanned costs to the mining.

The stockholders were repeatedly called on for more money and responded favorably several times. But there came the day in 1895, soon after operations were fairly underway, when more cash was needed and the request was denied. With the stockholders refusal, Captain Mullins resigned.

With many debts outstanding, Old Glory mining operations were stopped. Creditors included Roy Stahl and his associates for the outstanding mortgage, L. Zeckendorf & Co. for supplies, and the employees for labor. A long period of courts cases started, where creditors tried to get some of the money owed them.

Also, a series of receivers for the Old Glory Mine ensued. First among these was George J. Hilzinger of Tucson. Hilzinger thought he could economize the mining operation and supposedly had a plan to resolve the mine's outstanding debts. But Hilzinger also quit in frustration over the lack of support and was replaced as receiver by George Washington Cheney who was then the manager of the Montana Mine and later prominent in Tucson.

In May 1896 a court order was issued in Tucson to resume mining at Old Glory. Stilson Hutchins, chief creditor, was granted permission to operate the mine at his own expense. Any profits were to be applied to discharging all the debts. Later in May, Major Eugene Fechet took over full control, replaced the two Griffin mills with a 30-stamp mill, and resumed mining operations.

The Old Glory was now using the new cyanide process on an experimental basis to recover gold from the ore.

In 1897 ownership changed again, with Col. Issac Trumbo taking over the Old Glory from Stilson Hutchins for the Montezuma Gold Company. T. E. Hale succeeded Major Fechet as manager. Cornishman Nat Crocum was brought in to raise the height of the dam six feet to increase the size of the reservoir.

In early 1898 the mine was reported to be running well. The reservoir was full and stocked with striped bass.

From late 1898 to 1902 the Old Glory was mostly inactive due to a lack of financial backing.

In 1899 the litigation that had started in 1894 was finally settled. The Sheriff of Pima County sold the Old Glory at auction to Albert Steinfeld. The long waiting creditors were paid only a fraction of their claims.

In 1902 the Old Glory was to sold to the Zeckendorf Properties and operated a short time with a new 20-stamp mill.

By 1903 the Old Glory was operating a 30-stamp mill, under a new owner. The small reservoir downstream of the mill was then almost filled with sand. B. Bogan was listed as the owner.

In July 1904, the Old Glory was acquired by the Gold Mining Assurance Company from Indiana and Michigan. R. B. O'Neill was a Vice President and the local representative. In December 1904 O'Neill was reporting that prior to starting mining operations, 15 men were working on fixing up the dam, and putting up a company store and an office. They had "sunk numerous shafts and otherwise thoroughly tested the ground and are confident that we have a big proposition before us." By 1905 they were operating their 30-stamp mill with a combination of amalgamating, concentrating, and cyaniding recovery processes.

If you had been about to leave Tucson to live in the Old Glory mining camp in 1905, you might have noticed the advertisement below, which ran for some months in the *Arizona Daily Star*.



*This ad ran in Tucson newspapers for several months in 1905.*

Anyone seeing this add before their arrival in the frontier mining camp country must have been sorely disappointed in their crude accommodations! The El Warsaw turned out to be a ramshackle frame building. The building contained four rooms, approximately 10 x 15 feet in dimensions. Residents called it the "shack." The "shack" was on the side of a hill at Warsaw Camp, about a mile from the Old Glory mine.



*The El Warsaw hotel offered accommodations for Oro Blanco miners – 1906 Ring family photo.*



*El Warsaw residents tried to dress up their small, single rooms by covering the walls with family mementos – 1906 Ring family photo.*



*Another corner of a room at the Warsaw Hotel – 1906 Ring family photo.*

After 1905, the owners and milling operations of the Old Glory mine changed several times more, with only intermittent mining operations, until 1912, when the owners abandoned the Old Glory.

The estimated total production value from the Old Glory through 1913 is \$500,000.

The Old Glory mine was leased in 1914 by Sid Kempton, a well-known mining man in the area. Not only was Kempton's Old Glory mining operation not productive, but he himself was accidentally killed in 1918 in an explosion of a gas tank that he was soldering because it had been leaking.

The Post Office at Old Glory (actually at the nearby Warsaw Camp store) closed in 1915 because mining operations shut down. For the next 14 years, several owners operated the Old Glory. There were frequently leases for renewed production, but not much resulted.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Oro Blanco district's best-known old gold mine began to grow, as additional contiguous mining claims were located and added to the group. On April 7, 1929, M. J. Elsing bought Old Glory No. 1 and Old Glory No. 2 from B. H. Worthington and the S. E. Cox estate. In February 1930, Elsing located Old Glory No's 3-18. From that group of 18 mining claims, in 1935, James D. Culbertson of Santa Paula, California bought Old Glory No's 1-5. In 1938, in expectation of future production value, Culbertson patented Old Glory No. 1 and Old Glory No. 4. This included the original mine, mill site, and dams. Though the owners performed annual "labor and improvements" over the years to 1940, the Old Glory achieved no significant production.

The final round of significant mining interest at the Old Glory occurred in 1982, when Robert Johnson, acting as agent for the owners of Old Glory No. 1 (original mine) and Old Glory No. 4 (mill site), leased the claims to the Apache International Mining Company of Tucson, Arizona. But limited testing and mining feasibility studies convinced Apache International to pass on the opportunity to restart mining at the OBMD's best-known gold mine.

All that remains at the Old Glory site today are the rapidly deteriorating stone walls and foundation of the stamp mill powerhouse built in the 1880s. And the only formal visitors are rangers from the Coronado National Forest making periodic site inspections.



*These stone ruins of the mill building walls and foundation are all that remain today of the Old Glory Gold mine.*

## Suggested Reading

1. Herbert Eugene Bolton, *Kino's Historical Memoir of Primeria Alta, Translation of A Contemporary Account of the Beginnings of California, Sonora, and Arizona* by Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, S. J., 1683-1711 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1948).
2. John P. Wilson, *Islands in the Desert - A History of the Uplands of Southeastern Arizona* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).
3. James Brand Tenney, *History of Mining in Arizona*, Special Collections Division of University of Arizona Library (Tucson: 1927-1929).
4. William P. Blake, *Sketch of the Mineral Wealth of the Region Adjacent to the Santa Cruz Valley, Arizona* (Tucson, University of Arizona, 1901).
5. Stanton B. Keith, "Index of Mining Properties in Santa Cruz County, Arizona," *The Arizona Bureau of Mines Bulletin 191* (Tucson, University of Arizona, 1975).
6. J. Michael Canty, Michael N. Greeley, ed., *History of Mining in Arizona, Vol's I-III*, (Tucson, Arizona: Mining Club of the Southwest Foundation, 1991).