

Account given by W. W. Cahill

February 19, 1947

(1907)

Was not too clear as to date. Put it somewhere in 1905 or 1906, because he remembers he and John Ryan were in Ludlow at the time, building the T & T.

A fellow by the name of Jack Duane in Daggett was agent for D.W. Earle & Co., forwarding and commission merchants. Followed mining camps. Dealt in lumber, flour, grain, coal, etc., Brought freight from railroad station out to mines. T & T patronized this company. In fact, it was Duane who got Wash Cahill his job with P.C.B.

P.C.B. always on lookout for new strikes in borax.

Duane kept his ears open -- passed on tips.

At that time Death Valley and Borate were the only sources of colemanite.

Literally thousands of tips were brought to P.C.B. for colemanite. Samples usually proved to be lime. Cahill went to investigate dozens of them. Company never expected to find anything, but never passed up chances. Always investigated.

Seems that Blumenberg at that time was running Dawes and Myler plant in Daggett. Bag of samples arrived addressed to Blumenberg, or to the American Borax Company. Came collect. No separate letter. If there was note of some kind, it was inside bag. Duane's office was in railroad depot. He knew everything that went on in depot. Blumenberg left bag of samples there for weeks. He, too, like P.C.B., received lots of bum tips. Was probably just another sack of rocks. Reluctant to pay freight on them. Finally, however, got them out. Saw at a glance it was colemanite. Showed them to Duane, who also saw at a glance. Blumenberg exclaimed, "By God !", and jumped on train pronto, and beat it to Lang.

Duane promptly wrote to Cahill. Didn't dare send a wire, since news was so confidential. Told him he'd got some stuff that was the real thing. Get busy !

Cahill passed on news to Ryan who told him to go to Lang at once. Cahill got on night train. Next morning when he stepped off the train in Los Angeles at the Santa Fe depot, there was Blumenberg ! Cahill pretended he was coming into town to see his family.

Only one train a day going up to Lang (So. Pac. R.R.). Left at night. Cahill had to wait in town all day. Bought ticket for Lang. Lang consisted of just one building, the railroad depot. Put there to "O.S." the trains (check the fact that they'd passed by). Two men at Lang. Worked on 12 hour shifts. Night operator and day operator (also agent for R.R.) Day operator lived upstairs in depot with wife.

Must have been in spring of year, or autumn, because weather was chilly when he reached Lang at 11 p.m. Walked back to last car in train. Showed ticket to conductor. Conductor was surprised at his destination. Stopped train at Lang for him. Brakemen remarked:

"Are this is where you want to get off? Nobody gets off here."

Agent came out for his mail. Went back into depot to O.S. train. Didn't come out again. Wash knocked on door. Introduced himself as coming from T & T. Said he'd heard of borax mine being found over here.

"Feller was here yesterday," said agent. Described Blumenberg. Told him mine was five or six miles up canyon from depot. "Agent took him up by team."

Cahill wondered would he take him up? Sat there all night, waiting to see agent who went on duty at 7 a.m. Wash offered to pay operator to take agent's place. Agent agreed to take Cahill up. Borrowed a spring wagon and span of horses from farmer up canyon. Took Cahill right to the spot. Showed him tunnelling, about 12 feet into hillside. Nobody there. Cahill didn't have to analyze ore. Recognized it. Pandermite. Looks like talc. Mixed with colemanite. Streak at mouth of tunnel about six inches thick. Increased in width. 12 to 14 inches thick at end of tunnel. Cahill could see magnificent ledge cropping out on hill above, about 1000 feet, running straight over hill.

Blumenberg had got in touch with prospector who had located it. Must have found him there and taken him to town where he had wined and dined him. Made arrangement with him to take over property by giving him a few hundred dollars. Told him he'd immediately commence development work on property and would give him job as foreman while the work was in progress. In short, Blumenberg had it all tied up.

Cahill wired Ryan at Ludlow telling him there was no doubt about the deposit. (May still have wire) Mr. Ryan came right out and took over. Matter now out of Cahill's hands. Mr. Ryan, seeing that principal ledges were located, got hold of Johnny Mills, and while Johnny was supposed to be prospecting for himself, actually prospected for P.C.B., seeing if there were any outside locations that had been overlooked. Decided, after prospecting around for three or four weeks, that there was nothing worth locating.

Blumenberg went to work developing, as promised. Claims located as lode claims.

About this time Thorkildsen moved in. Began to make placer locations around, and (Cahill thinks) over principal locations Blumenberg had secured.

Cahill says, "As before stated, after I had made the first examination, Mr. Ryan took over. So I'm not positive as to how it came about, but as I recall, owing to the fact that at that time the courts had never decided whether or not colemanite claims should be located as placer or lode claims, it is my understanding that Thorkildsen and Blumenberg, not being sure themselves which was in the right, decided it was best to form some kind of a merger, which eventually developed in Thorkildsen buying all of Blumenberg's interests."

Cahill thinks P.C.B. paid one or two million for Lang mine.

Company paid agent at Lang \$20 a month to keep track of what was going on at Lang and report to them. Agent sent monthly reports as to shipments, etc.