

The big bore

Mining Review, 4 Sept 1897:

A GIGANTIC SCHEME

Promoted by J.M. Harris

The Spokesman Review: "The most gigantic scheme of development yet contemplated in the Slocan it is about decided to defer getting underway until a more propitious change of prices occurs, although the capitalists who were to come out from the east and review the proposition have not signified their intention of postponing the trip. The project has been worked out by J.M. Harris, president of the Reco company. It is to be a double-track crosscut tunnel, 12 feet high, the lower four feet of which is to be chambered the entire length; one chamber for the outflow of water, and the other for the inrush of air, so as to insure natural ventilation. This tunnel will tap at a great depth, thousands of feet in some instances and within a distance of two miles the following rich leads, all of which parallel through the main Slocan belt lying between the Seaton and south (or main) forks of Carpenter creek: The Payne, Washington, Reco, Noble Five, Goodenough, Slocan Boy, Robert E. Lee, American Boy, Ajax, Last Chance, Deadman, Antoine and Ruby Silver, Best, Rambler-Cariboo, Dardanelles, Texas, Omega, Blue Bird and Gray Copper, not to mention the blind leads supposed to exist in this phenomenal mineral zone. The exit of the tunnel will be below

Sandon, near the Canadian Pacific tracks."

The Miner, 4 Sept 1897: A big undertaking (tunnel scheme)

British Columbia News, 5 Nov 1897:

Mr. Harris' tunnel scheme

Engineers and mining men generally agree that the projected tunnel of J.M. Harris to tap all the mines in the North Hill, is one of the most advanced ideas of the age in mining, says the Sandon *Mining Review*. It would cost anywhere from half to three quarters of a million dollars, but it would expose everything in the hill to practical mining. If Mr. Harris can get sufficient outside capital interested, he will be doing a great deal towards making Sandon the greatest mining camp in the world, for it is generally believed this hill is full of mineral.

Victoria Daily Colonist, 15 Sept 1897:

GREAT MINING SCHEME

President of the Reco wants to run a tunnel two miles long

The Kootenaiian says that John M. Harris, president of the Reco Mining Company, has conceived the idea of driving a crosscut tunnel through Noble Five mountain. The tunnel would be two miles long, 12 feet high, wide enough for a double car track, and chambered the entire length so as to allow for drainage and natural ventilation. These workings would tap at a great depth, thousands of feet in some instance and within a distance of two miles the following rich

leads, all of which parallel through the main Slocan belt, lying between Seaton creek and the south (or main) fork of Carpenter creek ...

(I can't find *The Kootenaian* story referred to above. The issue of 8 Sept 1897 is missing from the microfilm reel.)

The Paystreak, 18 Sept 1897:

TO TUNNEL THE MOUNTAIN

Two miles long and a mile from the top J.M. Harris is not a man of small ideas. He has had under contemplation for some time, and is only waiting a favorable opportunity for commencing, a proposition which rivals the great mining ventures of Nevada and Colorado. It is to commence a little below Sandon and run a tunnel through the mountain north of town to the Reco mine, two miles long, tapping 11 well known ledges, the lowest depth being 3,500 feet and a mile below the summit of the range. It has been estimated that the work would cost \$50 a foot, or \$500,000 for the tunnel.

The success of the undertaking, of course, rests upon whether or not the ledges have the necessary depth. Mr. Harris is well satisfied that they have. He says that every indication of a true fissure is possessed by these ledges. They break the formation at right angles, the walls are perfect, and as far as they have been gone down on they widen.

The Payne Ledge would be reached in the first 300 feet, and as fast as the ledges were tapped drifting and stoping would commence. The tunnel would be large

enough to do any amount of carrying required. There would be two tracks and electric cars. The tunnel company would depend upon a royalty on the tonnage for a revenue.

The possibilities of such an enterprise are difficult to imagine. The big wealth producers of Montana, Colorado, and Nevada would have a rival in Kootenay. Bold men have achieved great things, and many people think Mr. Harris has plenty of courage.

Mining Review, 30 Oct 1897 and *British Columbia News* 5 Nov 1897:

Mr. Harris' Tunnel Scheme

Engineers and mining men generally agree that the projected tunnel of Mr. J.M. Harris to tap all the mines in the north hill is one of the most advanced ideas of the age in mining. It would cost anywhere from one-half to three-quarters of a million dollars, but it would, of course, expose everything in the hill to practical mining. If Mr. Harris can get sufficient outside capital interested, he will be doing a great deal towards making Sandon the greatest mining camp in the world, for it is generally believed this hill is full of minerals.

Mining Review, 12 Nov 1898

IT WILL BE A BIG BORE

A gigantic tunnel to be cut through the Noble Five Mountain

"Up in Sandon they are seriously contemplating the driving of the great long-distance tunnel which has been talked of for years past," said James

Dennistoun Sword, M.E., who is just back from a trip through the Slocan. "John M. Harris, the president of the Reco company, is at the head of the movement, and he is now interesting himself in the formation of a syndicate with that end in view. There is no doubt as to the benefit of the work if it is ever completed. The project has been discussed ever since the Slocan has been known, but the great cost of the undertaking has prevented the inauguration of the enterprise. The Slocan is perhaps as well adapted to long-distance development tunnels as any mining country on earth. The grades of the mountains up there are something incredible, and an enormous percentage of depth is gained with every foot of tunnel driven.

"Mr. Harris proposes starting a 10,000 foot tunnel below Sandon to cut clean through the Noble Five mountain. A maximum depth of 4,000 feet would thus be gained. Among the ledges that would be tapped at that depth are the lodes of the Noble Five, the Payne, the Argo, the Last Chance, and the Reco

"It is expected that with power the tunnel could be driven at the rate of from eight to ten feet per day, for the ground is very easily worked. According to that estimate the tunnel could be completed in a little more than three years. It would revolutionize mining in the Slocan ..." — *Rossland Miner*

British Columbia Gazette, 13 Dec 1900:
Private bill notice for "an Act to

incorporate a Company with power to run, construct, excavate and maintain a tunnel through and under the land lying between the Town of Silverton and the Town of Sandon ... from a point on the north side of Four-Mile Creek at or near where said creek enters Slocan Lake, and within two miles of the said Town of Silverton, to a point at or near the Town of Sandon, and within one mile thereof, and for the purposes of the undertaking to run exploring and branch tunnels from the main tunnel ..."

The ad doesn't name the company, its principles, or who sponsored the bill. Just the name of the law firm -- Davis, Marshall, and MacNeill.

Cascade Record, 22 Dec 1900: More on the tunnel

The Kootenaian, 3 Jan 1901:

A BIG TUNNEL

Through the mountain between Sandon and Silverton

One of the greatest mining enterprises ever undertaken in British Columbia, or, in fact, in the northwest, will soon be commenced in the Slocan. It is the running of a tunnel through and under the land lying between the towns of Silverton and Sandon wholly for prospecting purposes.

The distance in a straight line between these two towns is over six miles. To carry out this big enterprise large sums of money will have to be spent. It has been

estimated that the outlay will probably exceed \$5,000,000.

A mining company especially to carry out the proposed scheme has already been formed, but the names of the promoters and the name of the company have not as yet been made public. It has been stated, however, by those who are thoroughly acquainted with the proposition that the company has at its back an unlimited amount of capital and that the undertaking will be carried out in every detail.

What the company proposes to do exactly is to run the tunnel from a point on the north side of Four Mile creek near where the creek enters Slocan lake and within two miles of Silverton to a point within one mile of Sandon. For the purpose of the undertaking, exploring and branch tunnels from the main tunnel are to be run; also raise mining, working or air shafts along the line of the proposed tunnel or branches will be made. The company asks to explore for minerals by the use of drills, shafts, or excavations: to construct, maintain, and operate by electricity or otherwise tramways and roadways for the purpose of carrying ores, mine products and freight, or as may be otherwise required; to engage in all kinds of mining operations, and to erect and maintain crushing, electrical, hydraulic, sampling, concentrating, smelting and refining works, or other plant, and to deal in the product of the same; to supply, sell and dispose of compressed air, light and power, and to erect and place any pipes, electrical line,

cable or electrical apparatus above or below ground, along, over and across streets, bridges and lands; to secure the right of as much water in Four Mile creek as will be required for the purposes of the company, to take and hold shares in any other company; to enter into any agreement and to make contracts with any company owning lands, and to charge tolls and receive compensations for the use of the tunnels or works of the company, according to the desire of the company.

The country under which the proposed tunnel will run is practically one mountain range, but in some places it is quite broken. It will have to pass under one valley, but even then it will be a considerable distance below the surface. The highest elevation under which it will pass is that on Mount Alamo. Here the tunnel will be from 6,000 to 7,000 feet below the surface. The course which the company has chosen for the proposed tunnel is an appropriate one, as it will run directly at right angles with the main rich mineral leads which are known to exist in that section.

On the direct line of this proposed tunnel the country is nearly completely covered with mining properties and numerous prospects. There are probably 80 claims directly over the proposed course. Among the dividend payers of this section is the Bosun, Idaho, Alamo, Queen Bess, Ivanhoe, Ruth, and a few others. These properties have been undergoing development for the past year or two, and it is a well known fact that *The Mineral*

deposits become much richer as greater depth is reached.

By the new company an application will be made to the provincial legislature at its session in February for an act to incorporate it as a company to carry out the proposed scheme. The mining men of this district have great confidence in the scheme, and they believe that the application will be granted without question — *Spokesman Review*