

CERRO GORDO DENIM

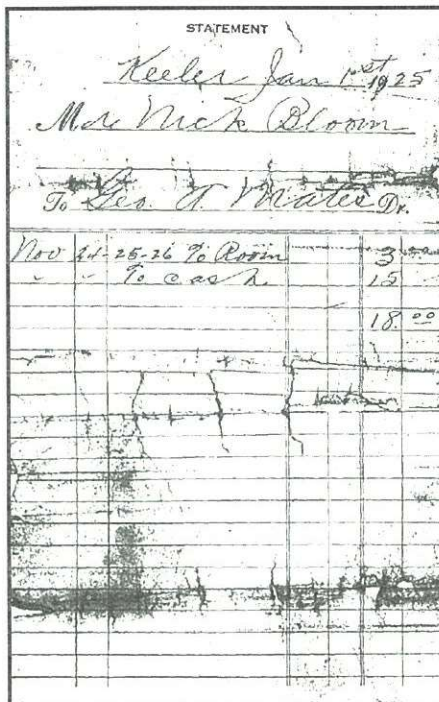
by Deric English

Approaching 8,500 feet in the Inyo Mountains of eastern California, one will find the mining camp of Cerro Gordo. The miners, prostitutes, Chinese laborers, and merchants of its heyday are ghosts of the past, but one can still sleep in its mining camp bunkhouse or shop Beaudry's General Store. Sections of the town have been restored and are just waiting for tourists that enjoy life in a mining camp ghost town.

Mining Company, Owens Lake Company, and Great Western Ore & Reduction Company began investing capital and equipment for underground mining. It is during this time that bullion from Cerro Gordo was loaded onto two steamers named Bessie Brady and Molly Stevens. The bullion was sent across the (now dry) Owens Lake, and destined for San Pedro Harbor. Some have ventured to say that Cerro Gordo and its riches made it Los Angeles' Comstock Lode.



The Boss brand jeans found in the Cerro Gordo mining district. Description of information retrieved from jeans includes, "The Boss, Union Made, Cohn Goldwater Co. Maker Los Angeles, size 34 waist, 31 length."



Statement from George A. Mates to Nick Bloom, January 1, 1925. This appears to be for a room and cash advance and was found in the pocket of Nick Bloom's jeans. (Actual size: 3½ H x 5½ V).

In 1865, Mexican miners found and named Cerro Gordo for its "fat" content of silver. Pablo Flores is the individual credited for discovering this rich silver deposit. These Mexican miners, with little or no capital, developed this deposit through open trenches and pits.

As time went on, those with capital began to develop Cerro Gordo. Companies like the Union

Similar to many mining camps, an eventual decline took place which resulted in many leasers trying their luck at procuring riches from Cerro Gordo. Nick Bloom might have been a lessee when, to keep dust at a minimum, he stuffed a pair of his Boss jeans between a wooden ore shoot and surrounding rock. Little did he know that seventy-two years later an underground explorer would find the pants, look in the pockets, and become just as thrilled as Nick Bloom would have been in finding a high-grade silver deposit. ✕