



## Smithsonian Institution

*Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives*

### Joseph D. Mountain - Articles

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difficulty with the financial arrangements decided my clients against the purchase. The next spring I was in the neighborhood of the gravel again so ~~just for fun~~ just for fun, I took another set of sample.s. Much to my dismay, these turned out to be "skunks". They showed almost no trace of gold. Looking for a reason, I took samples of the wood pile. These showed a high percentage of gold. The salters had drilled tiny holes in each stick of wood, put a few grains of gold into each hole and plugged them up again. When I burned the wood to thaw out the ground, the gold went down into the ground and I got it with my sample.s"

Mr. Cornell.

Sometimes mines which actually contain gold are sold for more than they are worth because the samples have been salted. One engineer was investigating a property in Arizona the sale of which was to involve nearly 1/2 million dollars. It was anticipated from the previous production of the mine that the samples would run somewhere in the neighborhood of \$6.50 to \$7.00 per ton. The engineer brought in dozens of <sup>bags of</sup> samples gave some of them to the assayer to run. They assayed from \$12 to \$14 per ton. Upon getting this information, the engineer gave the assayer more samples. These assayed ~~about the same values~~. A third lot of samples showed about the same. The engineer had been suspicious. ~~The first lot were the samples of the property. The second lot were samples of barren rock. The third lot were samples of blacksmith coal. The salters had done a thorough job of salting of the samples. They had injected a needful of gold cyanide solution into each sample bag sometime between the time that the sampels were sealed and the time the assayer recieved them.~~

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