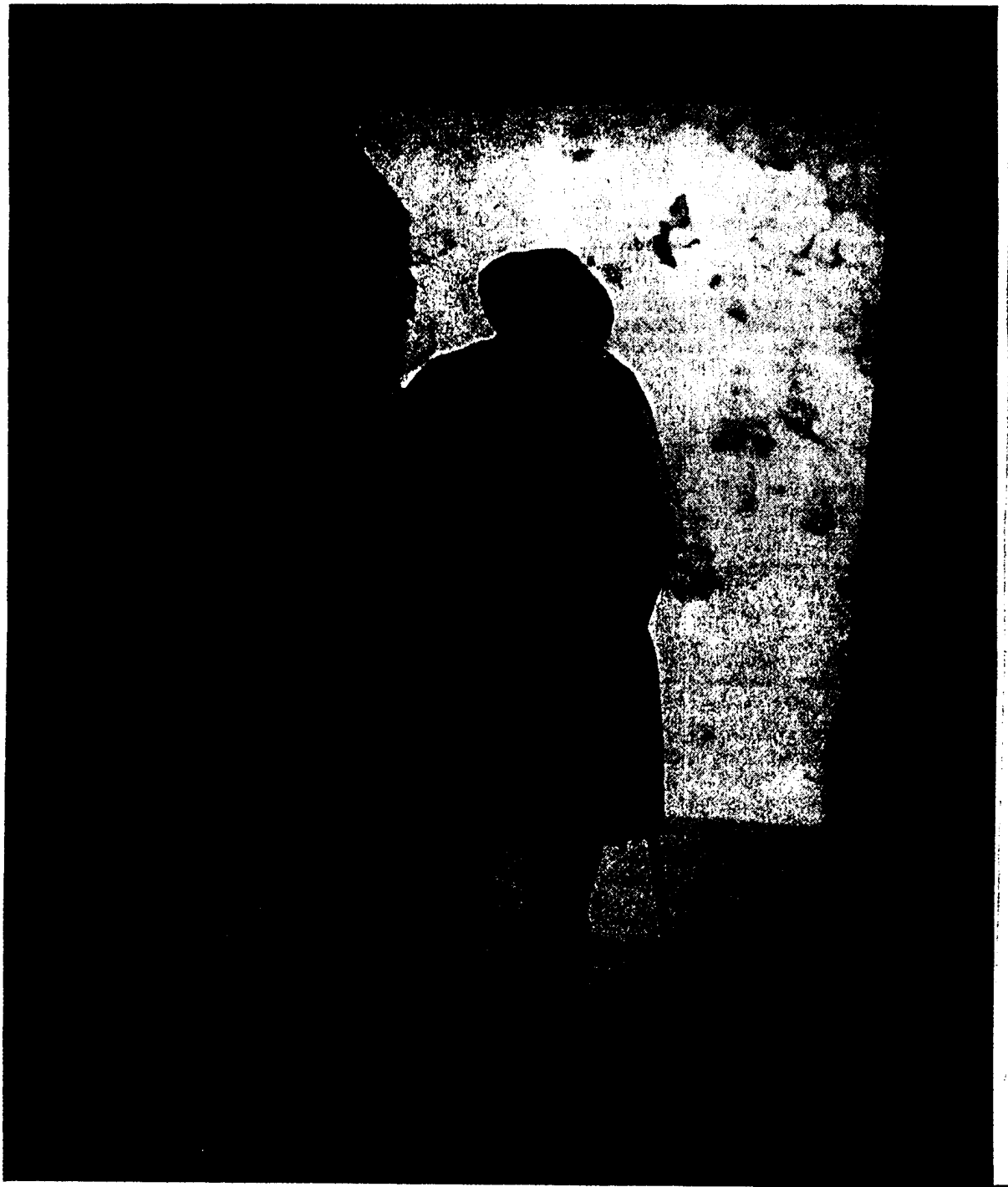


December
1955



Medical science brands it a hoax, yet in an 18-month period over 100,000 came to be "cured."

TRUE REPORTS ON THE UNDERGROUND CURE FOR ARTHRITIS

Arthritis can't be cured in a uranium mine, doctors say.
But an old crippled dog named Solomon didn't know that.
Right after his mine treatments he started chasing cats

BY SETH TOM BAILEY

Photographed for TRUE by Robert Halmi

MONTANA

A little over two years ago news dispatches out of Montana reported that persons afflicted with arthritis were claiming beneficial results from sitting an hour at a time six days a week in old abandoned gold mines that had been found to be radioactive. Some months prior to this time a woman visitor to the Free Enterprise Mine at Boulder, which was then mining uranium ore, discovered after a couple of trips down an 85-foot shaft that her arthritis pains were gone and she felt fine for the first time in several years. She immediately induced two friends who had arthritis to go into the mine with her and, after several visits, they too found the trips beneficial. Or so the story went.

For some time thereafter, as more and more visitors came and the management admitted them free of charge, the mining operations went on. But the increasing number of visitors impeded the work and something had to be done about it.

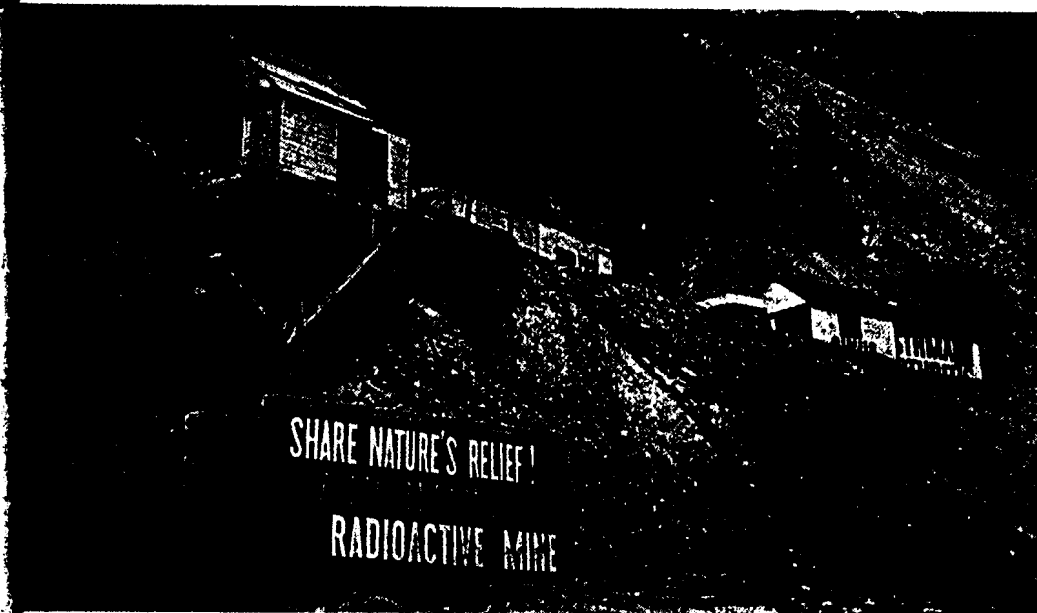
"I believe we can make more money charging admission to the property than working it for uranium," the superintendent told the mine owners who had complained about lagging production. They agreed.

Therefore, the mine was closed down for several months while a building with an office, reception room, an elevator and other modern conveniences were erected at a cost of around \$75,000. The mine management then announced that it was ready to accommodate visitors at \$10 an hour per person, or \$50 for six visits. The six-hours-a-week exposure period was considered insufficient to harm the human body, yet ample for the purpose of relieving it of arthritic pains. No complete cure for arthritis was claimed.

Owners of old abandoned gold mines in the region pricked up their ears. There was a sudden rush for Geiger counters. Most of the mines of the area contain a small amount of radioactivity, and soon "health mines" were in



When it became more profitable to "cure" arthritis than to mine uranium, a new industry was born. Above: A patient tries out radioactive dirt.



This Colorado mine claims to relieve asthma, arthritis, sinusitis, bursitis and even hayfever.



While absorbing radiation patients can read, listen to music, or study the framed testimonials hung on the wall.

operation by the dozens. The gold-mine owners had little money for plush installations and about all the preparation they made was a little cleaning up here and there where it was needed and the installation of electric lights. The admission fee runs anywhere from \$1 to \$3, with a generous discount for six consecutive visits. The Free Enterprise still sticks to its original fee, refusing to cut prices to meet the stiffening competition.

Soon after the news stories appeared, no less than four federal agencies and the American Medical Association branded the whole thing another medical hoax. The AMA called it an "unfortunate promotional scheme." But by word of mouth and through hometown newspaper articles by those claiming benefits, the word was spread and soon arthritics from all parts of the country were pouring into Boulder. Finding sufficient housing facilities for them became a major problem in that small town. Mine records disclose that in an 18-month period more than 100,000 persons sought relief.

Out of all this some questions have arisen. What relief from pain, if any, have these persons received? If the whole

thing is a hoax, as the AMA says it is, why hasn't someone put a stop to it? Why hasn't the Post Office department prosecuted the mine owners for using the mails to defraud? Why have many persons revisited the mines two and three times, if they are receiving no actual benefits?

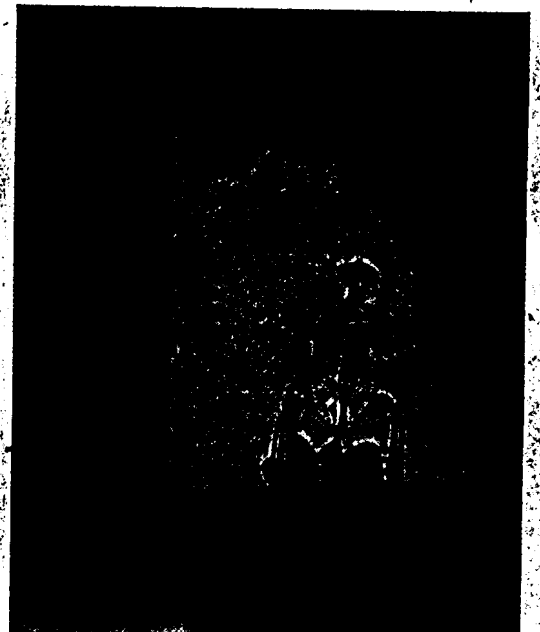
On a recent fishing trip into Montana which took me near the mines I attempted, as a free-lance writer, to discover the answers to some of the questions. I was urged to do so by Lucile Herbert, wife of Charles W. Herbert of Livingston, whom my wife and I visited for a week. The Herberts, whose permanent home is in Tucson, Arizona, have a summer home on the West Boulder.

Lucile told me she had suffered for years from an arthritic condition in her fingers and that she had visited Boulder when her husband went there to take pictures. Out of curiosity she had gone into the mines for the prescribed period and three weeks later she was pleasantly surprised to find the pain in her fingers had vanished. Sitting in the mines, she said, would not cure arthritis but it did provide her relief from pain up to one year.

Having subsequently read an article called *Quackery in*



Above: An attendant tests radioactive rocks taken from the mine with a Geiger counter. Right: Three out of five persons "taking the cure" claim relief—the rest go away discouraged and bitter.



the Atomic Age, which violently attacked the theory that radioactivity would relieve arthritic pains, I was frankly dubious about it.

"But it's true," Lucile insisted. "The pain left my fingers three weeks after I came home."

On the way to Boulder we stopped at Helena to call on Norman J. Holter of the Holter Research Foundation, whose work in the medical-physics field has attained national prominence. Surely if anyone could give us the cold scientific facts about the mines, he could.

"Mr. Holter," I said, after explaining the purpose of my interview, "this business of sitting in old abandoned mines with the hope of getting relief from arthritic pains sounds absurd. What can you tell me about it?"

"Naturally," he replied, "if an individual feels after visiting a so-called health mine that he has had some relief, that individual is not going to think it absurd. On the other hand, some of the claims made by certain mine operators can certainly be considered absurd. There is evidence both for and against any psychological effect involved. I can tell you that some of the health mines have no radioactivity in them, yet some people have appeared to be helped. This of course is evidence in favor of the psychological effect. However, the cold, scientific fact is that there is not enough accurate information available either to the mine owners themselves or to anyone else upon which to base any scientific conclusion."

Mr. Holter was an instructor in physics at the University of California before he settled in Helena. He has been training people in atomic matters for several years, so I felt I had received information to discourage further interest in the mines. But I had to be sure. "Could it be possible," I said, "that there is some unknown element in these mines that has not yet been isolated—something science has not been able to put its finger on—which is actually helping these people?"

He studied me for a moment in conclusion. "I will give you my direct professional opinion which is that there is not any unknown element involved in the health-mine business." He shook his head.

So we climbed into the car and continued our trip.

In Boulder we stopped at Pappy Smith's Ranchotel where most of the mine visitors stay. A new batch had just arrived on the evening bus from the railhead and others had come in by car. Two of those who got off the bus were in wheel chairs, but these, Pappy explained, were the newcomers. "Talk to some of the old-timers," he advised. "Those who've been here two or three times."

Those back for a second or third go at it proudly pointed

out that they, too, had gone through the wheel-chair stage, or had been so crippled up they could hardly walk, and now they were standing on their feet, able to get around with the use of a cane.

A slight, soft-spoken man with a pinch of gray at the temples, who was a retired manufacturer from Indianapolis, told me that he had come to the mines on a stretcher. "For two years I was bedridden," he said, "and then I made a trip out here to visit the mines. When I went home I was able to stand on my feet and walk a little. After the second trip I got out of the wheel chair, and here I am back for a third time." His merry eyes twinkled. "Look at me now. I can walk like anybody else."

"That's right," said a second gentleman who had been listening. "I knew Frank when he was bedridden. His coming to the mines induced me to try it. I was so bent over I could hardly walk or take my eyes off the floor. I've been here twice before. This time I drove my car out and brought him. We enjoyed the trip immensely and even visited Yellowstone on the way. Just the two of us."

The gentleman who had been bedridden was F. W. Cardiff who had organized and directed a manufacturing concern for years, up to the time of his retirement because of his arthritis. His friend was Charles H. Holt, a stockbroker.

"Permit me to introduce myself," said another elderly gentleman. "I'm Arthur C. Peck of Duluth. Retired banker. I don't own a dime's worth of stock in these mines and never shall, so I haven't got any reason to lie." He stood slightly bent, looking up at me. "I had rheumatoid arthritis so bad," he went on, "that I couldn't put on my clothes or even comb my hair. I came here as a last resort after going to the Mayo Clinic and half a dozen

others. They all told me I was past medical aid. The three trips I have made have cost me approximately \$1,600. I spent over \$20,000 going around to clinics and got no help at all. Since I started coming here a year and a half ago I'm a new man. These mines haven't done anything for the deformities of arthritis but the visits have relieved the pain and that alone is worth more to me than anything else it could have done, for now I can walk and enjoy life. I don't care what the smart doctors say about these mines, I'll be coming back here every six months from now on and I'll live a hell of a lot longer than some of the specialists who gave me up."

It was a pretty convincing statement. But it was only one of a score to follow. Each statement of course involves the personal experience of the individual, and so many of them are so similar that together they form a striking pattern.

WHAT THE DOCTORS SAY

Medical science is traditionally conservative. No new cure is accepted before its effectiveness has been proved beyond reasonable doubt. The view of most doctors, as expressed in interviews with TRUE's medical expert, Donald G. Cooley, is that no scientific evidence has been found to indicate that small amounts of radioactivity, such as found in the Montana mines, can cure or relieve rheumatic diseases. The American Medical Association and the Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation share this view. The medical status of mine-sitting is summed up by one respected specialist in rheumatic diseases who remarked: "Those poor patients can't tell an arthritis cure from a hole in the ground."

Despite the lack of proof, the author of this article, a trained reporter with all the reporter's natural skepticism, decided to go out to Montana and see for himself. He found that three out of five arthritis sufferers claim help from visiting the mines, and met hundreds of people who swear by the uranium cure. In publishing his report, TRUE is not saying that this method of curing arthritis is valid. We merely feel that an unbiased look at what has happened will contribute to the search for truth and that the story of Tom Bailey's search for that truth is exciting and dramatic.

Here is the story they tell. For most arthritics, the first two or three visits to the mine cause a nauseous condition and sometimes vomiting. This is usually followed by severe pains, first in the afflicted joints and then throughout the entire body. The ache may last for several days, or it may disappear after the first day, depending on the physical condition of the individual. But eventually it goes away and, if the radiation was beneficial, so do all the arthritic pains. Calcium deposits remain, yet the patient's agony vanishes, or greatly diminishes.

Only about three out of five persons visiting the mines find any relief. Many go away discouraged and bitter. Although the time needed for reaction seems to vary widely, from a week to three or four weeks, there are usually some signs of it after the first day or two—such as pain not only in the afflicted joints but in other parts of the body as well.

A doctor in Helena, whose name cannot be used because of his affiliation with the AMA, told me this: "I believe that if anyone is being helped by these mines it's the patient with rheumatoid arthritis, the crippling type. Some of my patients have been helped and I'm not prepared to say whether it's the radiation or if it's all in the mind. Whatever it is, those helped, or who feel that they have been helped, are the rheumatoid cases. The others I sent down to the mines show little or no results at the present time."

There appears to be a difference of opinion on this among patients, however, for some afflicted with the 40-odd other types of arthritis claim relief. But a survey shows that the majority of cases which do find relief, whether it is mental or otherwise, are in the rheumatoid category.

While looking over the list of visitors at one of the mines I came across the name of a physician in a nearby town. The card revealed that he had made the customary six trips into the mine, so I went to see him.

"Now look," he said apprehensively when I told him what I had come for. "I'm in no position to make any statements for publication."

"I understand," I said.

He looked at me and grinned. "Okay, you can quote me if you want, but don't use my right name."

Here is his exact statement, as I wrote it down in my note book:

"Sure, I've got arthritis in my hands, and bad. It got so I couldn't operate. I had to call in other doctors and split the fee. I went to the Mayo Clinic twice, and that's no indictment of Mayo's, which is a fine clinic, but they couldn't help me. Finally one Sunday I told my wife I was going to visit the mines at Boulder. I took two treatments the first day. I kept a muffler around my neck, pulled up to my ears so nobody would recognize me. I went back again on Wednesday when

I had half a day off and managed to get away a few hours on Friday. I went down again on the weekend. In all, I took six treatments."

He leaned over and flexed his fingers. "Last Monday I operated on my first patient in eight months. I'm in business again."

"Have you reported this to the AMA?" "I have not. They'd laugh at me."

As I returned to the hotel that evening a gentleman stopped me. "I hear you're doing an article on the mines," he said. He was a large bespectacled man with a tuft of reddish beard on his chin. "My name's Ed Collins. I'm a lumber dealer in Portland, Oregon. I'm not trying to get my name in print, but if I can help you in any way I'll be glad to."

He later joined us at the dinner table and named no less than half a dozen well-known clinics he had gone to in search of relief from arthritic pains. He thought that one or two had helped him a little, but not enough. He had heard of the mines but had no faith in them. "To me," he said, "sitting in an old tunnel sounded as silly as sleeping with a rabbit's foot under your pillow, but my wife finally dragged me to Montana. Hell, I'd never seen the state before, anyway, and maybe the change would do me good. And I can say this for sure—I wouldn't be back here now if that first trip hadn't helped me. It's not psychosomatic. The pain's gone and you can tell the world it didn't just up and disappear overnight for no reason. I know it wasn't a state of mind, because I felt no relief for two weeks after I left here. I was convinced it was bunk and when the relief did come I was more surprised than anyone."

I was hearing so much in favor of the mines that the next day I began digging for contradictory evidence. I had wondered when we started for Boulder if I would be able to find any testimonials other than those supplied by the mines themselves, and practically everyone I talked with was willing to swear on a stack of supreme court judges that he or she had been helped.

I looked up Father Conran, pastor of St. Catherine's Parish at Boulder, and asked him if any of his parishioners had arthritis and if they had visited the mines. Surely a priest would tell me the truth.

"Yes," he said, "several of my people are afflicted, including myself." He said he had made 18 trips into the mines and he had noticed no change. His was not the crippling type. "But I have seen many people helped," he went on.

"Do you know of anyone who hasn't been helped?" I inquired.

"I honestly don't," he replied, "except in my own case."

I next called on A. H. Eiselein, editor and owner of the Boulder *Monitor*, who has been publishing his paper for almost 40 years and who has a finger on the general pulse, politically and otherwise.

"About three out of every five persons who come to the mines claim they have been benefited," I said. I was using the ratio established by the mines. "About the other two? Who will help them?"

"Medical science, I suppose," he re-

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At \$2 a throw, this Texas farmer treats 150 patients a day with uranium-bearing dirt.

The Underground Cure for Arthritis

[Continued from page 20]

plied. "About one-third of the people who come here only *think* they have arthritis. Many find later that it's a case of nerves or muscular trouble. Even the doctors don't know half the time. Of course many who visit the mines stay only a day or so and that's not enough to do them any good. Some types of arthritis can't be helped by radiation and those must be treated by their doctors."

I asked him about the mines that had mushroomed since the Free Enterprise opened its doors to the public.

"There are a few good ones," he said, "that have sufficient radiation. And there are some that are not so good. I've been in them all with a Geiger counter." He showed me several Geiger counters that he owned. It was a sort of hobby with him.

I asked him if the American Medical Association had ever investigated the claims made by mine visitors and his reply was a prompt, "No, not a single case." He said he had tried several times to get the AMA to send a qualified observer but nothing had ever been done about it.

"When Sister Elizabeth Kenny came to this country to show how to treat polio, the AMA waited two years before it would recognize her method. Now it's used in every hospital in the country that treats polio. I suppose they'll wait until all the arthritics have been cured and then they'll finally admit there's something to it."

He admitted in the next breath that he had used the word "cured" loosely, and added, "The mines don't actually cure anything that I know of, but they do give relief to arthritic pains and you know what that means to the patients. They're living again."

From Fergus C. Fay, manager of the Free Enterprise Mine which had started the whole thing, I learned more about the AMA. He said he had asked that organization to send a qualified observer to the Free Enterprise and that he had received an answer stating that a man would be sent providing the mines paid his salary and upkeep over a period of months. Fay declined to do this.

An AMA official told me that the organization had no money with which to make such investigations and that the only way Fay's request could be met would be for the mines to stand the expense.

The Free Enterprise Mine and a few others are endeavoring to conduct a legitimate business and make no claims which are not substantiated by sworn affidavits or by obvious facts, but some of the mine owners make all sorts of ridiculous claims about "cures." One operator even tells a story about a ray from the uranium ore being photographed, though it could not be seen by the naked eye, and he readily produces the photograph to prove it. The photographer who took the picture told me the ray, a white band running diagonally through the picture,

was a post near the camera that had been out of focus when the exposure was made. The post had later been removed by a mine employee, but the mine owner has refused to admit this, and uses the photo in his advertising pamphlets.

"It's the fly-by-night and unscrupulous operators we want to eliminate," Mr. Fay told me. "Not that we want their business, but because their fantastic claims hurt all of the legitimate mines."

The mine sends out cards after six months to each visitor inquiring if he has or has not received any benefits from his treatment. I asked Fay what the percentage of answers was.

"About 66 percent, and I consider that good because people seem to have a natural aversion to answering. They apparently feel that we might use their names for advertising purposes, which we do not do unless we have their specific permission. We do know from experience, however, that many persons who have not informed us of benefits have had them, because we hear of them through people they send to us."

Mr. Fay produced a Reuters dispatch from Vienna which he had clipped from the *Kansas City Star* under date of Sep-

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tember 1, 1954. "In Europe they're way ahead of us in recognizing the value of radioactivity," he said. "Read this."

The dispatch stated that an abandoned gold mine near Bad Gastein in the Salzburg province of Austria had become a modern hospital where "thousands of patients every year find health." It went on to say that during the war the Nazis, in need of gold, sank a deep shaft into the mountains which was later abandoned. Some films exposed down in the mine were fogged, as though they had been passed in front of an X-ray apparatus. Investigation showed that deep in the shaft there was a high concentration of a radioactive nature, which, when combined with the heat of 104 degrees and the dampness, had remarkably good effects on certain types of disease, including arthritis and bursitis. "Now," the dispatch went on to state, "the whole place has been scientifically examined and thousands of patients go into the mine yearly under doctors' orders and control. Scientists believe that the secret is a vast source of highly mineralized and radioactive water deep within the mountain. The gases rise through clefts in the rock and bring the radioactive qualities together with the warmth and moisture."

I asked Mr. Fay if it was possible for people going into the mines to get too much radiation.

"There are possible dire consequences

from intense radiation," he said, "and that is why we limit our visitors to an hour or two a day. However, this mine has been operated since 1949 either for the mining of uranium ore or as a health mine and I know of no workman who has been harmed by constant exposure. During the past two years I have spent over 400 hours underground and I feel no apparent ill effect."

"Do any of the men who have worked here have arthritis?" I asked.

He laughed. "If they did, we wouldn't be in business."

Brought to my attention was a reference to the mines by Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, a syndicated columnist, who wrote on July 30, 1953: "If the ore were really highly radioactive the persons would be made ill, or even killed, and if the ore were not radioactive the mines would be obtaining money under false pretenses . . . so far as is now known, small, safe doses of radioactivity do not cure anything except, perhaps, a few types of cancer."

Another authority was quoted in a short magazine article as having said that exposure to radioactive ore would produce cancer.

"I wish they would at least be consistent," Mr. Fay said. "One says one thing and the other contradicts him, and that's what we're up against."

Fay added that he had yet to hear of any case in which cancer was attributed to mine radioactivity. He knew several miners who had worked in low-grade radioactive mines all their lives and were still in excellent health.

Dr. I. K. Cummings of Polaris, Montana, pretty well expressed what is in the minds of all doctors: "About the only beneficial effects to be ascribed to these treatments is the effect on the mind. The hysterical ones are undoubtedly benefited, and that in a sense is justifiable, if treatments could be narrowed down to this type."

I finally took off one morning for a fly-fishing stream and was going to put the mines and the AMA out of my mind for a few hours. I met another fisherman and, as fishermen will, we fell into a brief conversation.

"You should have been here last May," he said, "before the tourists loused it up. I got my limit in an hour."

"You live here?" I inquired.

"No, I'm from Kansas. I'm visiting the mines. I used to have arthritis bad—"

Oh, oh! I thought. Here we go again. His story was typical. He hadn't fished in ages, was flat on his back for a couple of years and then he had come to the mines. "Now I'm really enjoying life," he said. "When I can catch beauties like these I'm happy." He opened his creel to reveal four seven-inch trout he had hooked on grasshoppers.

"I wish I could find some way to be sure all this is not mental with these people," I said to my wife, Doris, as we retired that night.

"I heard something today in the lobby," she answered. "A man was telling about a dog someone here owned that was all crippled up with rheumatism. He was so bad he could hardly walk. They

[Continued on page 30]

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[Continued from page 28]

took him into the mines a few times and later he whipped another dog that had been molesting him for months."

I snapped to attention. "Who was the fellow?"

"I only know him by sight," Doris said. "I'll point him out to you in the morning."

If a dog, I reasoned, could be aided by radioactivity, how could anyone say the effect was psychosomatic? A dog isn't supposed to think. That is, it's not supposed to reason like a human being. A dog with rheumatism wouldn't know *why* it was being taken into a mine. I knew I had to find that animal.

My quest the next morning was short. I contacted the editor of the *Monitor* who seemed to know everything. Mr. Eiselein said the dog belonged to a man down the street. There were several dogs in town, he informed me, which had been helped by visits to the mines but he was able to find only the one in question—a black-and-white mongrel that was standing in the middle of the street inspecting another dog. The animal showed no signs of rheumatism. When the other dog ran, he ran after it and his actions were those of any ordinary healthy pooch.

I talked with the owner who already had signed an affidavit covering the case, but somehow the affidavit could not be found. I began to smell a rat, or thought I did anyway, when I learned that the dog's picture had been in the paper. Eiselein was an enterprising newspaperman, and might do anything, I felt, to promote his town and the mines. He and the dog owner could have cooked all this up as a publicity stunt. No, I would have to find another dog, one that had rheumatism, but which had never been in the mines, and make a test of my own.

But finding such an animal was not easy. I visited all the cat and dog hospitals in Helena, but no rheumatic dogs. The severe winters in Montana are conducive to rheumatism in animals, I was told, but all known cases had been destroyed.

I asked one veterinarian if he had heard of any dogs that had been taken into the mines. "Yes, sometime back," he replied. "Over in Boulder."

Back in Boulder a service-station attendant told me of a dog that was so badly crippled with rheumatism it could stand for only short periods at a time. "Jim Carter owns it," he said. "I'll take you over there if you like."

Mr. Carter was proprietor of the Phillips 66 station in Boulder. He took us to his home to see the dog, which was stretched out in the yard. When I approached it, the animal raised its head slightly.

At the sound of his master's voice, the dog wagged its tail.

"What's his name?" I asked.

"Solomon. Noted for his wisdom. He's smart."

Solomon still wagged his tail but made no effort to rise.

"He won't get up unless I make him," Carter said. "He's pretty badly crippled. We've talked of having him put to sleep, but you know how that is. You hate to get rid of an animal you've raised from a

pup." He nudged the dog with the toe of his shoe and finally it got to its feet, but with considerable effort.

"He gets stiff when he lays down for any time," Carter explained.

I encouraged Solomon to walk to me and he did so but with great effort. He partly dragged the right hind leg and limped along on the left. He also seemed stiff in the spine and could turn only with labored effort. When he reached me he was panting as though he had been chasing a rabbit. He raised himself and leaned his paws against me in a friendly gesture.

"Have you ever taken him into the uranium mines?" I inquired.

"No, never have. Do you think it would do any good?"

"I don't know," I said. "But I'd like to find out."

I saw the dog again after its first visit to the Enterprise Mine and it had been vomiting.

"He's having severe pains," Carter said. "He whimpers in his sleep. I'm taking him up to the mines again tomorrow."

These were the same reactions some of the human visitors to the mines had had. After the second visit, Solomon was no longer sick, but he seemed content to lie still. There was no improvement in his physical condition that anyone could detect.

Subsequently I found another rheumatic dog called Thunderpumper and got his owner to take him to the mines. As I had other things to do I did not see the animal immediately. I wanted personally to contact persons who had been to the mines and I was permitted to select some names at random from the files. I chose those that were nearest the region and my wife and I shoved off.

Ten days later we returned to Boulder. I drove to the Phillips 66 station but Mr. Carter was not there. At the house no one answered the door bell. Moreover, Solomon was not in the yard.

"I hope those mine visits didn't kill him!" I said fearfully to my wife. "Mr. Carter will never forgive me."

Just then I heard a rustle in the grass and around the house bounded old Solomon, his tongue lolling and dripping saliva. He was at that moment as agile as any dog I had ever seen. I saw then the object of his interest, an ordinary house cat sitting on top of a post, glaring down at us with malevolent green eyes.

The old dog was so pleased when I went with him to the base of the post to inspect his quarry that he licked my hand. Except for a slight limp which was not noticeable when he hurried, there seemed to be nothing wrong with him. Whatever it was that had happened to Solomon in the past 10 days had given him a brand new lease on life.

"You can't imagine what's happened to Solomon," Carter said with a trace of excitement in his voice when I found him an hour later. "He's chasing cats and having a hell of a time. Those two visits to the mines did it!"

I asked Carter if the dog had ever lived up before when the cat came around.

"Oh, no, not until after he'd been in the mine. He didn't used to pay any attention to cats."

I later visited the other dog's owner, and again it was the same story. The dog had lived up after four trips into the mines, and was practically as good as new. But Thunderpumper's owner, whose family camped in a trailer, pulled out shortly thereafter and I've never been able to contact them again for a signed affidavit.

Not long ago I got a letter from Carter, Solomon's owner. "Last fall I took Solomon hunting many times and he just got along fine and was as good as he was before his recent trouble started. There is no doubt in my mind that the mine was responsible for the return of his former liveliness."

I have since felt some embarrassment about questioning the Boulder editor's veracity and about suspecting him of having cooked up a publicity story for the mines, but when he reads this he can feel assured that I no longer mistrust him and he has my profound apologies.

Since my trip to the mines I have been receiving letters from visitors with whom I had no personal contact and I have completely disregarded them in this article on the theory that they were no doubt inspired by the mine owners. However, I have personally contacted over 100 persons who visited the mines. About 60,000 of the 100,000 mine visitors left their names and addresses, and are thus available for checking. Some did not receive relief, but three out of five say they did, and I have their statements before me in their own handwriting.

One of the most outstanding examples is that of Everett E. Kracaw, P.O. Box 253, Fort Madison, Iowa, whose physician (name withheld at his own request) certified the patient's statement that he had been unable to sleep for more than a few minutes at a time for three years.

"When I went to the Free Enterprise Mine I was really reaching for straws," he told me. "Besides not sleeping, I hadn't been able to stand up straight for a year and a half and I was 35 pounds underweight. My first visit to the mine resulted in severe pains in the spine and rib area. I went to bed feeling perfectly miserable. About 10 o'clock I fell asleep and you can imagine my surprise when I awakened at 8 o'clock the following morning, having slept the night through for the first time in three years. A few days later I took off my brace and I have never had it on since."

To the average layman it does not seem possible that so much evidence in the form of personal statements by those claiming benefits could pile up without there being some truth in it. Either people are bigger fools than we think they are, or science is slower in discovering its shortcomings than it has been in the past.

These facts are offered medical science for what they are worth. As a reporter, I offer no personal conclusions. But I can't forget old Solomon up there in Montana chasing house cats, and hunting as vigorously as ever, after his long period of inactivity. To date he's made no statement about his marvelous recovery, but undoubtedly he will after he's had time to consider the matter—psychologically that is.—Seth Tom Bailey



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