

Lost Dutchman Mine Prospector Missing

By GENE McLAIN

A RETIRED Phoenix photographer, who dreamed of finding the fabulous Lost Dutchman gold mine and scorned pack animals for a helicopter to delve into the mysterious Superstition mountains, presented sheriffs of two counties with a search problem yesterday.

James A. Cravey, 62 years old, 1014 West Polk street, hired the helicopter to land him and eight days' provisions in an apparently otherwise inaccessible section of the foreboding mountain range east of Phoenix.

He hadn't returned yesterday, though due back in Phoenix last Friday, and fear was expressed that he has joined the long list of

persons who have sacrificed their lives for a gold hoard that may not even exist.

Cravey's return was uncertain at best.

AFFLICTED WITH a crippling of his legs, he is unable to walk far even under favorable conditions, and at this time of year conditions in the rugged, isolated mountains are anything but favorable.

Totally without prospecting experience, experts say Cravey is not equipped to care for himself under the rigorous conditions that have trapped and killed a number of gold mine seekers wise in the ways of the Superstitions.

His friend of 25 years, C. W. Vanderflute, Phoenix, reported his fears to Sheriff Cal Boies yesterday morning.

Boies relayed the report to Sheriff Lynn Early of Pinal county, since the Superstitions are located there.

THE SUPERSTITIONS are a big mountain range and only the helicopter pilot knows where Cravey was landed. The pilot was believed to be in San Diego yesterday.

Vanderflute believes Cravey mentioned Boulder Creek, reported to be in the most remote section of the mountains, but no one immediately available yesterday knew its location.

A search in the Superstitions is not an ordinary hunt. Some mine seekers have ascended into the rugged fastnesses of the mountains and disappeared, never to be found.

Vanderflute said Cravey carried a 50-foot length of rope, intending to lower himself into the supposedly rich mine whenever he found it. A crippled right arm would have precluded his climbing out of any shaft.

CRAVEY APPARENTLY discovered what he believed was the location of the long-sought mine in a dream. He confided to Vanderflute that he would recognize it when he saw it again.

"You'll lose your life up there," Vanderflute warned.

"What's the difference," Cravey is said to have replied.

Vanderflute said Cravey insisted on the trip despite protestations and left with a promise to contact his friends by last Friday. He intended to hike out of the mountains to the Superior highway, Vanderflute said.

Cravey was described as 62 years old, five feet, seven inches tall and weighing 180 pounds. He had brown hair and blue eyes and was wearing work clothing and heavy shoes.

The legend of the Lost Dutchman mine grew after the death in Phoenix of Jacob Walz, a prospector, who in the early days periodically emerged from the Superstitions with rich stores of gold.

His wealth spent in Phoenix and Mesa, he would re-enter the mountains and later return with more gold.

Many persons unsuccessfully sought to trail Walz and, after his death, scores made trips into the mountains seeking the source of his gold. None was successful and no further trace was found of some.

Reportedly the 18th victim of the Lost Dutchman lure was Adolph Ruth, retired government clerk. Bullet holes in his skull, when found in 1932, attested to the fact he was murdered.

Through the efforts of the helicopter pilot who landed his craft on a mesa beyond the rim of the rugged Superstition chain and let the aged prospector proceed on foot on a "dream quest for gold," sheriff's deputies now have the exact location of Cravey's starting point.

THE PILOT, Charles Marthens, and Edwin J. Montgomery, president of the Arizona Helicopter Service, landed on the mesa yesterday and found Cravey's first night's camp. Around the dead campfire were a bedroll, a five-gallon can of water and most of the aged man's eight-day supply of provisions. The camp site is located about eight miles southeast of Canyon Lake up Le Barge canyon—just over the Pinal county line.

Cravey's gun, mining tools and canteen were missing and it was theorized he had been away from camp the first day the helicopter set him down in the wild canyon.

The helicopter men searched the water holes in the vicinity for a trace of Cravey—but found no clues. It was presumed the novice prospector had been unable to retrace the trail back to his camp—and perhaps may have perished for lack of food and water.

ORIGINALLY, Cravey had told C. W. Vanderflute, a Phoenix friend, he had "seen the location of a lost gold mine in a dream" and that he was going in search of it. Despite Vanderflute's protestations, Cravey hired the helicopter pilot to land him in the isolated mountains where many have met their death. He wanted to "save time," he said.

The time element also was apparent in the findings at Cravey's camp. Since the retired photographer didn't even bother to pack his provisions with him, it was obvious he was in a hurry to find his "dream mine."

IN ADDITION to being a novice in the art of prospecting in a country noted for its ruggedness and blind canyons, Cravey was suffering from an affliction which had crippled his legs.

Despite this, however, Pinal county officers said they were still hopeful the man might be found. Sheriff Early and his posse left this morning by car to the Apache Trail, from which point they proceeded into the mountains by horseback.

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Prospector Hunt Pushed

Experienced cowboy guides and a sheriff's posse took off at day-break today in search for 62-year-old James A. Cravey, a retired Phoenix photographer, who has been missing for three weeks in the treacherous canyons of the Superstition Mountains, it was disclosed last night by Lynn Early, Pinal county sheriff.

Hikers Find Man's Bones

MESA, Feb. 21—Discovery of the skeleton of James A. Cravey, retired photographer who disappeared in the rugged Superstition Mountains last June while seeking the legendary Lost Dutchman mine, was reported tonight by two Arizona visitors.

They are Capt. R. F. Perrin, U. S. Army, retired, and Lt. Comdr. Wilton F. Clements of Chicago, guests at Sunset Trail Ranch 11 miles east of here.

THE TWO men reported finding the skeleton of a man, minus the head, late this afternoon 2½ miles south of Weaver's Needle while on an all-day hike in the area. Because of the late hour, they did not search for the skull, but brought the man's wallet back to Sunset Trail Ranch. Identification was made through papers in the wallet.

Sheriff Cal Boies was notified at Phoenix. Boies said sheriff Lynn Earley of Pinal county will organize a party to pick up the skeleton tomorrow morning.

Cravey is the 20th person known to have lost his life looking for the fabled lost mine in the Superstitions. One of the most widely publicized deaths was that of Adolph Ruth of Washington, D. C., whose skull, containing a bullet hole, was found in 1931 by Harvey Mott, managing editor of *The Arizona Republic*, who was on an archaeological expedition sponsored by the newspaper.

CRAVEY HIRED a helicopter to fly him into the Superstitions last June. That was the last time he was seen.

Several weeks later, the helicopter returned with a searching officer. After a search, they located what appeared to be Cravey's camp not far from the spot where the helicopter had originally set him down. There was no indication that any of his supplies had been used.

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Skeleton Of Photographer Taken From Superstitions

MESA, Feb. 22—Superstition Mountains today yielded the bones of yet another who sought—and failed—to solve the mystery of the Lost Dutchman's gold.

But the mountains' fastness still obscured the secret of his death, just as it hides the fate of countless others who thirsted and died in a vain search for the legendary treasure trove.

Following a horseback trip into the rugged haunts of the Dutchman, Sheriff Lynn Earley of Pinal County said the remains "without doubt" are those of James A. Cravey, retired Phoenix photographer who disappeared last June.

"MOST" of the bones were brought out late this afternoon and taken to a Florence mortuary, Sheriff Earley said. The skull was found in a hackberry thicket, about 25 or 30 feet from the rest of the skeleton. There was no evidence of foul play, he said.

The Pinal sheriff termed it a wonder that the skeleton was found at all, inasmuch as most of the bones were in the thicket. The discovery was made late Saturday by two Valley of the Sun visitors, Capt. R. S. Perrin and Lt. Comdr. Wilton S. Clements of Chicago, while on an all-day hike into the wilderness.

They were attracted to the skeleton by a rope and a shoe apparently belonging to Cravey.

IDENTIFICATION was made from a wallet found in the tattered vestiges of clothing found with the skeleton. All of the credentials bore Cravey's name, Sheriff Earley said.

No canteen could be found, indicating that the physically handicapped Cravey wandered away

from his camp without water. No water can be found in the area in the summer months.

N Lottie C. Devine, coroner, of Florence, last night was attempting to locate acquaintances or possible relatives of Cravey.

Cravey possibly was the first prospector to use a helicopter in his search for gold. He was flown into an almost-inaccessible part of the mountains last June 21 by helicopter to begin his quest. With him were landed eight days' provisions. He had intended to hike out of the mountains to the Superior highway but he was never seen alive again. A ground and air search failed to find any clues of his disappearance, although his unused provisions were found at his base camp.

THE LEGEND of the Lost Dutchman mine grew after the death in Phoenix of Jacob Walz, a prospector who in the early days reportedly emerged periodically from the Superstitions with rich stores of gold.

After spending his wealth, he would re-enter the mountains. Attempts to trail him were unsuccessful and search for the mine has continued almost without let-up since his death.

Cravey is the 20th known victim of the Lost Dutchman search. How many more have died only the Superstitions know.