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HEATH

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Coming north from Nevada in 1874, James Ruth and T. J. Heath discovered four silver claims above Goodale's Cutoff along Brownlee Creek that October. They located a millsite at Ruthburg—some two miles below their major property, the Belmont—and had ore sufficiently rich to create substantial interest there the next summer. William A. West came in from Placerville and added some more excitement when he located the Fairview lode, May 8, 1875. A mining district was organized at Heath, June 28. Identification of copper ore added to Heath's mineral possibilities. Lodes eighty feet in width looked good, although no testing could be done there to establish their value. So a batch of high grade samples were packed out to Rye valley for assays, and in 1876 a two ton test lot was assembled for shipment to San Francisco. Eventually the Belmont came to George Hearst's attention, and in June, 1881, he came up to Boise to purchase that property. Lead silver mining continued there for many years, leading to Bunker Hill and Sullivan leases there in 1920. Among other distinctions, Ruthburg's mill appears on Idaho's state seal.