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Miners in many western silver camps spent years searching for a smelting process appropriate for sulphide ores after Flint began to attract interest in 1864, and an 1868 experiment with O'Hara's furnace at Flint provided them a good example of an elaborate system that did not work. Some progress was made in Black Hawk, Colorado, with less troublesome sulphides before a more satisfactory technology was provided for Eureka, Nevada, that solved problems in other camps as well. Flint, however, never really benefited from those advances, but efforts to install a satisfactory recovery procedure continued for many years.

After winter snow had melted in 1864, prospectors "without any means, ranging over the mountains with their blankets and a few pounds of flour on their back--their sole capital," discovered a silver and antimony lode more than twenty feet wide at Flint. (Boise Semi-Weekly Democrat), December 20, 1867.) With a massive ore deposit regarded as one of Owyhee County's richest, their new mine attracted development capital that summer. Within a year after Flint was located, about three tons of ore were packed more than eight miles to Silver City for testing. Although sulphide ore from Flint contained \$210 worth of silver per ton, Silver City milling methods could recover less than a third of that value. Even though more than a 100 per cent profit could be made on such rich ore, a loss of \$145 per ton was unacceptable. In any case, not enough high-grade ore was available for a commercial operation. But D. H. Fogus, whose Morning Star mill in Silver City had been tested for ore from Flint, was sufficiently impressed to try an improved process designed to handle sulphide ores. Unfortunately, his new plant at Flint failed to work. (Some years went by before much progress was made in treating sulphide ores.) But he invested so heavily in trying to develop his Rising Star mine at Flint that his Silver City mills (operated in partnership with J. Marion

More of Idaho City) went bankrupt August 14, 1866.

Activity at Flint, however, did not cease. A small town of Oro, complete with a store, hotel and livery stable gradually emerged in 1866, although lack of lumber slowed down construction. Another, equally small camp--Owyhee City--was built nearby to accommodate Rising Star miners. A four-stamp test mill soon confirmed that the Rising Star ore was rich enough to justify mining, and by 1867 another five-stamp mill commenced operation. Before it would work, "a wooden flue, running to the top of an adjacent hill, some two hundred feet in height" had to be built "on account of not having enough draft too . . . [its] smoke-stack." (Report of William Ashburner of San Francisco in Rossiter W. Raymond, Mineral Resources of the States and Territories West of the Rocky Mountains, 1869, p. 163). A well-managed Iowa company, however, brought in a mill that could process fifteen tons a day. They also had a small roasting process to experiment upon sulphide ore later in 1867. Its "calcining works and roasting furnaces work[ed] perfectly," but its amalgamator proved defective. (Idaho Statesman, November 26, 1867). Only about \$90 to \$110 was salvaged from \$250 of silver assayed in each ton of ore. While profitable, such a loss still was regarded as unsatisfactory.

Fogus managed to liquidate his Rising Star holdings, but for much less than their anticipated value. William Lunt and George Hearst--prominent San Francisco capitalists who had resources to develop important mines in Nevada, Mexico, Montana, and later in South Dakota as well as in Idaho--finally acquired Fogus' Rising Star claims for only \$30 a foot. They got an attractive bargain assuming that they could provide a successful process that would work for sulphide ores. While Iowa promoters were in New York trying to finance an improved amalgamator, Lunt undertook a large-scale operation at Flint. His 110-foot tunnel reached Rising Star ore at a depth of 50 feet, while a shaft added another 140 feet of depth to his development of a ten-foot vein.

Owyhee City grew substantially in 1868 to become Lunt City and to accommodate eight miners who worked on a forty-stamp mill, part of which went into operation December 20. "Its roasting, calcining and drying furnaces, pans, retorts, pumps" and other features made it a regional attraction during that Christmas season. (Owyhee Semi-Weekly Tidal Wave, December 22, 1868) Flint achieved most of its silver production before San Francisco funding ran out in February, 1869. Then activity halted while

miners in Owyhee City suspended work during an attachment proceeding.

Even after Henry J. Hall returned from San Francisco with funds to resume mining and milling for Flint's major Rising Star lode, he had more setbacks. His miners insisted upon payment for time they were unemployed while waiting for funds. When Hall refused, twenty of them departed to join a new rush to White Pine, then attracting a large population to Hamilton, Nevada. So he had to advertise for fifty more miners, who were promised high wages. Those who answered his ad soon were disappointed. By mid-April, after a total production of 1,000 tons, Hall's mine had run out of ore. Development work in search of more ore was continued. But Hall immediately set out to San Francisco to induce Lunt and Hearst to purchase some more Flint mines in order to realize something on their Rising Star mill investment. His trip did not accomplish too much.

Efforts in later years to revive silver mining at Flint led to occasional milling of high grade ore. A large new mill building, designed to accommodate forty stamps, was built around 1888, but ten stamps were more than enough to handle later mining. Occasional revivals, complete with plans for large operations that never materialized, followed. A Chicago syndicate agreed to purchase Flint's major properties for \$600,000 in 1891, but no major revival followed that deal. Early twentieth-century activity (1906) included an 800-foot crosscut tunnel and a 453-foot shaft that brought total development at Flint to 5,000 feet. Then in 1910, Elias Myers, a British capitalist, acquired Flint's major properties for \$135,000 and drove a new 1,500-foot crosscut tunnel. A new forty-ton stamp mill was purchased to facilitate production there in 1915. By 1922, another revival at Flint increased total development work to 10,000 feet. A 2,000-foot tunnel new exposed Rising Star ore at a depth of 500 feet, justifying installation of a flotation concentrator. In 1924, Flint's mills were rebuilt, and a small production was realized in what had become Owyhee County's largest mining operation. Additional small production followed in 1834 and 1941. Out of all that activity, Flint's 1888 mill building survives as an attraction in one of Idaho's better ghost towns.

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