Pelton, Arizona

Under the leadership of Charles O. Brown of Tucson, copper mining began at the Old Boot mine, also known as the Mammoth mine, in 1873 and the Young America mine in 1874. Hand-sorted high-grade ores from these early operations were shipped by wagon to Yuma, Arizona, for transshipment via boat to San Francisco smelters. In an effort to reduce the high costs of transporting ores to distant smelters, a small blast furnace was erected at the site of the Young America mine during the summer of 1874.

Pelton was a community located at the western foothills of the Silver Bell Mountains. George J. Roskuge’s 1983 Official Map of Pima County shows Pelton on the Road to Red Rock where it meets a road going southwest through the Indian Reservation and the Santa Rosa Ranch. This would put the town site within a mile or two northwest of the more recent town of Silver Bell (1952-1984). Roskruge’s map can be viewed online at https://www.loc.gov/item/77692954/.

The 1900 Federal Census lists Pelton with its residents as transcribed below:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1900 Federal Census** | **Pelton, Silverbell Mining District** |  | **Pima County** | **Arizona** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Household**  | **Last Name** | **First Name** | **Relation** | **Sex** | **birth** | **Age** | **Birthplace** | **Occupation** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coragan | Coragan | David W | Head | M | 1848 | 51 | California | Saloon Keeper |
|  | **Babcock** | **Newton** | **partner** | **M** | 1832 | 67 | **Virginia** | **Bartender** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bethune | Bethune | Frances | Head | M | 1870 | 30 | Virginia | Bookkeeper |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Rieves | Rieves | Jose | Head | M | 1852 | 48 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Rieves | Guadalupe | wife | F | 1860 | 40 | Mexico | None |
|  | Rieves | Cipriano | son | M | 1880 | 20 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Rieves | Merna | dtr | F | 1884 | 16 | Mexico | None |
|  | Rieves | Ramon | son | M | 1888 | 12 | Mexico | None |
|  | Rieves | Cruz | son | M | 1890 | 10 | Arizona | None |
|  | Rieves | Aurtra | dtr | F | 1894 | 6 | Arizona | None |
|  | Rieves | Susana | dtr | F | 1897 | 3 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tapia | Tapia | Fernandez | Head | M | 1881 | 19 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Alcantar | Alcantar | Filomino | Head | M | 1874 | 26 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Alcantar | Carnacion | wife | F | 1870 | 30 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ochoa | Ochoa | Ramon | Head | M | 1878 | 22 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pena | Pena | Ignacio | Head | M | 1861 | 24 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Molina | Molina | Ignacio | Head | M | 1877 | 23 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Castro | Jose | partner | M | 1882 | 18 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Escalante | Escalante | Tomas | Head | M | 1852 | 48 | Mexico | Laborer |
|  | Escalante | Guadalupe | wife | F | 1870 | 30 | Mexico | None |
|  | Escalante | Francisco | son | M | 1887 | 13 | Arizona | None |
|  | Escalante | Juana | dtr | F | 1898 | 2 | Arizona | None |
|  | Escalante | Isabel | sister | F | 1877 | 23 | Arizona | None |
|  | Escalante | Mariana | sister | F | 1884 | 16 | Arizona | None |
|  | Escalante | Vicente | brother | M | 1886 | 14 | Arizona | None |
|  | Escalante | Natal | niece | F | 1890 | 10 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gallego | Gallego | Pedro | Head | M | 1873 | 27 | Arizona | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Estrella | Estrella | Jesus | Head | M | 1871 | 29 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Junotti | Junotti | Joseph | Head | M | 1857 | 43 | Italy | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Feliz | Felix | Manuel | Head | M | 1850 | 50 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Bolyn | Bolyn | Thomas H | Head | M | 1862 | 38 | England | Copper Mine |
|  | Bolyn | Mary | wife | F | 1879 | 21 | Mexico | None |
|  | Bolyn | Gloria | dtr | F | 1899 | 1 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Castro | Castro | Jesus | Head | M | 1875 | 25 | Mexico | Laborer |
|  | Castro | Ramona | wife | F | 1877 | 23 | Mexico | None |
|  | Castro | Manuel | son | M | 1898 | 2 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Soto | Soto | Rafael | Head | M | 1879 | 21 | Arizona | Copper Miner |
|  | Soto | Selena | wife | F | 1882 | 18 | Arizona | None |
|  | Soto | Antonio | son | M | 1899 | 1 | Arizona | None |
|  | Martinez | Lisargo | boarder | M | 1874 | 26 | Mexico | Laborer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Anion | Anion | Augustin | Head | M | 1855 | 45 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Anion | Armida | wife | F | 1880 | 20 | Mexico | None |
|  | Anion | Rudolfo | son | M | 1898 | 2 | Arizona | None |
|  | Anion | Augustin | son | M | 1899 | 0 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Alorres | Alorres | Jesus | Head | M | 1868 | 32 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Alorres | Margarita | wife | F | 1867 | 33 | Mexico | None |
|  | Estudilla | Jesus | boarder | M | 1875 | 25 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mesa | Mesa | Precio | Head | M | 1858 | 42 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mascareno | Mascareno | Manuel | Head | M | 1869 | 31 | Mexico | Copper Mine |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Castillo | Castillo | Juan | Head | M | 1854 | 46 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fuentes | Fuentes | Manuel | Head | M | 1840 | 60 | Spain | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Vihond | Vihond | Walter | Head | M | 1870 | 30 | Nova Scotia | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reardon | Reardon | Harry J | Head | M | 1861 | 39 | Pennsylvania | Mechanical Engineer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Neilson | Neilson | Carl S | Head | M | 1861 | 39 | Scotland | Mine Superintendent |
|  | Neilson | Mary | wife | F | 1860 | 40 | Scotland | None |
|  | Neilson | Hilda D | dtr | F | 1888 | 12 | Arizona | None |
|  | Neilson | Georgianna E | dtr | F | 1890 | 10 | Arizona | None |
|  | Neilson | Jack | son | M | 1892 | 8 | Arizona | None |
|  | Neilson | Richard | son | M | 1894 | 6 | Arizona | None |
|  | Whytock | Christina | m-in-law | F | 1843 | 57 | Scotland | None |
|  | Aguirre | Lola | boarder | F | 1881 | 19 | Arizona | Private School Teacher |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Decker | Decker | William | Head | M | 1852 | 48 | England | Copper Smelterer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cochrain | Cochrain | Malcolm | Head | M | 1863 | 37 | Scotland | Mining Engineer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Reed | Reed | Claud | Head | M | 1874 | 26 | Michigan | Steam Pump Engineer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lentz | Lentz | Frank | Head | M | 1876 | 24 | Kentucky | Teamster |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lee | Lee | Sing | Head | M | 1870 | 30 | China | Cook/Restaurant |
|  | Ah | Sam | partner | M | 1853 | 47 | China | Waiter/Restaurant |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Moral | Moral | Ruperto | Head | M | 1880 | 20 | Mexico | Laborer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Flores | Flores | Juan | Head | M | 1870 | 30 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Flores | Juana | wife | F | 1865 | 35 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Garriaga | Garriaga | Gernoso | Head | M | 1876 | 24 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Garriaga | Teresa | wife | F | 1883 | 17 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gaff | Gaff | James | Head | M | 1857 | 43 | Pennsylvania | Copper Miner |
|  | Scott  | Joseph B | partner | M | 1860 | 40 | Texas | Copper Miner |
|  | Burns | James H | boarder | M | 1862 | 38 | Scotland | Copper Miner |
|  | Lord | Henry | boarder | M | 1873 | 27 | New York | Copper Miner |
|  | Craig | John | boarder | M | 1864 | 36 | Michigan | Copper Miner |
|  | Fagan | James | boarder | M | 1859 | 41 | Iowa | Copper Miner |
|  | Murphy | Frank E | boarder | M | 1857 | 43 | New York | Copper Miner |
|  | Wing | Ching | servant | M | 1865 | 35 | China | Cook/Boarding House |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The Census reveals that Pelton had a population of 80 persons. Occupations included 31 copper miners, three laborers, two cooks, one restaurant waiter, one private school teacher, one saloon keeper, one bartender, one bookkeeper, one copper smelterer, one mining engineer, one mechanical engineer, one steam pump engineer, one teamster, and one mine superintendent. The rest of the townspeople were wives and children.

According to Roskruge’s map, Pelton was very close to the Young America Mine, which is located smack dab in the middle of the Oxide Pit. It is likely that Pelton also disappeared, just like Silverbell of the early 1900s and Silver Bell of the late 1900s.

The 1900 Census also lists residents of the Silver Bell Mining District as living separately from the people of Pelton. Where they actually lived is uncertain.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1900 Federal Census** | **Silverbell Mining District** | **Pima County** | **Arizona** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Household**  | **Last Name** | **First Name** | **Relation** | **Sex** | **birth** | **Age** | **Birthplace** | **Occupation** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Colores | Colores | Nabor | Head | M | 1863 | 37 | Mexico | Teamster |
|  | Colores | **Mabricia** | wife | F | 1858 | 42 | **Mexico** | None |
|  | Colores | **Benito** | son | M | 1884 | 16 | **Arizona** | None |
|  | Colores | **Jesus** | son | M | 1886 | 14 | **Arizona** | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Garcia | Garcia | **Ramon** | Head | M | 1857 | 43 | **Mexico** | Cattle Herder |
|  | Garcia | **Juana** | wife | F | 1870 | 30 | **Mexico** | None |
|  | Garcia | **Ramon** | son | M | 1886 | 14 | **Arizona** | None |
|  | Garcia | **Catalina** | dtr | F | 1890 | 10 | **Arizona** | None |
|  | Noriaque | **Francisco** | boarder | M | 1867 | 33 | **Mexico** | Laborer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Maish | Maish | **Charles** | Head | M | 1875 | 25 | **Indiana** | Steam Pump Engineer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ward | Ward | **Anthony** | Head | M | 1870 | 30 | **Arizona** | Grocery Clerk |
|  | Ward | Elvira | wife | F | 1873 | 27 | Arizona | None |
|  | Ward | **Antonio F** | son | M | 1894 | 6 | **Arizona** | None |
|  | Ward | Mary L | dtr | F | 1896 | 4 | Arizona | None |
|  | Ward | **John B** | son | M | 1898 | 2 | **Arizona** | None |
|  | Ward | Leopold | son | M | 1899 | 1 | Arizona | None |
|  | Marquez | **Jose** | boarder | M | 1879 | 21 | **Mexico** | Teamster |
|  | Borquez | Luis | boarder | M | 1875 | 25 | Mexico | Teamster |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lewis | Lewis | Lewis B | Head | M | 1869 | 31 | Pennsylvania | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Burns | Burns | Edgar | Head | M | 1881 | 19 | England | Copper Miner |
|  | Grijalva | Luis | partner | M | 1830 | 70 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Preciada | Juan | partner | M | 1873 | 27 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Provato | Ramon | partner | M | 1882 | 18 | Arizona | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Campbell | Campbell | Charles | Head | M | 1875 | 25 | England | Mineral Assayer |
|  | Campbell | Virginia | wife | F | 1880 | 20 | New Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Jeffery | Jeffery | Robert H | Head | M | 1873 | 27 | England | Mining Engineer |
|  | Condon | Edward | partner | M | 1854 | 46 | Illinois | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sanchez | Sanchez | Narbo | Head | M | 1878 | 22 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Sanchez | Victoria | wife | F | 1877 | 23 | Mexico | None |
|  | Gonzales | Ignacio | boarder | M | 1881 | 19 | Mexico | Laborer |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Terene | Terene | Jose | Head | M | 1877 | 23 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Terene | Petra | wife | F | 1875 | 25 | Mexico | None |
|  | Terene | Ignacio | son | M | 1894 | 6 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Castillo | Castillo | Ramon | Head | M | 1873 | 27 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Dania | Placio | partner | M | 1875 | 25 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Terene | Terene | Eufrate | Head | M | 1878 | 22 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Flores | Flores | Francisco | Head | M | 1846 | 54 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Flores | Carina V | wife | F | 1867 | 33 | Mexico | None |
|  | Flores | Lola | dtr | F | 1883 | 17 | Mexico | None |
|  | Flores | Flora | dtr | F | 1884 | 16 | Mexico | None |
|  | Flores | Elana | dtr | F | 1889 | 11 | Arizona | None |
|  | Flores | Guillermo | son | M | 1892 | 8 | Arizona | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ruiz | Ruiz | Francisco | Head | M | 1873 | 27 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Ruiz | Francisco | son | M | 1898 | 2 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Arraiza | Arraiza | Lorenzo | Head | M | 1877 | 23 | Arizona | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Flores | Flores | Juan | Head | M | 1847 | 53 | Mexico | Copper Miner |
|  | Flores | Jesica | wife | F | 1860 | 40 | Mexico | None |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gallegos | Gallegos | Ignacio | Head | M | 1868 | 32 | Mexico | Blacksmith |
|  | Morall | Rupert | partner | M | 1880 | 20 | Arizona | Copper Miner |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Residents of the area living outside of Pelton numbered 49. This includes 16 copper miners, three teamsters, one cattle herder, one laborer, one steam pump engineer, one grocery clerk, one mineral assayer, and one mining engineer. The rest are wives and children.

The total official population of the Silverbell Mining District was 129 in 1900.