

THE GOLD RUSH AT NELSON'S LEDGES  
Tales of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys  
Industrial Information Institute

ANNCR: The Industrial Information Institute presents ... Tales of the Mahoning and Shenango Valley ...

MUSIC: THEME UP, THEN BACKGROUND

ANNCR: If people of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys would like a look at history, go to the place just off route 4-2-2 northwest of Warren, a place known as Nelsons Ledges. Here is nature's own illustrated history. A geological story of mammoth proportions. Telling of gargantuan upheavals when our world was young. Of raging torrents that brought down to our valley from far to the north tons and tons of small white pebbles ... pebbles of quartz. Here at Nelsons Ledges we see above ground a rock formation that farther to the east is always far below ground. Below even the deepest vein of coal. The strange pressures of time and the slowly working forces of nature cemented the quartz pebbles together to form a sort of fairyland, oddly shaped rock formations, mysterious caves, secret hideaways, strange shapes and colors. Long before the arrival of the European settlers, the natives found the strange collection of rock a fascinating and useful hiding place. And many years later, Nelsons Ledges was the scene of a fantastic sort of fantasy, a true-life drama like nothing ever seen before or since in the Mahoning and Shenango valleys.

MUSIC: THEME UP AND OUT

ANNCR: You're about to hear "The Gold Rush at Nelson's Ledges." Number 22 in our current series of Tales of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys." Performed and transcribed by the Industrial Information Institute, and brought to you by ...

**Home Savings and Loan ... There's no place like Home.**

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**COMMERCIAL BREAK**

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ANNCR: And now, here is this week's Tale of the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys... The Gold Rush at Nelson's Ledges.

MUSIC: THEME UP, THEN UNDER

ANNCR: The strange conglomeration of rock comprising Nelsons Ledges is intriguing to all sorts of people. The geologist, for example, finds it a veritable laboratory.

GEOL: This particular formation is commonly known as pudding stone or, more accurately, sharon conglomerate. The pebbles are almost all white quartz. Hard as common rock. Quartz comes from the breakdown of granite, and since the nearest granite is in Canada, it would seem to indicate that these quartz pebbles were rolled down to this location by rivers. Most sharon conglomerate is found far underground. Quite fascinating.

ANNCR: To an early collector of indian relics, Nelsons Ledges was equally interesting.

Collector: Well, indians must have used this place as a sort of headquarters for centuries. When I first

came here, you could go back into those rocks and find arrowheads and axes and tommy hawks ... And all that stuff, lying everywhere. I reckon folks have hauled enough indian stuff out of there to start an indian museum.

ANNCR: An early resident of the area, as a matter of fact, did contribute to Hiram College a considerable collection of indian artifacts taken from Nelsons Ledges. To the young couple who wished to get away from younger brother, Nelson's Ledges still is a happy solution. But to a man like Chester Perkins, Nelsons Ledges meant something quite different from geology, museum pieces and law. But of course Chester looked at everything about the same way.

OLIVER: The trouble with you, Chester Perkins, is that you don't want to work for what you get. You're always looking for a shortcut.

CHESTER: What's the matter with a shortcut?

OIVER: Nothing's the matter, if you really find a shortcut. But all the ones you find turn out to be blind alleys. And we bought that fool horse, and he fell dead right in the middle of the race. I told you then that I was through with your fool schemes.

CHESTER: Fool schemes, ey? Well let me tell you something, Oliver Duffy. (ARGUMENT CONTINUES UNDER)

ANNCR: This was all taking place back in 1870. Now frankly, we've just made up the names Chester Perkins and Oliver Duffy. We don't know exactly how the whole thing got started, but we do know that somebody set off a chain reaction that made a lot of people feel downright foolish before the dust settled. Well, anyway, let's see what Chester Perkins' latest get-rich-quick scheme is.

Chester: Precious stones. Exactly right. There must be thousands of them.

Oliver: Where?

Chester: In Nelsons Ledges. That's what I've been trying to tell you. Look here. I found it yesterday in one of the caves. Look at it shine!

Oliver: So what is it?

Cheser: Well how do I know what it is? Look at it. If that ain't worth money, I don't know what is. Now here's the way we work it. You put in enough money to buy some blasting powder. And I'll go down in that cave ...

Oliver: And blow yourself to kingdom come, that's what you'll do.

Chester: It might just be worth it.

Oliver: No, Chester, you'll just have to find another financial supporter this time. I'm not spending another cent on your hair-brained schemes.

Chester: But precious stones, Oliver. Hundreds of them. Think of it.

Oliver: Yea, but I've got precious little money, Chester. And what I've got, I aim to keep.

MUSIC UP, THEN UNDER

ANNCR: Once in a great while, a pebble of red jaspar is found at Nelsons Ledges. Perhaps that's what Chester Perkins found. Anyway, he thought he had stumbled onto a fortune. And with or

without financial support, he was determined to follow it through. Back to the ledges he went, and into the cave where he had found the shiny pebble. And spent hours grubbing through the rocky formation. Suddenly he stopped short, stared at the rock in his hand, and rushed outside. Slowly he turned the rock in his hand, catching the last rays of the setting sun. The rock glittered. Chester Perkins turned pale. A wild grin covered his face. He started to run, forgetting his pick and shovel and the candle still burning in the cave. He ran like a man pursued. Found his horse and leaped into the saddle. He whipped the beast into a frantic gallop, and didn't stop until he reached the home of Oliver Dufffet.

SFX : CRASH

Chester: Oliver. Look here. Look at what I've found.

Oliver: What's the matter with you? Where've you been?

Chester: Oh, never mind that. Never mind. Look here.

Oliver: Well what'd you find this time, an 85-carat diamond?

Chester: Don't joke. Look! You'll believe your own eyes, won't you?

Oliver: Why, it just looks like an ordinary old ...

Chester: Up to the light. Up to the light.

Oliver: Hey, Chester. Where'd you get this?

Chester: In the cave. In the cave at the Ledges.

Oliver: Do you know what it is?

Chester: Any fool'd know what it is. Do you know?

Oliver: It's gold, Chester. That's what it is. It's gold.

MUSIC: UP, THEN UNDER

ANNCR: The excited planning went on until late in the night.

Oliver: Now remember, Chester. We mustn't say one word. Not one word, mind you, to a living creature. One word of gold at the Ledges, and that place'd look like a bee swarm inside of six hours.

Chester: You think I'm crazy? Just see that you don't say anything.

Oliver: Alright, then. We'll meet there at sunup. We'll even hide the horses so nobody'll know we're anywhere around.

Chester: Alright, alright. I'll see you in the morning.

Oliver: My heavens, Chester. It looks like you finally found it. After all these years, you finally found that shortcut.

MUSIC: UP AND OUT

ANNCR: We'll join the great Nelsons Ledges treasure hunt ... when we return.

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## COMMERCIAL BREAK

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MUSIC: UP AND BACKGROUND

ANNCR: Today, the Nelsons Ledges area of Trumbull County is a center of entertainment and diversions. Quarry Park features camping, scuba diving, and music concerts. The Nelson Ledges Road Course is a nationally recognized race track for sports car racing. But north of these rests Nelson Ledges State Park, the rock domain where Chester Perkins had made his discovery so many years ago. There they were, Chester and Oliver Duffy, bright and early in the morning, trudging into Chester's special cave ... loaded down with picks, shovels, and sacks. The sacks that would hold their loot.

MUSIC OUT

Chester: It was right in here, Oliver. Over here. Right where I left it. And my pick and shovel. I picked up that gold right up off the floor of this cave.

Oliver: Alright. Let's first look over all the loose rock. Until we've done that, we can start knocking it down with our pick.

Chester: Look. Look, Oliver. Bigger than the one I found yesterday.

Oliver: Well, I'll be dad-blamed. Do you suppose this gold has been lying around all this time and nobody has noticed it before?

Chester: It takes a man with good eyes, Oliver. And good sense.

Oliver: Alright, Chester. Let's get to work. Now I'll take the ...

Emmet: Is this where the gold is?

Chester: What? Who's that?

Oliver: Emmet Toliver.

Chester: What in tarnation are you doing here, Emmet?

Emmet: Eh, I just wanted to know if this is where you're finding the gold.

Chester: What are you talking about?

Emmet: Now, don't be smartalecking with me, Chester Perkins. When you talk in your sleep the word gets agound.

Chester: Talk in my sleep?

Oliver: Ah, Chester. I told you again and again ...

Chester: Honest, Oliver. Honest. I didn't.

Oliver: Were you dreaming about gold last night?

Chester: Dreaming? You're dad-blamed right I was dreaming about gold – piles and piles and piles of it ...

Emmet: Yeah, and your wife says you were talking about gold too – talking in your sleep. Now she just happened to mention it at the store this morning ... So I thought I'd kinda take a little trip out here and see what it was all about.

Henry: Ah, is that you in there, Chester? Where's the gold? Where's it hidden at?

Emmet: He's in here, Henry. This must be the place. Bring your shovels down here.

Oliver: Who's that?

Emmet: Looks like Jake Nipaway. He was in the store this morning too.

Oliver: Well, Chester, let's get busy. It looks like it's every man for himself. We better get what we can while we can. Ah, it won't be long before the whole county's out here. Come on.

MUSIC UP, THEN BACKGROUND

ANNCR: Once the gold fever gets started, it goes like wildfire. With lightning-like speed the word spread.

Voice #1: Hey, hey ... there's gold in Nelsons Ledges. Chester Perkins found it. Tell George. And tell 'em there's more.

ANNCR: The vision of glittering wealth came before the eyes of everyone who heard the word...the word of gold at the Ledges. There was no waiting. A man heard the word ... he packed a few belongings and started traveling towards Nelsons Ledges. They came by the hundreds from all the villages and towns of the surrounding countryside. Laden with camping equipment ... screens, pans, shovels ... almost hysterical with the gold fever. They clawed at the ledges with almost inhuman energy ... clutching at every bit of rock remotely resembling gold. The gold rush hit Nelsons Ledges with full swing.

CROWD: Noise ... (CONTINUES THROUGH SCENE)

Oliver: One more sack. Just bring up one more sack. Then I don't care what the rest of these greedy fools do. We'll have enough.

Chester: I can't move another step, Oliver. I'm just completely done.

Voice #1: I wonder how much this is worth?

Voice #2: Well it ain't that simple. Different ore has different amounts of gold in it. Now, it depends on how much gold they can get out of these here rocks. Oh, wait. Ain't you had any of this to the assayer?

Voice #1: You think we're crazy? Let him tell everybody about it?

Voice #2: STAMMER ... Well unless you've had it assayed, you don't even know if it is gold.

Voice #1: Well just look at it. Look at it man. If that isn't gold, well ...

Oliver: Chester, maybe we just better ...

ANNCR: Well, you already know the ending. They took it to an assayer. And it didn't take him long to tell

them what it was.

ASSAYER: Hummm ... Well, it's not worth a thing. It's useless. It's what they call iron pyrite (IRON PIE-RITE). There's a lot of it around here.

Chester: Iron pyrite??

ASSAYER: Yes. There's another name for it too ... some folks call it fools gold. Yessir, fools gold. Now the reason they call it fools gold ...

Oliver: Never mind. We know why.

MUSIC: THEME UP TO GRAND SWELL

ANNCR: And that's the way it ended, a dazzling few hours of golden dreams ... a soaring flight into fancy, and a shattering crash to the earth of reality. Fools Gold was all they ever found at Nelsons Ledges ... And that's probably why to this day it's still the picturesque beauty spot it's always been. A mysterious and impressive monument to the power of nature. Here in the Mahoning and Shenango Valleys.

MUSIC UP, THEN UNDER

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Next week, our story is built around the colorful figures from our valley who gained national fame for his unique publication. Listen then for "Sanford Hill and His Almanac." Our next Tale of the Mahoning and Shenango Valley.

MUSIC UP, THEN UNDER

ANNCR: These historical dramatizations, written in collaboration with Howard C. Aley, are part of a program of community education developed by the schools' advisory committee of the Industrial Information Institute.

MUSIC UP TO GRAND SWELL, THEN OUT

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