

46 - Star-Tribune Casper Wyo. - Thursday, June 14, 1973



**Rebuilt plant**

NOW owned and operated by the Board of Trustees of W. Industries, the Casper Star plant was rebuilt in 1962. (Picture by Pat Beck)

## Pioneer plant in operation

CHANCE — Wyoming's "pioneer" bentonite plant is still in operation.

The state's oldest bentonite processing plant is located four and one-half miles west of Casper at Clay Spar. Operation

was started at this location in 1927.

The late Frank Marshall, who served as U.S. Congressman from Wyoming in 1904-06 and again in the years 1933 through 1935, had considerable financial

interest in the plant.

At one time Clay Spar was considered a community town and had its own post office. In the years 1930-32, there was a store for the plant's employees and lunch houses were provided for the overworked employees.

The original plant at Clay Spar burned down about 1932 and was rebuilt.

Employment

The processing plant at Clay Spar is now owned and operated by the Board of Trustees of W. Industries, known until recently as National Lead Company. Twenty men are employed at the plant and an office staff of one full-time secretary during plant hours.

The handling process involves several steps.

The bank houses are no longer used and the well-known house has been razed and is now the superintendent's home.

It is rumored in the community that the Clay Spar plant will close operations in "a matter of years". Sources often include the depletion of high grade bentonite deposits in the area and the expense of complying with environmental protection standards.

However, no official comment is available at this time according to Sanford Wain plant superintendent.

It is known that many industries are facing the financial pinch of the high cost of consolidation drives.

And in the late Annual for the overworked employees.

Western Edition published in March 1930 by the Casper Star their meals was run by a Mrs. Lecher.

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Only lines will prove these predictions right or wrong. In the meantime, Wyoming's pioneer bentonite plant is in full operation.

**Wyoming**

### Mining has mission

RAPID CITY, S. D. — Fred Schickel is mine excavation and valuation work. He also is a consultant for various government agencies in connection with large underground openings.

Mr. Schickel is the annual convention of the Wyoming Springs, Colo. Mining Association.

Holder of an engineering degree from Stanford University in California in 1923, he was a major engineer for United Verde Copper Co. at Jerome, Ariz., and mine construction work in Colorado, South America, and was an engineering officer in the Army.

From 1925 to 1932 he was a mine engineer, superintendent and manager of various mining properties in California and Nevada for Gold Fields American Development Co. of New York and London.

In 1933 he became professor of mining engineering and head of the Dept. of Mining Engineering at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Rapid City, S. D.

Since 1935 he has been a consulting engineer for various mining companies and to



EDWIN H. OSMER

# First Bentonite Plant Began Operation In 1927

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