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P.O. Box 3113, Johannesburg, S. Africa.

Serial No. ABR. 9

DOPE SHEET.

Date 24th April 1947

Story Diamond Digging and Mine.

Camera H. Duncan Abraham.

Length 420ft appr

Location BLOEMHOF and PREMIER MINE.

Also covered by _____

Roll Number

Footage

SUMMARY OF STORY

This story concerning the digging and mining of diamonds in South Africa has three connections with topical news, namely:

1. The numerous diamond presentations made to the Royal Family during their present visit to South Africa.
2. The recently opened new alluvial diamond diggings at Bloemhof at which there was a diamond rush on the 4th February, has proved unsuccessful and diggers are moving off.
3. The famous Premier Diamond Mine at Cullinan near Pretoria, which closed down in 1932 is now opening up again and is undergoing reconstruction and will employ new methods.

The story depicts one of the diehard diggers still working at the Bloemhof diggings, and having some luck. The process employed by the small individual digger in recovering diamonds from alluvial deposits is shown, followed by scenes at the great Premier Mine, famous for the discovery in 1905 of the Cullinan Diamond, the largest in the world, which since 1907, when it was presented to King Edward VII, has formed an important part of the Crown Jewels.

The fact that there has been some talk in the Press about India requesting the return of the Koh-I-Noor Diamond may add further topical interest to this story.

STORY

The story could open with general view of portion of the Diamond Diggings at Bloemhof (Roll No. 2, shot 8) and followed by various shots of the process of digging and recovering diamonds, or it could open with views of the diggers camp (Roll 2, shots 11, 12 and 13) and then follow with view of actual diggings. Then show the comparison of a large diamond mine with scenes of the Premier Mine.

The procedure in regard to alluvial diggings is that a farm on which the existence of diamonds has been proved, is, after due consideration, thrown open by the Government for pegging. Diggers' Licences are issued to

individuals by ballot and those successful in obtaining a licence run for the claims they fancy, and insert their pegs in the ground and the claim becomes theirs. Work is eagerly commenced usually with great expectations. Natives are employed by the digger, according to his means, to assist in the work.

It is to a large extent a game of chance, some strike it lucky and make a fortune; others make a decent living, while many draw a blank and go broke or withdraw before it is too late. This particular diggings has not proved to be a profitable one, owing to the fact that most of the diamonds found have been of poor quality, containing flaws such as cracks and spots.

The process of recovering diamonds at a diggings of this type, where the gravel is near the surface, is a simple one. The gravel is dug out with pick and shovel, and this is passed through the Dummy which is really a sieve, and all large stones are removed. The finer gravel is then put into the washing machine, where all the earth and clay is washed away in the form of tailings. The heavy deposit which consists of small pebbles and stones are given a final washing called Gravitating and then this heavy deposit is turned out on the sorting table to be carefully sorted by hand and the diamonds, if any, picked out.

The large diamond mine is a very different proposition although the rudiments of the process are similar, but large mechanical plants are used, and instead of alluvial, the diamonds are found at a great depth, necessitating a very large and deep pit, or the sinking of a shaft and underground workings. Such is the Premier Mine, famous for the discovery of the worlds largest diamond, which weighed $3,025\frac{3}{4}$ carats = $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. known as the Cullinan Diamond discovered in 1905. It was presented to King Edward VII in 1907 by the Transvaal Government. The largest gem cut from this remarkable stone and known as The Star of Africa, was set in the British Sceptre, and the next largest in the British Crown.

The Premier Mine closed down in 1932 during the diamond slump, and remained closed through the war years; but now the mine is re-opening and re-constructed. Instead of continuing mining operations in the large open pit which is already 600 feet deep and become too dangerous to work, shafts are being sunk and the mine will be worked underground and new type of machinery for recovering the diamonds will be employed.

The film shows the temporary headgear used in sinking a vertical shaft. This headgear will be replaced by a much larger one when production is started.

The work of sinking the shaft is in full swing and shots Nos. 5 and 6 Roll No. 3 show the buckets being hauled up from below and contents tipped out.

The remaining scenes are explained in the list of shots.

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Length 420ft. approx

Location Diamond and Premier Mine.

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Roll Number

SHOTS

Footage

1.
 1. Native boy gravitating gravel, this is done by means of a sive being moved in a drum of water.
 2. The Native boy carries the sive containing the heavy deposit to the sorting table and there he turns the contents out for sorting.
 3. C.U. of Heavy Deposit being sorted.
 4. A still closer shot of heavy deposit being sorted.
 5. Finding a diamond in this deposit. (Repeated Roll No.2)
 6. C.U. of diamonds in hand. (Repeated Roll No. 2.)
 7. Medium distance shot of scene showing Native boy digging out the gravel in foreground with the Washing machine and equipment in background; and native boys carrying buckets of gravel to the machine. The motor truck in background is a water carrier. Water has to be transported to the diggings, and is an expensive item.
 8. C.U. of native digging.
 9. Native boy pouring gravel into washing machine.

2.
 1. The rotating washing machine in action washing the gravel
 2. C.U. Sorting the Heavy Deposit (Looking for the Diamonds.) After the earth and clay has been washed away these pebbles remain. They are called "Heavy Deposit," and it is in this that the diamonds are found and the final process is sorting this by hand and picking out the diamonds, if any. In this case two were found and are picked out.
 3. C.U. of the two diamonds in the palm of the hand of the Diamond Digger. One of them is a double diamond. (Two joined together, these are separated when they reach the cutter).
 4. A closer shot of diamonds in hand.
 5. C.U. of the diamonds being carefully tilted into the "Diamond Box". (The box in which the Digger keeps his precious stones.)
 - 6 and 7. Native at foot of washing machine shovelling away the "Tailings". (This is the waste mud and earth washed away by the machine.)

Roll No. 2. 8.

- General view of portion of the diggings with work in full progress.
9. Pan shot of deserted workings on the diggings. Many diggers who are dissatisfied with the property and have had no luck, have packed up and left possibly for another field of activity, or a more profitable diamond claims elsewhere.
10. Native boys sifting the gravel to clear large stones before the gravel is washed. The machine employed is called a "Dummy" and the operation "Dummying".

XXX

Roll No. 3. PREMIER MINE.

1. Pan shot of general view of the great hole at Premier Mine. It is in this hole that the world-famous Cullinan Diamond was found in 1905.
 2. C.U. of Sheave Wheels rotating at the top of the headgear. It is over these wheels that the steel cable is lowered into the shaft below carrying the cage containing men and materials for work below, and for hauling up the skips of earth and rock.
 3. View of portion of the village of Cullinan, which is the mining village named after Sir James Cullinan. One of the sheaf wheels are seen rotating in the foreground.
 4. View of top of the headgear of portion of the mine buildings and showing a considerable amount of reconstruction work going on.
 5. View of village of Cullinan from headgear.
 6. View of headgear with bucket being hauled up from below where shaft sinking is in progress. The bucket is tipped, throwing out rock, earth and water.
 7. C.U. of operation of tipping bucket.
- 8 and 9. C.U. views taken in the big hole.

XXX Roll No. 2 cont.

- Shot 11. View of the diggers camp near Bloemhof.
12. Scene in the camp showing the shopping area.
13. Two belles of the camp with a private residence in the near background.

The News Editor -

NOTE.

Should you wish to link up diamond cutting with this story, you may be able to use shots of this from the Johannesburg story, already ~~sent~~ sent.

I was very surprised and sorry to learn that you had experienced difficulty in joining Dupont film stock. The firm with whom I am employed here, use almost entirely Dupont stock as they are the local agents, and have no difficulty in joining. I therefore enclose in this parcel a bottle of the cement they use which is Roscoe, strengthened by dissolving in it, a few thin cuttings of film approximately four perforations cut up. I hope you will find this successful. This is rather important as I have difficulty in obtaining sufficient Kodak Stock and have to rely on using a portion of Dupont. Furthermore I find that Dupont Superior 2 is about two stops faster than Plus X, in spite of the fact that Western's grade the two films the same speed, but extra development is given to Superior 2.

In this consignment Roll No. 1 is Dupont Superior 2 and the stop used with K2 filter is F16. While similar scenes taken immediately afterwards on Roll No. 2 which is Plus X stock were exposed with stop F8 and same filter. It will be of interest to note the result, but Superior 2 being faster requires to be longer in the bath.

Thank you very much for your letter of the 15th and 16th inst. I am very glad you have been able to use material as mentioned.

All stories of the Royal Tour have been cut out of your Newsreel coming to this country, because of duplication by African Films here. Consequently, "Johannesburg Prepares" has unfortunately not been shown here. I trust this will not apply now that the tour is over.

There are many people, for instance, looking out for the Mayor's British Flood Relief Fund story, as this was exclusive so I hope it's not cut out. By the way, the digger at Bloemhof actually did find the two diamonds while I was filming, so I brought him some luck!

With kindest regards, writing soon,

H. Duncan Abraham
H. Duncan Abraham.

P.S. Will be very glad if you kindly take Mrs A to lunch, thanks for phone number is Brighton - Preston 5504.
28, Redhill Drive
WITBENE BRIGHTON.

P.S. My wife would probably be very interested to know when S. African stories are being shown in Newsreel in Brighton could you kindly advise her.