



ANDREW J. PRICHARD (1830 - 1902)

Explorer and Prospector

2018 Inductee from Mining's Past

Andrew J. Prichard was born in Connecticut in 1830 and served in the Union Army. After the Civil War, he prospected his way through New Mexico, Colorado, Montana and on into Idaho. He was one of the early users of the reopened Mullan Road, which provided a way across the Bitterroot Mountains into Idaho. Here, he first worked as a logger.

In 1879, he and Samuel Thomas Irwin, another seasoned prospector, joined forces and prospected, sometimes as a team, other times separately. In 1883, Prichard announced the discovery of gold in the creeks and tributaries of the Coeur d'Alene River. This discovery came at a most opportune time for the Northern Pacific Railroad, who seized upon the discovery to stimulate ticket sales on the newly built railroad which was within 25 miles of the discovery.

In addition to working placers along the creeks, Prichard also has the distinction of locating the oldest lode claim in the Coeur d'Alene region, the "Evolution", staked and recorded in 1882. People who came found better prospects in veins carrying substantial silver and lead values than in the spotty placer deposits. This led to the development of the mighty Coeur d'Alene mining district. Prichard died in Murray, Idaho in October, 1902.