



The Prospector and His Protégé

Jack Langton

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American personalities are a dime a dozen. Becoming a legend takes much more. Vernon J. Pick made the jump with his serendipitous prospecting discovery of yellowcake in the southern Utah desert, gaining infamy as The Uranium King of America in 1954. The story of his discovery was told and retold at that time in the likes of Time and Fortune magazines, but only now has the depth of his persona and his discovery's influence on the future of American minerals exploration been made clear through the literary meanderings of his erstwhile protégé, Jack M. Langton.

First casting a spotlight on the genesis of his own career, Langton recounts his days and adventures with Pick in the Arctic tundra, building a personal view of the man and his extraordinary vision. Descriptions of Pick's magnificently wrought retreats at Walden West in California and Walden North in British Columbia are interwoven with the dealings and antics of Pick and Langton in their quest for minerals and riches . . . tales sprinkled with privileged authenticity that only genuine friendship can achieve.

From this vantage point he paints a vivid picture of the behind-the-scenes intrigue associated with Nelson Bunker Hunt's famous attempt to corner the world silver market, the demise of The Superior Oil Company, and the caste-like world of the Phelps-Dodge Corporation. Not since Upton Sinclair has such a stunning portrait been painted of the inner workings of an entire segment of American industrial society.

A bit brash and not without guile, *The Prospector and His Protégé* is in the end the personal story of a man both guided by the spirit of a legend and haunted by the personal destruction that unfulfilled striving for equal celebrity can bring . . . a chronicle of the Prospector and his Protégé.

G.A. Mac McLean, Ph.D.

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